

The Gospel According to

JOHN



BIBLE STUDY COURSE BY
RICHARD "RUSTY" RUTHERFORD

Gospel of John: The Story of Jesus from a Jerusalem Perspective

All the people would get up early to hear him speak in the Temple courtyard. **Luke 21:38**

A study in the Gospel According to John divided into 34 pericopes with comments and questions.

Written and taught by
Richard “Rusty” David Rutherford
Columbus, Texas
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Author's Preface



This new study on the Gospel of John intends to emphasize the Jerusalem focus of Jesus' 3 ½ year ministry. I believe this Gospel was written by Lazarus, who lived in Bethany on the Mount of Olives. Jesus probably met Lazarus through John the Baptist who probably knew John's father Zechariah, a priest in the Temple at Jerusalem. **Luke 1:5-9**. I believe Lazarus was a retired priest as he knew Annas, the former High Priest. **John 18:15**

Lazarus came to know Jesus beginning as a disciple of John the Baptist and then becoming one of Jesus' first five disciples, although he was not chosen as one of the Twelve. **John 1:35, 40**. He was too old. When Jesus came to Jerusalem, he stayed at Lazarus' home where he was entertained by Lazarus' two unmarried sisters, Mary and Martha. **Luke 10:38-42**

Lazarus knows of Jesus' Galilean ministry and may have accompanied him in Galilee. Certainly, he was present when Jesus fed the 5,000 men who had gathered in a deserted place north of the Sea of Galilee. He saw the Galileans want to make Jesus' King and march on Jerusalem as their Davidic Messiah who would liberate the Jews from the Roman occupation of Syria-Judea.

Only Lazarus portrays and explains Jesus' Bread of Life sermon--his last sermon in Galilee. After this, Jesus goes to Jerusalem and never returns to Galilee until after his resurrection. Lazarus spends time in this Gospel portraying Jesus' teaching of his identity to the religious leaders in Jerusalem, the Pharisees, the chief priests, and the elders. He also portrays his teaching in the Temple courtyards to the people of Jerusalem and those pilgrims who have come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths, called in Hebrew Sukkot.

Jesus wanted these leaders to understand who he was and why God had sent him to earth. While the Galileans readily accepted Jesus as the long-awaited Davidic Messiah, the religious leaders had trouble. If Jesus had not proclaimed himself equal to God, and had made moves to eliminate the Romans, they would probably have followed him. But God had a different

plan for his Son Jesus. He would sacrifice his life to die as a substitutional atonement for human sin so as to reconcile wicked people to a holy God.

Although this sacrifice had been prefigured in the Jewish ceremony of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, by the two goats **Leviticus 16**, the religious leaders did not make the connection. They were trapped by their own idea that God could not come to earth as a human being, although the Hebrew Bible taught that God had appeared to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses as fire out of a burning bush and to Joshua as the Commander of the Lord's Army.

They did not see that Jesus taught what God had revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures. He constantly quoted from them as his authority. They had their own idea of what a Messiah should be and do. This pride kept them from seeing the genuine identity of Jesus. Lazarus attempts to demonstrate this all through his Gospel.

It is in the Upper Room Discourse--Chapters 13-17--that Lazarus records Jesus' actual words to his disciples as he teaches them what they are to do as his disciples. These precious words are key to understanding the close, personal relationship Jesus wants his disciples to have with him and with his Father. There is no ambiguity here. Jesus speaks plainly. He says:

If you have known *ginosko* me, you will also know *ginosko* my Father. From now on, you know *ginosko* him through me and have seen *horao* him in me. **John 14:7**

The relationship Jesus has with his disciples is very close. He tells them:

Those who love *agapao* me will do what I say *tereo*-keep *logos*-words. My Father will love *agapao* them and we will go *erchomai* to them and make *poieo* our home *mone* with them. **John 14:23**

Jesus' disciples are his servants. They are to do what Jesus' tells them to do. Jesus washed his disciples' feet. He did this to them as an example. They are to obey the words of Jesus. To help them remember Jesus' words, Jesus gives them the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach *didasko* you everything *pas* -all things. He will remind *hypomimnesko* -bring remembrance you of everything *pas*-all things that I have ever told *eipon* you. **John 14:26**

These words give us the confidence that Lazarus, a retired priest, has faithfully recorded the words of Jesus. Priests were trained to memorize large portions of Scripture exactly. Like the scribes, they did their jobs faithfully. It is the words of Jesus recorded in this Gospel that have brought so many to faith in Jesus as Lazarus has intentionally intended to do:

These miracles *semeion* -signs have been written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and so that you will have life by believing in him. **John 20:31**

God has promised that his words will have significant effect on humans:

The earth and the Heavens will disappear, but my words will never disappear. **Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33**

Notes on this Bible Translation and My Editorial Insertions

The translation used in this study is the *GOD'S WORD* translation (GWT). The GWT translation is an attempt to make the English text of the Bible developed in the 1500's more readable to modern Americans. It is not a paraphrase, but it has retranslated the oldest manuscripts into modern American English at about newspaper level using "closest natural equivalence". The Bible is meant by God to be understood. Therefore, using modern language is essential.

I have used this translation in my teaching since 1996 and have found it very accurate. I love the King James Version and so when there are variances in the GWT, I may insert within the Bible text the original transliterated Hebrew or Greek word in **10-point bold-face type** followed by an English word to help better understand the meaning of the passage. English words added to aid in understanding are also in 10-point type but are not in bold. Lastly, if the original Hebrew or Greek word appears in the Bible 10 times or less, I may also indicate how often it appears (e.g., 10x or 2x, etc.). Here's an example from John 11:33 and the raising of Lazarus involving three Greek words:

³³When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who were crying with her were deeply moved *embrimaomai*-groaned 5x *pneuma*-spirit and troubled *tarasso*-agitated.

This has shown me that the GWT translation is remarkable for finding the right meanings to phrases that are often difficult to translate.

Notes on Font Usage

All text is in the Big Caslon font. Scripture text is in regular **14-point**. If I have inserted parallel Scripture quotations, they are also in regular **14-point**, but are slightly further indented (.08) than the main Scripture text and are enclosed by brackets []. All Scripture citations are in **12-point bold face**. All my comments and questions to think about are all in regular 12-point.

Introduction

THE CITY OF JERUSALEM IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY

The principal roads existing in Israel in the first century were two main trade routes: the Via Maris or the Road of the Sea that ran along the shoreline of the Mediterranean Sea and the King's Highway in the east.

The City of Jerusalem wasn't on either main trade route. Jerusalem got its importance for having the Temple where pious Jews were required to travel by the Torah for the three great pilgrim festivals of Passover and Pentecost in the spring and the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths in the fall. **Deuteronomy 16**. Many Jews came ten days earlier for the solemn Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur. There was also the Feast of the Dedication or Hanukkah in December. At this time the population of the city swelled from its normal population of 50,000 to over 250,000 people.

The country before the Romans came in 64 BC was governed by a High Priest assisted by a council of 70 priests and laymen called a Sanhedrin. When the Romans came, the Romans allowed Herod the Great, a client King and Idumean, rule the country. When he died in 5 BC, Galilee and Perea were given to his son Herod Antipas to rule. His son Philip ruled east of the Sea of Galilee and north while his son Herod Archelaus ruled Judea, Samaria and Idumea. Archelaus was replaced in 6 AD by a Roman Governor who ruled from Caesarea Maritima on the Mediterranean Sea. At the time of the pilgrim festivals, the Governor came with his soldiers to Jerusalem to keep order. The Governor allowed the Sanhedrin to rule under his supervision and guidance.

The Temple at Jerusalem had been built by King Solomon in seven years, from 966 BC to 959 BC. This Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. From 520-515 BC, Governor Zerubbabel built a second Temple smaller than the first. King Herod the Great then added on to the Temple during his reign. It was still being remodeled in Jesus' day.

The Temple was the main attraction of the city. Morning and evening sacrifices were conducted as well as special sacrifices for the Sabbath, New Moon Festivals, and of course, the pilgrim festivals.

Priests served in 24 courses for about two weeks each year but also on the special services as they were called. There are estimates that there were over 20,000 priests. About half of the priests lived in Jerusalem and the other half lived in Jericho, about 15 miles north.

Priests were assisted by Levites who performed many of the routine services. Most of the residents of Jerusalem were involved in providing services for the Temple, including food

and animals for sacrifice. They also provided housing and food for the many pilgrims that came to the city.

HISTORY OF JERUSALEM AND ITS TEMPLE

We are really introduced to Jerusalem when King Melchizadek, the King of Salem that later was named Jerusalem, blesses Abraham when he returns with the spoils of war after rescuing his nephew Lot. **Genesis 14:17-24**. This took place around 2,000 BC.

After David of Bethlehem became King of all Israel in 1003 BC, he and his men went to the Jebusite city of Jerusalem to attack it. David captured the fortress Zion and built the City of Jerusalem. **2 Samuel 5:5-10**

David chose Jerusalem because it really was in neutral territory among the tribes. Although it resided in the territory of Benjamin, it had never been captured by Israel as the Canaanite Jebusites had resisted capture. David built his palace there. To help the city serve as a capital for the nation, David recovered Israel's most precious religious object, the Ark of the Covenant that had been made at Mount Sinai around 1,300 BC. **Exodus 25:10-22**

The Ark symbolized the presence of God in the Israelite camp and was kept in the holiest part of the Wilderness Tabernacle, the Holy of Holies. David brought this Ark to Jerusalem with much ceremony and placed it in a new Tent he had constructed. **2 Samuel 6:1-19**

While David wished to build a House for God, he was instructed that his son would build the Temple. Yet God promised that David's descendant would always reign on the throne of Israel. **2 Samuel 7:16**

King Solomon started construction on the Temple in the fourth year of his reign and completed it in the eleventh year of his reign. **1 Kings 6:37-38**. On the Festival of Booths in the seventh month, Solomon dedicated the Temple. They brought the Ark of the Covenant to the Temple and placed it in the Holy of Holies. **1 Kings 8:6**

When the priests left the Holy Place, a cloud filled the Lord's Temple. The priests couldn't serve because of the cloud. The Lord's glory filled the Temple. **1 Kings 8:10**. God approved of the Temple and filled it with his presence.

Unfortunately, God allowed this Temple to be completely destroyed in 586 BC by the Babylonians because of the sin of the Judeans. The Temple was destroyed, and the people taken into captivity in Babylon for seventy years.

In 539 BC, God allowed King Cyrus of Persia to capture Babylon and issue an edict allowing the Judeans to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their city and the Temple. While the foundation

of the Temple was laid immediately, construction on the Temple itself did not begin until 520 BC. It was finished in 515 BC. **Ezra 6:15**. But the glory of God did not fill the Temple.

This second Temple was not the magnificent edifice King Solomon built. But King Herod the Great [37-34 BC] began enlarging and rebuilding the Temple. This rebuilding went on for 46 years. **John 2:20**. It was a source of pride for the Jerusalemites and their source of income from the pilgrims who came to it.

So when Jesus attacked the Temple establishment and said: *Tear down this Temple and I'll rebuilt it in three days* **John 2:19**, the priests took great offense. Later when Jesus said: *You see all these buildings, don't you? I can guarantee this truth. Not one of these stones will be left on top of another. Each one will be torn down.* **Matthew 24:2**. Not only the priests but also the people of city were terrified. All of them would lose their livelihoods.

Jesus declared that he himself was the Temple. He told the Samaritan woman:

Believe me. A time is coming when you Samaritans won't be worshiping the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You don't know what you're worshiping. We Jews know what we're worshiping because salvation comes from the Jews.

Indeed, a time is coming and it is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for people to worship him like that. God is a spirit. Those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. **John 4:21-24**

Only in the Gospel of John does Jesus say this. In the Gospel of Luke, after Jesus ascends into Heaven, Luke concludes his Gospel by saying:

The disciples worshiped him and were overjoyed as they went back to Jerusalem. They were always in the Temple where they praised God. **Luke 24:52-53**

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke says:

The believers had a single purpose and went to the Temple every day. **Acts 2:46**

Every day in the Temple courtyard and from house to house, they refused to stop teaching and telling the Good News that Jesus is the Messiah. **Acts 5:42**

PERICOPE I

A Summary of the Identity of Jesus

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you kill the prophets and stone to death those sent to you. How often I wanted to gather your children together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you were not willing. Your House will be abandoned. I can guarantee that you will not see me again until you say: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. **Luke 13:34-35**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

¹In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was already with God in the beginning.

³Everything came into existence through him. Not one thing that exists was made without him.

⁴He was the source of life, and that life was the light for humanity.

⁵The light shines in the dark, and the dark has never extinguished it.

⁶God sent a man named John to be his messenger. ⁷John came to declare the truth about the light so that everyone would become believers through his message. ⁸John was not the light, but he came to declare the truth about the light.

⁹The real light, which shines on everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into existence through him. Yet the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹He went to his own people and his own people didn't accept him.

¹²However, he gave the right to become God's children to everyone who believed in him. ¹³These people didn't become God's children in a physical

way — from a human impulse or from a husband's desire <to have a child.>
They were born from God.

¹⁴The Word became human and lived among us. We saw his glory. It was the glory that the Father shares with his only Son, a glory full of kindness[grace] and truth.

¹⁵John declared the truth about him when he said loudly: This is the person about whom I said: The one who comes after me was before me because he existed before I did.

¹⁶Each of us has received one gift after another because of all that the Word is. ¹⁷Laws were given through Moses, but kindness [grace] and truth came into existence through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. God's only Son, the one who is closest to the Father's heart, has made him known.

COMMENT

Many key words that will be used throughout this gospel are introduced here-- *word* 22x, *life* 44x, *light* 24x, *truth* 27x, *world* 80x, *believe* 52x, *glory* 12 x, *kindness-grace* 4x, *law* 16x, *Son* 63x. [The totals are of the KJV.]

Jesus' identity from before Creation is emphasized. Jesus is with God and is God. He is the Son of God. This title appears in Mark 3x, Matthew 8x, Luke 7x, and John 10x.

Mark begins with this proclamation: *This is the beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.* **Mark 1:1.** He ends with a Roman centurion saying: *Certainly this man was the Son of God.* **Mark 15:39.** Matthew likewise says: *An army officer and those watching Jesus with him saw the earthquake and the other things happening. They were terrified and said: Certainly this is the Son of God.* **Matthew 27:14**

Luke has the angel tell Mary: *He will be a great man and will be called the Son of the Most High.* **Luke 1:32.** In John, Lazarus simply tells us the reason he wrote his Gospel: *But these have been written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Son of God and so that you will have life by believing in him.* **John 20:31.** Jesus' deity is never questioned by the Gospel writers.

This first chapter is meant to identify many of the principle themes of the Gospel. Light and darkness. Jesus is the Light of the World. Life and death. Jesus gives us Eternal Life, never to be separated from God. This phrase appears 6x in the Gospel. Life Eternal appears 3x. Everlasting Life 7x, Life Everlasting 1x. Eternal Life begins immediately when

one believes in Jesus as the Son of God. This is called Realized Eschatology or Last Things Now.

Jesus gave people the right to become children of God when they are born again as Jesus explained to Nicodemus. **John 3**. God the Father enables people to believe in Jesus. When they do, they are born again as God transforms their lives into a new way of living filled with the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, many Jews in Jesus' day did not believe in him. Yet Jesus' chosen disciples with one exception were faithful to him. When Jesus asked them after he gave his Bread of Life Sermon: *Do you want to leave me, too?* Peter answered for the group: *Lord, to what person could we go. Your words give Eternal Life. Besides, we believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.* **John 6:67-69**

God the Father enabled his Son to take human form and live on earth for 33 years. This was the Covenant of Redemption, a Covenant cut by the three members of the Holy Trinity before the world was created. God the Father would send God the Son to earth in human form to preach the Good News and then die as a substitutional sacrificial atonement for the sins of the whole world. **John 3:16**. In this way, wicked humans are reconciled to a holy God. **Romans 5:10**

Jesus' disciples saw the glory that God placed in Jesus' life as he performed miracles and spoke words of life his Father gave him. They testify of the gifts they received during Jesus' earthly ministry by the grace God gave to his Son. Likewise, they testify at the end of the Gospel: *We know that what he says is true.* **John 21:24**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Many call this the Gospel of the Three L's: Light, Life, and Love. Why isn't love mentioned in the first chapter?
2. The Holy Spirit will become very important in the Gospel. Why isn't he mentioned in this first chapter?
3. Why is John the Baptist mentioned twice in this first chapter. What is his importance to the story of Jesus?
4. How do humans see Jesus' glory? Why do some see his glory and others don't see it?
5. Truth is important as truth comes from God and the lie comes from Satan. What is truth? **John 18:38**
6. What does it mean to be born from God? **John 3:3, 5**. When does this occur?

7. What is the difference between the Laws that God gave Moses and the kindness [grace] and truth that comes from Jesus. **John 1:17**

EXTRA CREDIT

No one has ever seen God. God's only Son, the one who is closest to the Father's heart, has made him known. **John 1:18**

Explain what Jesus is saying here:

Thomas said to him: Lord we don't know where you're going. So how can we know the way? Jesus answered him: I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one goes to the Father except through me. If you have known me, you will also know my Father. From now on you know him through me and have seen him in me.

Philip said to Jesus: Lord, show us the Father and that will satisfy us. Jesus replied: I have been with all of you for a long time. Don't you know me yet, Philip? The person who has seen me has seen the Father. So how can you say: Show us the Father? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. What I'm telling you doesn't come from me. The Father, who lives in me, does what he wants. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me. Otherwise, believe me because of the things I do. **John 14:5-11**

The Pharisees believe that no one can see God because God told Moses:

But you can't see my face because no one may see me and live. **Exodus 34:20**

Isn't that why they won't believe that Jesus is God. Would Jesus' explanation here have helped them believe?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

What does it mean to be a child *teknon* of God? See **Romans 8:14-16**.

PERICOPE 2

John the Baptist Introduces Jesus to Israel

God sent a man named John to be his messenger. John came to declare the truth about the Light so that everyone would become believers through his message. John was not the Light, but he came to declare the truth about the Light. **John 1:6-8**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Priests and Levites from Jerusalem Question John's Identity

¹⁹This was John's answer when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him: Who are you? ²⁰John didn't refuse to answer. He told them clearly: I'm not the Messiah.

²¹They asked him: Well, are you Elijah?

[I'm going to send you the prophet Elijah before that very terrifying Day of the Lord comes. **Malachi 4:5**]

John answered: No, I'm not.

Then they asked: Are you The Prophet?

[The Lord your God will send you a prophet, an Israelite like you. I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. Whoever refuses to listen to the words that prophet speaks in my name will answer to me. But any prophet who dares to say something in my name that I didn't command him to say or who speaks in the name of other gods must die. **Deuteronomy 18:17-20**]

John replied: No.

²²So they asked him: Who are you? Tell us so that we can take an answer back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?

²³John said: I'm a voice crying out in the desert. Make the way for the Lord straight, as the prophet Isaiah said. **Isaiah 40:3**

²⁴Some of those who had been sent were Pharisees. ²⁵They asked John: Why do you baptize if you're not the Messiah or Elijah or the prophet?

²⁶John answered them: I baptize with water. Someone you don't know is standing among you. ²⁷He's the one who comes after me. I am not worthy to untie his sandal strap.

²⁸This happened in Bethany on the east side of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

John Identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God

²⁹John saw Jesus coming toward him the next day and said: Look. This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. ³⁰He is the one I spoke about when I said: A man who comes after me was before me because he existed before I did. **John 1:15.** ³¹I didn't know who he was. However, I came to baptize with water to show him to the people of Israel.

³²John said: I saw the Spirit come down as a dove from Heaven and stay on him. ³³I didn't know who he was. But God, who sent me to baptize with water, had told me: When you see the Spirit come down and stay on someone, you'll know that person is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. ³⁴I have seen this and have declared that this is the Son of God.

COMMENT

John the Baptist was the son of Zechariah, a priest in the Jerusalem Temple. **Luke 1:3-22.** His parents were old when he was born so he may have been adopted by the Essenes, a monastic celibate group that lived in Qumran on the shores of the Dead Sea copying the Scriptures and writing commentaries as they awaited the coming of the archangel Michael who they also called Melchizadek and the two Messiahs: the Messiah of Aaron and the Messiah of David. These three would lead them, the sons of light, in a battle against the sons of darkness.

John was preaching in the Judean wilderness and baptizing people in the historic Jordan River. Because he declared peoples' sins were forgiven when they confessed their sin, he

was bypassing the normal way that sins were forgiven in the Temple through animal sacrifices **Numbers 15:22-31** and the Day of Atonement. **Leviticus 16:1-34**. In doing this, John was making the Temple redundant. So officials were sent out from Jerusalem to question John about his religious activities.

John replied he was not the Messiah, not Elijah, nor The Prophet prophesied by Moses. **Deuteronomy 18:15-20**. Instead, he was introducing a man *who would baptize with the Holy Spirit*. John testified that he came to introduce this man to Israel. This concept of baptizing with the Holy Spirit had never been mentioned before in the Hebrew Bible. John also associated the Holy Spirit with a dove. This also had never before been mentioned. The words **Holy Spirit** are mentioned only twice in the Hebrew Bible:

[Create a clean heart in me O God and renew a faithful spirit within me. Do not force me away from your presence and do not take your **Holy Spirit** from me. **Psalm 51:10-11**]

[In all their troubles he was troubled, and he was the Messenger who saved them. In his love and compassion he redeemed them. He always held them and carried them in the past. But they rebelled and offended his **Holy Spirit**. So he turned against them as their enemy. He fought against them. **Isaiah 63:9-10**]

Although the phrase Holy Spirit is mentioned only twice, God's Spirit appears many times in the Hebrew Bible from **Genesis 1:1; 6:3; 41:38; Exodus 31:3; 35:31; Numbers 11:17, 25-26, 29; 24:2; Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14; 1 Samuel 10:6, 10; 11:6; 16:13-14; 19:20, 23; 2 Samuel 23:2**; and many more times.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. John is very clear that he is making a path for the Lord *kyrios* when he quotes **Isaiah 40:3**. Some say that John could not have given the testimony about Jesus in **John 3:22-36** as he mentions God the Father and God the Son. John the Baptist must have been given knowledge about the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Did John believe that Jesus was God?
2. John describes Jesus as *the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*. **John 1:29**. John also describes Jesus as pre-existent. Do the other Gospels describe John as having this knowledge of God?

3. How does John's baptism differ from Jesus' baptism? Describe the nature of John's baptism. Describe the nature of Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit? When did he do this?
4. Why doesn't the Beloved Disciple mention God's voice speaking at Jesus' baptism as do the other Gospels? **Mark 1:11; Matthew 3:17; Luke 3:22**
5. John says that when he baptized Jesus, he didn't know who he was. Yet John was Jesus' cousin related to Mary through Elizabeth. **Luke 1:36**. When did John recognize Jesus for who he was?
6. Why does John say he is not The Prophet prophesied by Moses? **Deuteronomy 18:15-20**. Couldn't there have been more than one prophet?
7. As the disciples were coming down from the mountain after the transfiguration of Jesus where he met with Moses and Elijah, Jesus said *Elijah had come*. **Mark 9:13; Matthew 17:12**. Wasn't Jesus referring to John the Baptist?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why did the Holy Spirit appear in the form of a dove? What does this symbolism represent? **Mark 1:10; Matthew 3:16; Luke 3:22**

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

How did John the Baptist know to call Jesus, *the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*? **John 1:28**. Was he referring to the Passover event in Egypt where a lamb was killed and its blood painted on the door posts? When the angel of death saw the blood, he would pass over the Jewish home. **Exodus 12:21-23**

Jews recalled this event at the Feast of the Passover and Unleavened Bread.

PERICOPE 3

Jesus Calls His First Five Disciples

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

John the Baptist Sends Two of His Disciples to Follow Jesus

³⁵The next day John was standing with two of his disciples. ³⁶John saw Jesus walk by. John said: Look. This is the Lamb of God. ³⁷When the two disciples heard John say this, they followed Jesus.

³⁸Jesus turned around and saw them following him. He asked them: What are you looking for?

They said to him: Rabbi [which means teacher]. Where are you staying?

³⁹Jesus told them: Come and you will see. So they went to see where he was staying and spent the rest of that day with him. It was about ten o'clock in the morning ~~dekatos~~-tenth ~~hora~~-hour.

⁴⁰Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two disciples who heard John and followed Jesus. ⁴¹Andrew at once found his brother Simon and told him: We have found the Messiah *messias* which means Christ *christos*-anointed one.

⁴²Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.

Jesus looked at Simon and said: You are Simon, son of John. Your name will be Cephas [which means Peter].

⁴³The next day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee. He found Philip and told him: Follow me. ⁴⁴Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter.

⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and told him: We have found the man whom Moses wrote about in his teachings and whom the prophets wrote about. **Deuteronomy 18:15-20**. He is Jesus, son of Joseph, from the city of Nazareth.

⁴⁶Nathanael said to Philip: Can anything good come from Nazareth?

Philip told him: Come and see.

⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and remarked: Here is a true Israelite who is sincere.

⁴⁸Nathanael asked Jesus: How do you know anything about me?

Jesus answered him: I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.

⁴⁹Nathanael said to Jesus: Rabbi, you are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.

⁵⁰Jesus replied: You believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that. ⁵¹Jesus said to Nathanael: I can guarantee this truth: You will see the sky open and God's angels going up and coming down to the Son of Man. **Genesis 28:10-22**

COMMENT

Jesus chooses five disciples. In the Jewish Talmud their names are Matthai, Naqqai, Netzer, Buni, and Todah. In this Gospel, their names are the unnamed Beloved Disciple, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael.

John the Baptist sends Lazarus and Andrew to Jesus. Andrew brings his brother Simon to Jesus. Jesus re-names Simon to Peter meaning rock. Jesus then calls Philip. Andrew, Simon, and Philip are from the same town, Bethsaida. Philip then calls Nathanael.

Jesus calls Nathanael a descendent of Jacob in whom there is no Jacob. The name Jacob means *Heel Grabber* or *Trickster*. Nathanael asks Jesus: *How do you know me?* Jesus says: I saw you contemplating the Messiah when you were sitting under the fig tree. Nathanael then expresses great admiration for Jesus: He calls him the Son of God and the King of Israel.

Jesus then tells Nathanael he will see greater things than that. Jesus will pray constantly to his Heavenly Father all through his 3 ½ year earthly ministry. The power he receives from the Spirit will tell him what to say, think, and do. Angels will be constantly carrying messages between Jesus and the Father.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why are Jesus' first words in this Gospel: *What are you looking for?* so significant. **John 1:38**
2. Neither the Beloved Disciple nor Nathanael are among Jesus' Chosen Twelve. Why is this? Why do both the Beloved Disciple and Nathanael pop up in Galilee with Jesus after his resurrection? **John 21:2;20**
3. What is Jesus' purpose in re-naming Simon as Peter? **John 1:42**
4. Why does Jesus call Nathanael a true Israelite? **John 1:47**
5. What is the purpose of a Jew sitting under a fig tree? See **1 Kings 4:25; 2 Kings 18:31; Isaiah 36:16; Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:3.**
6. Why does Nathanael call Jesus *the Son of God* and *King of Israel* when he first meets him?
7. What are the greater things Jesus promises Nathanael he will see? **John 1:50**

PERICOPE 4

Jesus Performs His First Miracle at Cana in Galilee

The Word became human and lived among us. We saw his glory. It was the glory that the Father shares with his only Son, a glory full of kindness [grace] and truth. **John 1:14**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Changes Water into Wine

²¹ Three days later a wedding took place in the city of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. ² Jesus and his disciples had been invited too.

³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him: 'They're out of wine.'

⁴ Jesus said to her: 'Why did you come to me? My time ~~hora~~ hour has not yet come.'

⁵ His mother told the servers: 'Do whatever he tells you.'

⁶ Six stone water jars were there. They were used for Jewish purification rituals. Each jar held 18 to 27 gallons.

⁷ Jesus told the servers: 'Fill the jars with water. The servers filled the jars to the brim. ⁸ Jesus said to them: 'Pour some and take it to the person in charge. The servers did as they were told.'

⁹ The person in charge tasted the water that had become wine. He didn't know where it had come from although the servers who had poured the water knew. The person in charge called the groom ¹⁰ and said to him: 'Everyone serves the best wine first. When people are drunk, the host serves cheap wine. But you have saved the best wine for now.'

¹¹ Cana in Galilee was the place where Jesus began to perform miracles. He made his glory public there and his disciples believed in him.

¹²After this, Jesus, his mother, brothers, and disciples went to the city of Capernaum and stayed there for a few days.

COMMENT

Jesus, his mother, his brothers and his disciples were invited to Cana of Galilee for a wedding. Jewish weddings normally lasted a week. During the wedding banquet, the wine ran out. Mary said to Jesus: *They're out of wine*. Jesus said: Why did you come to me? The time for my doing miracles had not yet come. Mary told the servants: Do whatever he says.

Jesus apparently first prayed, then told the servants to fill jars normally filled with water for purification rituals, to fill them with water. Then Jesus told the servants: *Pour some and take it to the master of the feast*. The master tasted the wine and congratulated the couple on serving the best wine last.

It was in Cana that Jesus performed his first sign or miracle. His disciples believed in his power from God. Then Jesus, his family and his disciples went to Capernaum.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus performs seven signs or miracles in this Gospel. Some are spectacular like feeding 5,000 men with five loaves and two fish. Why is this apparently insignificant sign Jesus' first miracle? What is its purpose?
2. Jesus' mothers and brothers are invited to the wedding. Where are Jesus' sisters? **Mark 6:3; Matthew 13:56**
3. What does Jesus mean when he says his hour has not yet come? **John 2:4**
4. Why did Jesus perform this miracle? Was it simply because his mother asked him to?
5. What was it that Jesus' disciples believed he had done? **John 2:11**
6. Why does Lazarus say *Jesus made his glory public in Cana*? **John 2:11**. What does he mean?
7. What did the guests at the wedding banquet think of Jesus?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why did Jesus, his mother, his brothers, and his disciples go to Capernaum instead of returning to Nazareth? **John 2:12**

PERICOPE 5

Jesus Visits the Jerusalem Temple and Cleanses It

I will bring them to my Holy Mountain and make them happy in my House of Prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar because My House will be a House of Prayer for All Nations. **Isaiah 56:7**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Throws Merchants and Moneychangers out of the Temple Courtyard

¹³The Jewish Passover was near so Jesus went to Jerusalem. ¹⁴He found those who were selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons in the Temple courtyard. He also found moneychangers sitting there. ¹⁵He made a whip from small ropes and threw everyone with their sheep and cattle out of the Temple courtyard. He dumped the moneychangers' coins and knocked over their tables.

¹⁶He told those who sold pigeons: Pick up this stuff and get it out of here. Stop making my Father's House a marketplace.

¹⁷His disciples remembered that Scripture said: Devotion for your House will consume me.

[Indeed, devotion for your House has consumed me and the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me. **Psalm 69:9**]

¹⁸The Jews reacted by asking Jesus: What miracle *semeion*-sign can you show us to justify what you're doing?

¹⁹Jesus replied: Tear down this Temple and I'll rebuild it in three days.

²⁰The Jews said: It took forty-six years to build this Temple. Do you really think you're going to rebuild it in three days?

²¹ But the Temple Jesus spoke about was his own body. ²² After he came back to life, his disciples remembered that he had said this. So they believed the Scripture and this statement that Jesus had made.

²³ While Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover festival, many people believed in him because they saw the miracles that he performed ²⁴ Jesus, however, was wary of these believers. He understood people ²⁵ and didn't need anyone to tell him about human nature. He knew what people were really like.

COMMENT

This apparently is Jesus' first visit to Jerusalem. Apparently, he takes his five disciples with him. Jesus is outraged at the selling of sacrificial animals and the changing of money in the Temple courtyards. This is the only place in the entire Temple that Gentiles are permitted to enter and to pray. How can they pray with all this noise? So Jesus clears the Temple.

The Temple authorities ask Jesus: *What is your authority for doing this?* Give us a sign. Jesus replies: *Tear down this Temple and I'll rebuild it in three days.* The authorities are bewildered and do not press him further.

However, Jesus' disciples understood he was talking about himself being the Temple and being resurrected on the third day.

Apparently, Jesus did many other miracles in Jerusalem at this time and many who saw these miracles believed in him. However, Jesus knew that unless he kept on doing miracles, these people would not continue to believe in him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What was Jesus' purpose in clearing out the merchants in the Temple courtyards? Was it merely a symbolic gesture?
2. Why wasn't Jesus arrested when he did this? This was the time of the Passover Festival, the city was crowded, and the Roman Governor was in town.
3. This is the only time Jesus calls the Temple *my Father's House*. **John 2:16**. What does he mean?
4. Why did Jesus give such a subtle sign? **John 2:19**. Nothing about his being raised from the dead has been mentioned before. The chief priests couldn't possibly know what he meant.

5. When Jesus mentioned destroying the Temple, this certainly sent up an alarm to the Temple authorities. Why did Jesus choose this subject for his sign? It only put the authorities on edge.
6. What are the other miracles Jesus did in Jerusalem at this time? Why did he even do miracles if they would not lead to heartfelt faith?
7. What was the disciples' reactions to Jesus' cleansing the Temple?

PERICOPE 6

Jesus Teaches a Rabbi about the Need to be Born from Above

He went to his own people and his own people didn't accept him. However, he gave the right to become God's children to everyone who believed in him. These people didn't become God's children in a physical way – from a human impulse or from a husband's desire to have a child. They were born from God. John 1:11-13

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

A Conversation with Nicodemus

³¹ Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member *archon*-ruler in the Jewish council Sanhedrin. ² He came to Jesus one night and said to him: Rabbi, we know that God has sent you as a teacher. No one can perform the miracles you perform unless God is with him.

³ Jesus replied to Nicodemus: I can guarantee this truth: No one can see *horao* God's Kingdom without being born from above *anochen*-again, from a higher place.

⁴ Nicodemus asked him: How can anyone be born when he's an old man? He can't go back inside his mother a second time to be born, can he?

⁵ Jesus answered Nicodemus: I can guarantee this truth. No one can enter *eiserchomai* God's Kingdom without being born of water and the Spirit *pneuma*.

⁶ Flesh and blood give birth to flesh and blood but the Spirit gives birth to things that are spiritual.

⁷ Don't be surprised when I tell you that all of you must be born from above.

⁸ The wind *pneuma* blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you don't know where the wind comes from or where it's going. That's the way it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

⁹Nicodemus replied: How can that be?

¹⁰Jesus told Nicodemus: You're a well-known teacher of Israel. Can't you understand this? ¹¹I can guarantee this truth: We know what we're talking about, and we confirm what we've seen. Yet, you don't accept our message. ¹²If you don't believe me when I tell you about things on earth, how will you believe me when I tell you about things in Heaven?

¹³No one has gone to Heaven except the Son of Man, who came from Heaven.

¹⁴As Moses lifted up *hypsoo* the snake<on a pole>in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up *hypsoo*. ¹⁵Then everyone who believes *pisteuo* in him will have Eternal Life.

[The Lord said to Moses: Make a snake and put it on a pole. Anyone who is bitten can look at it and live. So Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole. People looked at the bronze snake after they were bitten, and they lived. Numbers 21:8-9]

¹⁶God loved *agapao* the world this way. He gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him will not die but will have Eternal Life. ¹⁷God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save the world. ¹⁸Those who believe in him won't be condemned. But those who don't believe are already condemned because they don't believe in God's only Son.

¹⁹This is why people are condemned. The light came into the world. Yet, people loved the dark rather than the light because their actions were evil. ²⁰People who do what is wrong hate the light and don't come to the light. They don't want their actions to be exposed. ²¹But people who do what is true come to the light so that the things they do for God may be clearly seen.

COMMENT

Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, the 71-member ruling body in Israel comes to Jesus by night. He has heard about him and wants to talk to him. Although he greets Jesus

in a friendly way, Jesus gets right to the reason Nicodemus has come – to learn Jesus’ true identity.

Jesus tells Nicodemus he must be born again by God if he wants to know Jesus’ genuine identity. Later Jesus will say:

People cannot come to me unless the Father provides the way. **John 6:65**

Yet Jesus doesn’t spell out to Nicodemus what he must do to be born again. Nicodemus must figure this out for himself. Jesus also refers to the work of the Holy Spirit that God uses to bring people to a knowledge of himself. Is Nicodemus acquainted with this?

When Nicodemus questions how these things can be, Jesus tells him openly:

No one has gone to Heaven except the Son of Man who came from Heaven.
John 3:17

Jesus has actually answered Nicodemus’ question – the reason he came to see Jesus.

Jesus tells Nicodemus he must believe in Jesus’ true identity as the Son of God. Otherwise, God will condemn him. So he points Nicodemus to living a holy life God approves of that Jesus describes as the light rather than ungodly ways of living Jesus describes as the dark. This will be a continuing motif throughout this Gospel.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Nicodemus come to see Jesus at night rather than in the daytime? Why does Jesus say people love the dark?
2. Why does Jesus use the term *born again* or *born from above*? What Old Testament story is he referring to? See **Ezekiel 37:1-38**.
3. Jesus talks about the work of the Holy Spirit. Is this a concept Nicodemus should know about? Why?
4. Jesus uses the term Eternal Life or Everlasting Life here for the first time in this Gospel. He will use it in **John 3:15-16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2-3**. What does Eternal Life mean and how does one obtain it?
5. When Jesus says that he is from Heaven, what does Nicodemus conclude? Why doesn’t he ask Jesus more about this?
6. Jesus differentiates between physical things and spiritual things. **John 3:6; 6:63**. How does Nicodemus understand this?

7. Does Nicodemus really believe Jesus comes from Heaven? How can you tell?

EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus says that God sent his Son Jesus into the world to save the world, not to condemn the world. John 3:17. Yet those who do not believe in Jesus are condemned for not believing that Jesus is the Son of God. Isn't this double-talk?

PERICOPE 7

John the Baptist Testifies about the Identity of Jesus

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

^{3:22} Later, Jesus and his disciples went to the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them and baptized people. ²³ John was baptizing in Aenon, near Salim. Water was plentiful there. People came to John to be baptized, ²⁴ since John had not yet been put in prison by King Herod Antipas.

²⁵ Some of John's disciples had an argument with a Jew about purification ceremonies. ²⁶ So they went to John and asked him: Rabbi, do you remember the man you spoke so favorably about when he was with you on the other side of the Jordan River? Well, he's baptizing, and everyone is going to him.

²⁷ John answered: People can't receive anything unless it has been given to them from Heaven. ²⁸ You are witnesses that I said: I'm not the Messiah, but I've been sent ahead of him.

²⁹ The groom is the person to whom the bride belongs. The best man, who stands and listens to him, is overjoyed when the groom speaks. This is the joy that I feel. ³⁰ He must increase in importance, while I must decrease in importance.

³¹ The person who comes from above is superior to everyone. I, a person from the earth, know nothing but what is on earth, and that's all I can talk about.

The person who comes from Heaven is superior to everyone ³² and tells what he has seen and heard. Yet, no one accepts what he says. ³³ I have accepted what that person said and I have affirmed that God is truthful. ³⁴ The man whom God has sent speaks God's message. After all, God gives him the Spirit without limit.

³⁵ The Father loves his Son and has put everything in his power. ³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has Eternal Life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life. Instead, he will see God's constant anger *orge* wrath.

COMMENT

John is reflecting on the prophet Hosea's concept that God is the husband and that Israel is his wife when says Jesus is the bridegroom and he is only the best man.

[Israel, I will make you my wife forever. I will be honest and faithful to you. I will show you my love and compassion. I will be true to you, my wife. Then you will know the Lord. **Hosea 2:19**]

John has been taught by God that Jesus is the Son of God, and he has come down from above, from Heaven. John affirms that God has taught him the truth about Jesus. John further says that God has given Jesus the Holy Spirit and that Jesus speaks God's message.

John concludes by saying everyone who believes in the Son of God will receive Eternal Life. Those who do not believe in the Son will incur God's wrath.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. John the Baptist is the first person in this Gospel to speak about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is mentioned 16x in **John 1:32-33** 2x, **3:5-6, 8, 3:34; 4:24; 6:63; 7:39** 2x; **14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:13; 20:22**. Why does John say Jesus has been given the Holy Spirit without limit? Has God limited the amount of the Holy Spirit he has given to John?
2. John again affirms Jesus' identity as the Son of God and the Messiah *christos*-anointed one. Why are these titles so important to John?
3. John's humility is impressive. He says *he must decrease but Jesus must increase*. How does John see his role in God's plan for Jesus?
4. John says that *he can only know what is on earth*. **John 3:31**. However, God has spoken to John so doesn't he know a little bit about Heaven?
5. John says:

The Father loves *agapao* his Son and has put *didomi*-given everything *pas*-all in his power *cheir*-hand. **John 3:35**

What does John mean by saying this?

6. John answered: *People can't receive anything unless it has been given to them from Heaven*. **John 3:27**. John is says that salvation is a gift from God. Paul explains it this way:

God saved you through faith as an act of kindness [grace]. You had nothing to do with it. Being saved is a gift from God. It's not the result of anything you've done so no one can brag about it. God has made us what we are. He has created us in Christ Jesus to live lives filled with good works that he has prepared for us to do. **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Is this what Jesus is referring to when he told Nicodemus that he must be born again?

PERICOPE 8

Jesus Identifies Himself to Samaritans as the Coming Messiah

The woman said to him: I know that the Messiah *messias* ^{2x}is coming. When he comes, he will tell us everything. Jesus told her: I AM he, and I am speaking to you now. **John 4:25-26**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Meets a Samaritan Woman at a Well

⁴Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John. ²Actually, Jesus was not baptizing people. His disciples were. ³So he left the Judean countryside and went back to Galilee.

⁴Jesus had to go *dei*-must through Samaria. ⁵He arrived at a city in Samaria called Sychar. Sychar was near the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

[I'm giving you one more mountain ridge than your brothers. I took it from the Amorites with my own sword and bow. **Genesis 48:22**]

⁶Jacob's Well was there. Jesus sat down by the well because he was tired from traveling. The time was about noon.

⁷A Samaritan woman went to get some water. Jesus said to her: Give me a drink of water. ⁸His disciples had gone into the city to buy some food.

⁹The Samaritan woman asked him: How can a Jewish man like you ask a Samaritan woman like me for a drink of water? Jews, of course, don't associate with Samaritans.

From 735 BC to 722 BC, the Assyrians came and deported Israelites from Samaria to other parts of the Assyrian Empire and replaced them with Gentiles.

Later in 535 BC, when the Judeans returned from captivity in Babylon, these Gentiles wanted to help the Judeans rebuild their Temple at Jerusalem. The Judeans refused as they did not consider these people Jews. So these Gentiles, although they intermarried with the Jews, would not worship at Jerusalem but worshiped at Mount Gerizim at Shechem and used a Bible that only contained the first five books.

Jews refused to deal with these people and there was extreme hostility between them.

¹⁰ Jesus replied to her: If you only knew what God's gift is and who is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him for a drink. He would have given you living *zao* water *hydor*.

¹¹ The woman said to him: Sir, you don't have anything to use to get water and the well is deep. So where are you going to get this living water? ¹² You're not more important than our ancestor Jacob, are you? He gave us this well. He and his sons and his animals drank water from it.

¹³ Jesus answered her: Everyone who drinks this water will become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water that I will give them will never become thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give them will become in them a spring that gushes up to Eternal Life.

[The Lord will continually guide you and satisfy you even in sun-baked places. He will strengthen your bones. You will become like a watered garden and like a spring whose water does not stop flowing. **Isaiah 58:11**]

¹⁵ The woman told Jesus: Sir, give me this water. Then I won't get thirsty or have to come here to get water.

¹⁶ Jesus told her: Go to your husband, and bring him here.

¹⁷ The woman replied: I don't have a husband.

Jesus told her: You're right when you say that you don't have a husband.

¹⁸ You've had five husbands and the man you have now isn't your husband. You've told the truth.

¹⁹The woman said to Jesus: I see that you're a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain. But you Jews say that people must worship in Jerusalem.

²¹Jesus told her: Believe me. A time is coming when you Samaritans won't be worshiping the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²²You don't know what you're worshiping. We<Jews> know what we're worshiping, because salvation comes from the Jews.

²³Indeed, the time is coming, and it is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. The Father is looking for people like that to worship him. ²⁴God is a spirit. Those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

²⁵The woman said to him: I know that the Messiah *messias* is coming. When he comes, he will tell us everything. Messiah *messias* is the one called Christ *christos*-anointed one.

The Samaritans looked forward to a Taheb whom they called The Restorer.

²⁶Jesus told her: I *ego* AM *eimi* <he> and I AM speaking to you now.

²⁷At that time his disciples returned. They were surprised that he was talking to a woman. But none of them asked him: What do you want from her? or Why are you talking to her?

²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back into the city. She told the people: ²⁹Come with me, and meet a man who told me everything I've ever done. Could he be the Messiah *christos*? ³⁰The people left the city and went to meet Jesus.

³¹Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him: Rabbi, have something to eat.

³²Jesus told them: I have food to eat that you don't know about.

³³The disciples asked each other: Did someone bring him something to eat?

³⁴ Jesus told them: My food is to do what the one who sent me wants me to do and to finish the work he has given me.

³⁵ “Don’t you say: In four more months the harvest will be here? I’m telling you to look and see that the fields are ready to be harvested.

³⁶ The person who harvests the crop is already getting paid. He is gathering grain for Eternal Life. So the person who plants the grain and the person who harvests it are happy together. ³⁷ In this respect the saying is true: One person plants and another person harvests.

³⁸ I have sent you to harvest a crop you have not worked for. Other people have done the hard work, and you have followed them in their work.

³⁹ Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman who said: He told me everything I’ve ever done. ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans went to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them. He stayed in Samaria for two days.

⁴¹ Many more Samaritans believed because of what Jesus said. ⁴² They told the woman: Our faith *pisteuo* believe is no longer based on what you’ve said. We have heard him ourselves and we know *eido* that he really is the *christos*, the savior *sotor* of the world.

COMMENT

Jesus took his disciples back from Jerusalem to Galilee this time going through Samaria. Most Jews traveled on the east side of the Jordan River through Perea and thus they avoided this area as Samaritans hated Jews and Jews hated Samaritans.

At noon in the heat of the day, they reached Sychar where there was a well. Jesus remained at the well while his disciples went into the city to purchase food. A Samaritan woman came to the well and Jesus asked her for a drink. Seeing he was a Jew probably because of the tassels on his outer garment, she asked why. Jesus replied: If you only knew who I am, you would ask me for a drink and I would give you *Living Water*.

The woman said: Where’s your bucket?. The well is deep. Where are you going to get this Living Water. Are you more important than our ancestor Jacob? Now Jacob is the third patriarch of Israel yet this half-Jew considers him her ancestor.

Jesus ignored this question and said: Whoever drinks your water will thirst again. But with my Living Water, you will never thirst again. And my Living Water will become a spring that gushes up unto Eternal Life. Wow, said the woman. Give me this water and I won't have to come to this well again.

Go call your husband, said Jesus. I have no husband, she said. You said right, replied Jesus. You've had five husbands and the man you're living with now isn't your husband.

The woman quickly changed the conversation. I can see you're a prophet, she said. Our ancestors worship on this mountain but you Jews say we must worship in Jerusalem.

Jesus replied: Soon no one will worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. However, we Jews know what we're worshipping because salvation comes from Israel. The time is coming when true worshipers will worship God the Father in spirit and in truth. God is looking for worshipers like that.

The woman replied: When the Messiah comes, he will tell us everything. Jesus replied: **I AM**. At that, the woman left her water pot and ran back into the city. Then the disciples returned. But the woman brought back many Samaritans from the city and they believed the teaching Jesus did calling him the Savior of the World.

Jesus and the disciples stayed in Samaria two more days.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Jesus have to go to Samaria?
2. What does the Samaritan woman understand Jesus to be offering her when he speaks of Living Water that will bring Eternal Life?
3. Why does Jesus speak of genuine worship of God not being on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem? Won't Jews worship at the Temple anymore?
4. What does it mean to worship God in spirit and in truth? Aren't Jews doing that right now at the Temple?
5. Jesus states clearly that *salvation is from the Jews*. The Samaritans are in error when they worship. Why doesn't the woman contest this statement?
6. Why do the Samaritans believe that Jesus is the long awaited Taheb or Restorer? Is it only the woman's testimony?
7. Why do Jesus and his disciples remain two more days in Samaria? What do they do?

PERICOPE 9

Jesus Heals the Son of Herod's Official at a Distance

Jesus told him: Go home. Your son will live. The man believed what Jesus told him and left. **John 5:50**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

A Believing Official

⁴³After spending two days in Samaria, Jesus left for Galilee. ⁴⁴Jesus had said that a prophet is not honored in his own country. ⁴⁵But when Jesus arrived in Galilee, the people of Galilee welcomed him. They had seen everything he had done at the festival in Jerusalem, since they, too, had attended the festival.

⁴⁶Jesus returned to the city of Cana in Galilee, where he had changed water into wine. A government official was in Cana. His son was sick in Capernaum. ⁴⁷The official heard that Jesus had returned from Judea to Galilee. So he went to Jesus and asked him to go to Capernaum with him to heal his son who was about to die.

⁴⁸Jesus told the official: If people don't see miracles and amazing things, they won't believe.

⁴⁹The official said to him: Sir, come with me before my little boy dies.

⁵⁰Jesus told him: Go home. Your son will live. The man believed what Jesus told him and left.

⁵¹While the official was on his way to Capernaum, his servants met him and told him that his boy was alive. ⁵²The official asked them at what time his son got better. His servants told him: The fever left him yesterday evening at seven o'clock *hebdomas hora*. ⁵³Then the boy's father realized that it was the same time that Jesus had told him: Your son will live. So the official and his entire family became believers.

⁵⁴This was the second miracle that Jesus performed after he had come back from Judea to Galilee.

COMMENT

Jesus and his disciples have now returned from Samaria to Cana in Galilee. An official in the court of King Herod Antipas at Capernaum had a son who was ill. He heard about Jesus and so traveled to Cana to see him. He asked Jesus: *Come with me before my little boy dies.* Jesus told him: *Your son will live.* The man believed Jesus and left.

As he was arriving home, the man's servants met him. *Your son is alive,* they said. *When did he get better,* he asked? They replied: *Yesterday evening at 7 pm.* The official realized this was the exact time Jesus had said: *Your son will live.*

So the official and his entire family believed in Jesus. What is not being said in this story? The narrative does not describe the attitude of Jesus when the man made his passionate request to Jesus to save the life of his son. It was this attitude of Jesus and the way he said with full authority: *Your son will live* that brought the man to faith. Did the official believe in Jesus before he met the servants? This is the real question.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Does just the fact that Jesus does a miracle bring a person to faith? See **John 2:23-24**.
2. The man originally asked Jesus to come to his home in Capernaum to heal his son. Jesus did not refuse this request but simply said: *Your son will live.* It was at this moment the man had to decide whether to believe Jesus and what he said or to press Jesus further to come to Capernaum. What made the man choose to believe in Jesus immediately?
3. Herod Antipas, although Rome had appointed him the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, hated Jews. He built his palace at Tiberias on a Jewish graveyard. So Jews refused to even visit Herod. Most in his court were Gentiles as was probably this man. Jews did not associate with Gentiles unless it was really necessary. Why did Jesus?
4. Jesus works outside the norms of Jewish society associating with Samaritans and Gentiles. What risk is he taking by doing this?

PERICOPE 10

Jesus Heals a Paralytic on a Sabbath in Jerusalem

Jesus asked the man: Would you like to get well? The sick man answered Jesus: Sir, I don't have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I'm trying to get up, someone else steps into the pool ahead of me. Jesus told the man: Get up, pick up your cot and walk. **John 5:5-8**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Cures a Man at the Bethesda Pool

⁵ Later, Jesus went to Jerusalem for a Jewish festival.

² Near Sheep Gate in Jerusalem was a pool called *Bethesda* in Hebrew. It had five porches. ³ Under these porches a large number of sick people — people who were blind, lame, or paralyzed — used to lie.

⁵ One man, who had been sick for 38 years, was lying there. ⁶ Jesus saw the man lying there and knew that he had been sick for a long time. So Jesus asked the man: Would you like to get well?

⁷ The sick man answered Jesus: Sir, I don't have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I'm trying to get there, someone else steps into the pool ahead of me.

⁸ Jesus told the man: Get up, pick up your cot, and walk. ⁹ The man immediately became well, picked up his cot, and walked.

That happened on a day of rest — a Holy Day *sabbaton* — Sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews told the man who had been healed: This is a day of rest — a Holy Day. You're not allowed to carry your cot today.

¹¹ The man replied: The man who made me well told me to pick up my cot and walk.

¹²The Jews asked him: Who is the man who told you to pick it up and walk?

¹³But the man who had been healed didn't know who Jesus was. Jesus had withdrawn from the crowd.

¹⁴Later, Jesus met the man in the Temple courtyard and told him: You're well now. Stop sinning so that something worse doesn't happen to you.

¹⁵The man went back to the Jews and told them that Jesus was the man who had made him well.

COMMENT

Jesus returns to Jerusalem for a second time. He deliberately heals a paralyzed man on a Sabbath. Jesus has already irritated the Jewish religious leaders by cleansing the Temple. **John 2:13-22**. Now he irritates particularly the Pharisees as one of the 46 rules about the Sabbath in their oral law prevents healing on the Sabbath except in the case of a life-threatening illness.

The Jews confront the man who had been healed and upbraid him for carrying his cot of the Sabbath. But the man protests: The man who healed me told me to do this, he said.

Later, Jesus saw the man at the Temple. He told him: *Stop sinning so that something worse doesn't happen to you*. Then the man went and told the Jews that it was Jesus from Nazareth who healed him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Jesus heal this particular man on the Sabbath? What was his motive?

Remember the day of rest by observing it as a Holy Day. You have six days to do all your work. The seventh day is a day of rest – a Holy Day dedicated to the Lord your God. You, your sons, your daughters, your male and female slaves, your cattle, and the foreigners living in your city must never do any work on that day. In six days the Lord made Heaven, earth, and the sea, along with everything in them. He didn't work on the seventh day. That's why he blessed the day he stopped his work and set the day apart as holy. **Exodus 20:8-II**. See also **Deuteronomy 5:12-15**.

2. Why didn't the man simply say: Yes, when Jesus asked him if he wanted to get well?

3. Why did Jesus tell the man to carry his cot? By doing so, Jesus was causing the man to break the oral law of the Pharisees.
4. Why don't the Pharisees inquire into the circumstances of the man's healing experience?
5. Why does Jesus later confront the man in the Temple and command him to stop sinning?
6. Why does the man go and tell the Pharisees that it was Jesus of Nazareth who healed him?
7. Jesus spoke about and kept most of the Ten Commandments but in this Gospel he cavalierly heals on the Sabbath. It appears he does this deliberately. Why does Jesus do this? What reason does he give for doing so?

PERICOPE II

Jesus Identifies Himself to Jewish Religious Leaders in Jerusalem

The Father doesn't judge anyone. He has entrusted judgment entirely to the Son so that everyone will honor the Son as they honor the Father. Whoever doesn't honor the Son doesn't honor the Father who sent him. **John 5:22-23**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

The Son Is Equal to the Father

¹⁶The Jews began to persecute Jesus because he kept healing people on the day of rest *sabbaton*—a Holy Day.

¹⁷Jesus replied to them: My Father is working right now, and so am I.

¹⁸His reply made the Jews more intent on killing him. Not only did he break the laws about the day of rest—a Holy Day but also he made himself equal to God when he said repeatedly that God was his Father.

Jesus Says that He Is the Son of God

¹⁹Jesus said to the Jews: I can guarantee this truth: The Son cannot do anything on his own. He can do only what he sees the Father doing. Indeed, the Son does exactly what the Father does. ²⁰The Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing.

The Father will show him even greater things to do than these things so that you will be amazed. ²¹In the same way that the Father brings back the dead and gives them life, the Son gives life to anyone he chooses.

Those Who Don't Honor the Son of God Don't Honor God

²²The Father doesn't judge anyone. He has entrusted judgment entirely to the Son ²³so that everyone will honor the Son as they honor the Father. Whoever doesn't honor the Son doesn't honor the Father who sent him.

²⁴I can guarantee this truth: Those who listen to what I say and believe in the one who sent me will have Eternal Life. They won't be judged because they have already passed from death to life.

²⁵"I can guarantee this truth: A time is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who respond to it will live. ²⁶The Father is the source of life, and he has enabled the Son to be the source of life too.

²⁷"He has also given the Son authority to pass judgment because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸Don't be surprised at what I've just said. A time is coming when all the dead will hear his voice ²⁹and they will come out of their tombs. Those who have done good will come back to life and live. But those who have done evil will come back to life and will be judged.

[At that time Michael, the great commander, will stand up on behalf of the descendants of your people. It will be a time of trouble unlike any that has existed from the time there have been nations until that time. But at that time, your people, everyone written in the book, will be rescued. Many sleeping in the ground will wake up. Some will wake up to live forever, but others will wake up to be ashamed and disgraced forever.

Daniel 12:1-2]

°I can't do anything on my own. As I listen <to the Father> I make my judgments. My judgments are right because I don't try to do what I want but what the one who sent me wants.

Witnesses for Jesus

³¹If I testify on my own behalf, what I say isn't true. ³²Someone else testifies on my behalf and I know that what he says about me is true.

John the Baptist

³³You sent people to <the Baptizer> and he testified to the truth. ³⁴But I don't depend on human testimony. I'm telling you this to save you. ³⁵John

was a lamp that gave off brilliant light. For a time you enjoyed the pleasure of his light.

The Signs Jesus Performs

³⁶ But I have something that testifies more favorably on my behalf than John's testimony. The tasks that the Father gave me to carry out, these tasks which I perform, testify on my behalf. They prove that the Father has sent me.

God the Father Testifies about Jesus

³⁷ The Father who sent me testifies on my behalf. You have never heard his voice, and you have never seen his form. ³⁸ So you don't have the Father's message within you because you don't believe in the person he has sent. ³⁹ You study the Scriptures in detail because you think you have the source of Eternal Life in them. These Scriptures testify on my behalf. ⁴⁰ Yet, you don't want to come to me to get <Eternal> Life.

⁴¹ I don't accept praise from humans. ⁴² But I know what kind of people you are. You don't have any love *agape* for God. ⁴³ I have come with the authority my Father has given me but you don't accept me. If someone else comes with his own authority, you will accept him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe when you accept each other's praise and don't look for the praise that comes from the only God?

Moses Is Accusing you Pharisees

⁴⁵ Don't think that I will accuse you in the presence of the Father. Moses, the one you trust, is already accusing you. ⁴⁶ If you really believed Moses, you would believe me. Moses wrote about me. ⁴⁷ If you don't believe what Moses wrote, how will you ever believe what I say?

[The Lord your God will send you a prophet, an Israelite like me. You must listen to him. **Deuteronomy 18:15**]

COMMENT

1. How can Jesus say God the Father is working on the Sabbath?

2. Where is the first place in this Gospel where Jesus says: *I am the Son of God*. Where else does Jesus say he is the Son of God in this Gospel?
3. Does Jesus say: If you don't believe in the Son of God, you don't believe in God at all?
4. Jesus claims at the Last Day he will judge all people. Do the Pharisees believe in a final judgment and life after death?
5. Jesus calls John the Baptist as his witness. What does John the Baptist say about Jesus' identity in this Gospel?
6. Jesus says: If you don't believe my words, look at the signs I do. How do the signs Jesus does confirm his assertion he is the Son of God?
7. Jesus says: Moses wrote about him. Are there any other places Moses wrote about Jesus besides **Deuteronomy 18:15**?

EXTRA CREDIT

If the Jews don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God, how can they believe anything he says when he talks about his relationship to God? Is there another way Jesus can explain his true identity and relationship to YHWH **Exodus 3:14**, the Holy One of Israel **Isaiah 1:4**, the God of the Whole Earth **Isaiah 54:5**.

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

The title Son of God only appears once in the Hebrew Bible:

He answered and said: Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like the Son of God.
Daniel 3:25 KJV

Do the Jews know what Jesus means when he says he is the Son of God?

The title Son of God appears in Matthew 8x, Mark 3x, Luke 7x, and John 10x, and 18x in the rest of the New Testament.

PERICOPE 12

Jesus Feeds More Than 5,000 Men and Walks on the Sea of Galilee

When the people saw the miracle Jesus performed, they said: This man is certainly The Prophet who is to come into the world. **Deuteronomy 18:15-20**. Jesus realized that the people intended to take him by force and make him King. So he returned to the mountain by himself. **John 6:14-15**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Feeds More Than Five Thousand

⁶¹ Jesus later crossed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd followed him because they saw the miracles that he performed for the sick. ³ Jesus went up a mountain and sat with his disciples. ⁴ The time for the Jewish Passover festival was near.

⁵ As Jesus saw a large crowd coming to him, he said to Philip: Where can we buy bread for these people to eat? ⁶ Jesus asked this question to test him. He already knew what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered: We would need about a year's wages to buy enough bread for each of them to have a piece.

⁸ One of Jesus' disciples, Andrew, who was Simon Peter's brother, told him: ⁹ A boy who has five loaves of barley bread and two small fish is here. But they won't go very far for so many people.

¹⁰ Jesus said: Have the people sit down.

The people had plenty of grass to sit on. There were about 5,000 men in the crowd.

¹¹ Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to the people who were sitting there. He did the same thing with the fish. All the people ate as much as they wanted.

¹² When the people were full, Jesus told his disciples: Gather the leftover pieces so that nothing will be wasted. ¹³ The disciples gathered the leftover pieces of bread and filled twelve baskets.

¹⁴ When the people saw the miracle Jesus performed, they said: This man is certainly The Prophet **Deuteronomy 18:15-20** who is to come into the world.

¹⁵ Jesus realized that the people intended to take him by force *harpazo* and make him King. So he returned to the mountain by himself.

Jesus Walks on the Sea

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went to the sea. ¹⁷ They got into a boat and started to cross the sea to the city of Capernaum. By this time it was dark and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ A strong wind started to blow and stir up the sea.

¹⁹ After they had rowed three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea. He was coming near the boat and they became terrified.

²⁰ Jesus told them: It's me *ego-I emi-AM*. Don't be afraid.

²¹ So they were willing to help Jesus into the boat. Immediately, the boat reached the shore where they were going.

COMMENT

This is a very mysterious pericope. It appears in all four Gospels. **Matthew 14:13-21**; **Mark 6:30-44**; **Luke 9:10-17**. But only John mentions that the crowd of 5,000 men wanted to make Jesus King. None of the synoptic Gospels mention it.

Mark agrees there were 5,000 men present. **Mark 6:44**. Luke agrees with Mark. **Luke 9:14**. Matthew adds there were women and children present. **Matthew 14:21**. Mark mentions they were formed into groups of a hundred and fifties. **Mark 6:40**

Mark says:

[Jesus quickly *eutheos* made his disciples get into a boat and cross to Bethsaida ahead of him while he sent the people away. After he said goodbye to them, he went up a mountain to pray. **Mark 6:45-46**]

Matthew agrees with Mark that Jesus made his disciples get quickly into a boat while he alone sent the people away. He also mentions Jesus did not come to the disciples until between 3 AM and 6 AM walking on the sea. **Matthew 14:25**

Luke mentions Jesus feeding five thousand men but says nothing about Jesus sending the disciples away or walking on the sea. **Luke 9:10-17**

This mysterious story seems to leave out many details we would like to know about. So we have many things to think about.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How do 5,000 men gather in a deserted place? Was this a pre-arranged meeting? Remember this is the time of the Passover Festival when most men travel to Jerusalem. Jesus himself usually travels to Jerusalem at this time. The Passover is also when Jews remember that God freed them from Egyptian slavery and also wish the Romans would no longer occupy the Holy Land of God and tax them excessively. God could free them again.
2. Why does the crowd want to make Jesus King? Why does only Lazarus tell us this and the other Gospels don't?
3. Why does Jesus *quickly* make his disciples get into a boat and leave while he alone dismisses the crowd? Did his disciples get caught up in the excitement of the crowd wanting to make Jesus King?
4. Why does Jesus pray from 6 PM to at least 3 AM alone on the mountain before meeting his disciples?
5. Does Lazarus intend for us to see a miracle within a miracle when the boat immediately arrives at land? **John 6:21**
6. Why don't the disciples question Jesus about this affair?
7. Only Lazarus mentions that the people did not go home but remained in the area hoping to see Jesus again. **John 6:22**. Then the next day they left to find him and did find him at the synagogue at Capernaum where he preaches his Bread of Life Sermon. What did they want Jesus to do then?

PERICOPE 13

Jesus Explains He is God's Bread of Life Come Down from Heaven

I am the Living Bread that came down from Heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. The bread that I came to bring life to the world is my flesh. **John 6:51**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

The People Look for Jesus

^{6:22} On the next day the people were still on the other side of the sea. They noticed that only one boat was there and that Jesus had not stepped into that boat with his disciples. The disciples had gone away without him. ²³ Other boats from Tiberias arrived near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord gave thanks.

²⁴ When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into these boats and went to the city of Capernaum to look for Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the sea, they asked him: Rabbi, when did you get here?

Jesus Tells the Crowd to Work for Spiritual Things Not Physical Things

²⁶ Jesus replied to them: I can guarantee this truth: You're not looking for me because you saw miracles. You are looking for me because you ate as much of those loaves as you wanted. ²⁷ Don't work for food that spoils. Instead, work for the food that lasts into Eternal Life. This is the food the Son of Man will give you. After all, the Father has placed his seal of approval on him.

Jesus Says: God Wants You to Believe that I AM the Son of God

²⁸ The people asked Jesus: What does God want us to do?

²⁹Jesus replied to them: God wants to do something for you so that you believe in the one whom he has sent.

The People Ask Jesus to Perform Another Miracle

³⁰The people asked him: What miracle are you going to perform so that we can see it and believe in you? What are you going to do? ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the desert. Scripture says: He gave them bread from Heaven to eat. **Psalm 78:24**

[That evening quails covered the camp and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, the ground was covered with a thin layer of flakes like frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they asked each other: What is this? Because they didn't know what it was. Moses said to them: It's the food the Lord has given you to eat. **Exodus 16:13-15**]

³²Jesus said to them: I can guarantee this truth: Moses didn't give you bread from Heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from Heaven. ³³God's bread is the man who comes from Heaven and gives life to the world.

Jesus says he himself is the true bread from Heaven.

³⁴They said to him: Sir, give us this bread all the time.

The Galileans have not heard what Jesus has said. They are still thinking of physical bread.

Jesus Declares: I AM the Bread of Life

³⁵Jesus told them: **I AM** the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never become hungry, and whoever believes in me will never become thirsty. ³⁶I've told you that you have seen me. However, you don't believe in me.

Jesus previously told the Samaritan woman that he would give her Living Water. Now Jesus says he will provide the Galileans with Living Bread.

Jesus Says Only the Father Can Enable One to Believe in Jesus

³⁷ Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me. I will never turn away anyone who comes to me. ³⁸ I haven't come from Heaven to do what I want to do. I've come to do what the one who sent me wants me to do.

³⁹ The one who sent me doesn't want me to lose any of those he gave me. He wants me to bring them back to life on the Last Day. ⁴⁰ My Father wants all those who see the Son and believe in him to have Eternal Life. He wants me to bring them back to life on the Last Day.

The Jews Criticize Jesus Saying He Is Only a Man

⁴¹ The Jews began to criticize Jesus for saying: I am the bread that came from Heaven. ⁴² They asked: Isn't this man Jesus, Joseph's son? Don't we know his father and mother? How can he say now: I came from Heaven?

Finally, the Galileans realize what Jesus previously said in verse 33.

Jesus says: God Must Help You to Believe in Me

⁴³ Jesus responded: Stop criticizing me. ⁴⁴ People cannot come to me unless the Father who sent me brings them to me. I will bring these people back to life on the Last Day.

⁴⁵ The prophets wrote: God will teach everyone. **Isaiah 54:13**. Those who do what they have learned from the Father come to me. ⁴⁶ I'm saying that no one has seen the Father. Only the one who is from God has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ I can guarantee this truth: Every believer has Eternal Life.

Jesus Says: I AM More Than Manna. I AM the Living Bread. Eat me.

⁴⁸ **I AM** the Bread of Life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate *phago* the manna in the desert and died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes from Heaven so that whoever eats *phago* it won't die. ⁵¹ **I AM** the Living Bread that came from Heaven. Whoever eats *phago* this bread will live forever. The bread I will give to bring life to the world is my flesh.

The Jews Criticize Jesus for Saying: Eat My Flesh

⁵² The Jews began to quarrel with each other. They said: How can this man give us his flesh to eat *phago*?

⁵³ Jesus told them: I can guarantee this truth: If you don't eat *phago* the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you don't have the source of life in you.

Jesus Says: To Live in Me You Must Munch My Flesh and Drink My Blood

⁵⁵ My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Those who eat *trogo* my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them.

Notice Jesus has introduced a new word for eat. Before he used the word *phago*. Now he uses the word *trogo*, a word used for the noisy way animals eat like a cow chewing her cud.

⁵⁷ The Father who has life sent me and I live because of the Father. So those who feed *trogo* on me will live because of me.

⁵⁸ This is the bread that came from Heaven. It is not like the bread *manna* your ancestors ate *phago*. They eventually died. Those who eat *trogo* this bread will live forever. ⁵⁹ Jesus said this while he was teaching in a synagogue in Capernaum.

Jesus has changed his word for *eat* from *phago* to *trogo*. This is the word that describes an animal noisily eating like a cow chewing her cud. Jesus is emphasizing the physical to show that his disciples must have a close, personal relationship with him like the branches of a vine have with the vine. **John 15:1-8**

Many Disciples Now Leave Jesus Because of This Hard Teaching

⁶⁰ When many of Jesus' disciples heard him, they said: What he says is hard to accept. Who wants to listen to him anymore?

⁶¹ Jesus was aware that his disciples were criticizing his message. So Jesus asked them: Did what I say make you lose faith? ⁶² What if you see the Son of Man go where he was before?

Jesus is asking: What if you see me ascend into Heaven?

Jesus Says: You Must Look at Life from a Spiritual Perspective

⁶³Life is spiritual. Your physical existence doesn't contribute to that life. The words that I have spoken to you are spiritual. They are life. ⁶⁴But some of you don't believe.

Jesus Reinforces that God Must Enable People to Believe in Jesus

Jesus knew from the beginning those who wouldn't believe and the one who would betray him. ⁶⁵So he added: That is why I told you that people cannot come to me unless the Father provides the way.

Jesus has talked before about the disciples the Father will *give him*.

Jesus Asks the Twelve Disciples: Do You Want to Leave Me?

⁶⁶Jesus' speech made many of his disciples go back to the lives they had led before they followed Jesus. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve: Do you want to leave me too?

⁶⁸Simon Peter answered Jesus: Lord, to what person could we go? Your words give Eternal Life. ⁶⁹Besides, we believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.

This is the Beloved Disciple's version of Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi in the synoptic Gospels. **Matthew 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21**

⁷⁰Jesus replied: I chose all twelve of you. Yet one of you is a devil. ⁷¹Jesus meant Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. Judas, who was one of the twelve would later betray Jesus.

COMMENT

This is Jesus' last sermon to Galileans. They simply don't understand Jesus' teaching. Apparently, they are too concentrated on Jesus providing them with free food, healing people, and exorcising demons. These peasant people spend most of their lives growing food. One scholar estimates 85% of a Galilean's income was spent of feeding his family. They are concerned with surviving physically given their subsistence living rather than thinking of spiritual life.

Jesus is here speaking of himself as the Living Manna that God has now sent to his Chosen People just like he sent manna to the Israelites when they left Egypt.

God has sent Jesus to earth so that when people believe in Jesus, they can have a close, personal relationship with a holy God even though they are wicked humans who continually sin. Yet God must enable people to believe in Jesus. God must provide the way. What a mystery this is. We don't know exactly how this works but this is the way it is. Jesus attempted to explain this to Nicodemus, the great teacher of Israel. Did Nicodemus finally understand this?

God chose Jesus' disciples. They did not choose him. **John 15:16**

At the end of this hard teaching, many disciples choose not to follow Jesus anymore. So Jesus asks the Twelve: *Do you also want to leave me?* Peter speaks for the group: *Lord to whom can we go? We know you are the Holy One of God.* The synoptic Gospels portray this confession of Peter as happening at Caesarea Philippi. **Mark 8:29; Matthew 16:16; Luke 9:20**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus has already fed 5,000 men the Day before. Why does the crowd now want Jesus to perform another miracle? Do they want more free bread?
2. Jesus says: *God's bread is the man who comes from Heaven and gives life to the world.* **John 6:33**. This is the entire sermon in one sentence. Why can't the crowd understand and accept this?
3. What parallel and what contrast does Jesus want to make between the manna God gave the Israelites from the time they left Egypt to the time they crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land?
4. Why does Jesus emphasize more than once that God the Father must enable people to believe in Jesus? Why can't people directly believe in Jesus on their own without God's help?
5. If people don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God, how do they explain the miracles that he does? Is he merely like the prophets Elijah or Elisha or is he more?
6. Jesus again uses the terms Eternal Life and Last Day. How do these two terms coincide?
7. Lazarus mentions the Twelve only here in the Gospel. Why is that?

EXTRA CREDIT

When Jesus says one of the Twelve is a devil, how do the Twelve respond? Do they question this or does it go over their heads.

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

When Jesus refers to *the one who sent me*, do the Galileans think God sent Jesus just like he sent Moses, Elijah, and Elisha? Or is Jesus different?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

After Jesus feeds the 5,000 and Peter identifies Jesus as the Messiah, in the three synoptic Gospels Jesus begins to teach his disciples about his upcoming passion:

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man would suffer a lot. He taught them that he would be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the experts in Moses' Teachings. He would be killed but after three days, he would come back to life. He told them very clearly what he meant. Peter took him aside and objected to this. **Mark 8:11-32**

Now, in the synoptic Gospels, Jesus and his disciples begin a long journey to Jerusalem where Jesus teaches his disciples what it means to be his disciple and many other teachings. Finally, they arrive in Jerusalem where Jesus enters the city riding a donkey and then cleanses the Temple. **Mark 11:15-19**

ADDITIONAL THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Like each of the synoptic Gospels, Jesus makes three passion predictions using the key phrase lifted up. **John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32**. Why is John's language so different from that of the synoptics?
2. In the Gospel of John, after the Bread of Life discourse, Jesus goes directly to Jerusalem, never to return to Galilee until after his resurrection. Why doesn't Jesus continue his ministry in Galilee?
3. The event at the feeding of the 5,000 when the Galileans attempted to take Jesus by force and make him King **John 6:15** seems to be a significant turning point in Jesus' ministry. Why are the synoptic Gospels so reluctant to include many of the details of this event?

4. There seems to quite a space of time left out in the Gospel of John. The feeding of the 5,000 takes place at Passover in Chapter 6 in the spring. Chapter 7 begins with the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall. What happened in between that Lazarus doesn't tell us about?

PERICOPE 14

Jesus Identifies Himself as Living Water at the Feast of Booths in Jerusalem

On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus was standing in the Temple courtyard. He said loudly: Whoever is thirsty must come to me to drink. As Scripture says: Streams of Living Water will flow from deep within the person who believes in me. **John 7:37-38**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus' Brothers Urge Him to Go to the Festival of Booths

⁷ Jesus later traveled throughout Galilee. He didn't want to travel in Judea because Jews there wanted to kill him.

² The time for the Jewish Festival of Booths was near. ³ So Jesus' brothers told him: Leave this place, and go to Judea so that your disciples can see the things that you're doing. ⁴ No one does things secretly when he wants to be known publicly. If you do these things, you should let the world see you. ⁵ Even his brothers didn't believe in him.

⁶ Jesus told them: Now is not the right time for me to go. Any time is right for you. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I say that what everyone does is evil. ⁸ Go to the festival. I'm not going to this festival right now. Now is not the right time *kairos* for me to go.

⁹ After saying this, Jesus stayed in Galilee.

Jesus Goes to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem

^{7:10} But after his brothers had gone to the festival, Jesus went. He didn't go publicly but secretly.

¹¹ The Jews were looking for Jesus in the crowd at the festival. They kept asking: Where is that man? ¹² The crowds argued about Jesus. Some people

said: He's a good man while others said: No he isn't. He deceives the people.
¹³Yet, no one would talk openly about him because they were afraid of the Jews.

¹⁴When the festival was half over, Jesus went to the Temple courtyard and began to teach. ¹⁵The Jews were surprised and asked: How can this man be so educated when he hasn't gone to school?

Jesus Explains Where His Teaching Comes From

^{7:16}Jesus responded to them: What I teach doesn't come from me but from the one who sent me. ¹⁷Those who want to follow the will of God will know if what I teach is from God or if I teach my own thoughts.

¹⁸Those who speak their own thoughts are looking for their own glory. But the man who wants to bring glory to the one who sent him is a true teacher and doesn't have dishonest motives. ¹⁹Didn't Moses give you his teachings? Yet, none of you does what Moses taught you. So why do you want to kill *apokteino* me?

The first time the Jews sought to kill Jesus is in **John 5:16, 18**. The word *apokteino* is used four times in this chapter. It will be used seven more times in the Gospel.

²⁰The crowd answered: You're possessed by a demon. Who wants to kill *apokteino* you?

Jesus Asks: Why Can't One Heal a Person on the Sabbath?

²¹Jesus answered them: I performed one miracle and all of you are surprised by it. ²²Moses gave you the teaching about circumcision although it didn't come from Moses but from our ancestors. So you circumcise a male on a day of rest — a Holy Day.

²³If you circumcise a male on the day of rest — a Holy Day, to follow Moses' Teachings, why are you angry with me because I made a man entirely well on the day of rest—a Holy Day? ²⁴Stop judging by outward appearance. Instead, judge correctly.

²⁵Some of the people who lived in Jerusalem said: Isn't this the man they want to kill *apokteino*? ²⁶But look at this. He's speaking in public, and no one is saying anything to him. Can it be that the rulers really know that this man is the Messiah *christos*? ²⁷However, we know where this man comes from. When the Christ *christos* comes, no one will know where he is from.

Jesus Again Says that God Sent Him to Earth

²⁸Then, while Jesus was teaching in the Temple courtyard, he said loudly: You know me and you know where I come from. I didn't decide to come on my own. The one who sent me is true. He's the one you don't know. ²⁹I know him because **I AM** from him, and he sent me.

³⁰The Jews tried to arrest him but couldn't because his time *hora*-hour had not yet come.

³¹However, many people in the crowd believed in him. They asked, When the Messiah *christos* comes, will he perform more miracles *semeion*-signs than this man has?

³²The Pharisees heard the crowd saying things like this about him. So the chief priests and the Pharisees sent Temple guards to arrest Jesus.

Jesus Says: In a Little While, I Will Return to God

³³Jesus said: I will still be with you for a little while. Then I'll go to the one who sent me. ³⁴You will look for me, but you won't find me. You can't go where I'm going.

³⁵The Jews said among themselves: Where does this man intend to go so that we won't find him? Does he mean that he'll live with the Jews who are scattered among the Greeks and that he'll teach the Greeks? ³⁶What does he mean when he says: You will look for me, but you won't find me, and You can't go where I'm going?

The Jews think Jesus is going to teach the Jews scattered outside the Holy Land of Israel in the Diaspora. God says many times in the Hebrew Bible he will gather all Jews scattered to

the ends of the earth and bring them home to Israel. See **Deuteronomy 30:3-4; Isaiah 11:12; 60:4; 66:18.**

Jesus Declares: I Will Give You Living Water

³⁷On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus was standing<in the Temple courtyard>. He said loudly: Whoever is thirsty must come to me to drink. ³⁸As Scripture says: Streams of Living Water will flow from deep within the person who believes in me. ³⁹Jesus said this about the Holy Spirit, whom his believers would receive. The Spirit was not yet evident as it would be after Jesus had been glorified.

The Crowd Questions Who Jesus Is

⁴⁰After some of the crowd heard Jesus say these words they said: “This man is certainly The Prophet. **Deuteronomy 18:15**

⁴¹Other people said: This man is the Messiah. Still other people asked: How can the Messiah come from Galilee? ⁴²Doesn't Scripture say that the Messiah will come from the descendants of David and from the village of Bethlehem, where David lived?.

[You, Bethlehem Ephrathah, are too small to be included among Judah's cities. Yet from you Israel's future ruler will come for me. His origins go back to the distant past, to days long ago.

That is why the Lord will abandon Israel until the time a mother has a child. Then the rest of the Lord's people will return to the people of Israel.

The child will become the shepherd of his flock. He will lead them with the strength of the Lord, with the majestic name of the Lord his God. They will live in safety because his greatness will reach the ends of the earth. This man will be their peace. **Micah 5:2-4**]

⁴³So the people were divided because of Jesus.

The Temple Authorities Send Guards to Arrest Jesus but They Don't

⁴⁴Some of them wanted to arrest him, but they couldn't.

⁴⁵When the Temple guards returned, the chief priests and Pharisees asked them: Why didn't you bring Jesus?

⁴⁶The Temple guards answered: No human has ever spoken like this man.

⁴⁷The Pharisees asked the Temple guards: Have you been deceived too?

⁴⁸Has any ruler or any Pharisee believed in him? ⁴⁹This crowd is cursed because it doesn't know Moses' Teachings.

⁵⁰One of those Pharisees was Nicodemus, who had previously visited Jesus. Nicodemus asked them: ⁵¹Do Moses' Teachings enable us to judge a person without first hearing that person's side of the story? We can't judge a person without finding out what that person has done.

⁵²They asked Nicodemus: Are you saying this because you're from Galilee? Study <the Scriptures> and you'll see that no prophet comes from Galilee.

Elijah came from Galilee. **1 Kings 17:1**

⁵³Then each of them went home.

COMMENT

At the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths, the High Priest would go to the Pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher and carry water to the altar in the Temple and pour it out. People accompanied him singing:

With joy you will draw water from the springs of salvation.
Isaiah 12:3

This was done for seven days. On the eighth day of the feast, no water was brought to the altar. So Jesus climatically said: *Whoever is thirsty, come to me and drink and I will give you Living Water* just as he had said earlier to the Samaritan woman. **John 4:10**. There is also an echo here of **Isaiah 55:1-2**.

Light was also celebrated at this festival. We will see in Pericope 16 that Jesus also says: *I AM the Light of the World*.

In this pericope, there continue questions about Jesus' identity. Jesus tells them that in a little while, he will return to his Father. But the Jews only understand he is claiming to be

the Son of God and so want to arrest him. But the guards are in awe of Jesus' teaching and fail to arrest him.

The people argue about Jesus' place of birth. Is it Galilee where they know he was raised or from Bethlehem where the prophets said the Messiah would be born. Little do they know he is not from either place.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus is on a strict timetable arranged by God the Father. Jesus will refer to his hour *hora*. Jesus will say: *My hour has not come* in **John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20**. Finally, Jesus says: *The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified*. **John 12:23**. Why were the authorities unable to arrest Jesus until the precise time Jesus' hour comes?
2. Jesus says those who want to follow the will of God will know if Jesus teaches the truth. **John 7:17**. How will they know this?
3. Jesus knows the Temple authorities want to kill him. When did the High Priest get the Sanhedrin to decide to do this?
4. What is Jesus' argument for healing on the Sabbath?
5. What Scripture says that the Messiah will come from an unknown place? **John 7:27**
6. Define Living Water. How does it relate to the only verse outside of John's Gospel that refers to Living Water?

My people have done two things wrong. They have abandoned me, the fountain of lifegiving ~~hay~~ living water. They have also dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that can't hold water. **Jeremiah 2:13**

7. Is Nicodemus a disciple of Jesus at this point?

PERICOPE 15

Jesus Forgives a Woman Caught in Adultery

Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. **John 8:11 KJV**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

^{8:1} Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Early the next morning he returned to the Temple courtyard. All the people went to him so he sat down and began to teach them.

³ The experts in Moses' Teachings and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught committing adultery. They made her stand in front of everyone ⁴ and asked Jesus: Teacher, we caught this woman in the act of adultery. ⁵ In his teachings, Moses ordered us to stone women like this to death. **Leviticus 20:10**. What do you say?

⁶ They asked this to test him. They wanted to find a reason to bring charges against him.

Jesus bent down and used his finger to write on the ground. ⁷ When they persisted in asking him questions, he straightened up and said: The person who is sinless should be the first to throw a stone at her. ⁸ Then he bent down again and continued writing on the ground.

⁹ One by one, beginning with the older men, the experts in Moses' Teachings and Pharisees left. Jesus was left alone with the woman. ¹⁰ Then Jesus straightened up and asked her: Where did they go? Has anyone condemned you?

¹¹ The woman answered: No one, sir.

Jesus said: I don't condemn you either. Go. From now on don't sin.

COMMENT

Although this pericope does not appear in the better manuscripts, most current editions of the Gospel include it as it is characteristic of Jesus.

The scribes and Pharisees bring a woman to Jesus who was caught committing adultery. They attempt to force Jesus to condemn the woman to death by stoning as this is required by Moses' teachings.

Jesus says nothing but begins writing in the dust on the ground with his finger. The scribes and Pharisees continue asking them questions. Finally, Jesus rises and says: *Who ever is without sin should throw the first stone at her.* The oldest in the crowd drops his stone and leaves. Then the rest continue. Finally, Jesus is left alone with the woman.

Where did those who condemned you go? Has anyone condemned you? The woman replied: *No.* Jesus said: *Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.*

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What was the motive of the scribes and Pharisees in bringing her to Jesus?
2. When Jesus wrote in the dust on the ground, what did he write?
3. Why did Jesus' question cause the scribes and Pharisees to drop their stones and leave?
4. Why did Jesus forgive the woman for her adultery?
5. What did Jesus know about the woman the scribes and Pharisees didn't know?
6. What did the watching crowd conclude about Jesus' actions?
7. What would the scribes and Pharisees report back to their leaders about Jesus' actions?

PERICOPE 16

Jesus Identifies Himself as Not of This World

You're from below. I'm from above. You're from this world. I'm not from this world. For this reason you'll die because of your sins. If you don't believe that I am the one *ego-I eimi-AM*, you'll die because of your sins. **John 8:23-24**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Speaks with the Pharisees about His Father

^{8:12} Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. He said: **I AM** the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will have a life filled with light and will never live in the dark.

¹³ The Pharisees said to him: You testify on your own behalf so your testimony isn't true.

¹⁴ Jesus replied to them: Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is true because I know where I came from and where I'm going. However, you don't know where I came from or where I'm going.

¹⁵ You judge the way humans do. I don't judge anyone. ¹⁶ Even if I do judge, my judgment is valid because I don't make it on my own. I make my judgment with the Father who sent me.

Jesus Says His Witnesses Are God the Father and Himself

¹⁷ Your own teachings say that the testimony of two people is true.

[One witness is never enough to convict someone of a crime, offense, or sin he may have committed. Cases must be settled based on the testimony of two or three witnesses. **Deuteronomy 19:15**]

¹⁸ I testify on my own behalf and so does the Father who sent me.

¹⁹ The Pharisees asked him: Where is your father?

Jesus replied: You don't know me or my Father. If you knew me, you would also know my Father.

²⁰ Jesus spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury area of the Temple courtyard. No one arrested him, because his time *hora*-hour had not yet come.

Jesus Tells the Pharisees They Will Go to Outer Darkness Because of Their Sin

²¹ Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. He said: I'm going away and you'll look for me. But you will die because of your sin. You can't go where I'm going.

²² Then the Jews asked: Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means when he says: You can't go where I'm going?

²³ Jesus said to them: You're from below *kato*. I'm from above *ano*. You're from this world. I'm not from this world. ²⁴ For this reason I told you that you'll die because of your sins. If you don't believe that I *ego* AM *eimi* <the one>, you'll die because of your sins

²⁵ The Jews asked him: Who did you say you are?

Jesus told them: I am who I said I was from the beginning. ²⁶ I have a lot I could say about you and a lot I could condemn you for. But the one who sent me is true. So I tell the world exactly what he has told me. ²⁷ The Jews didn't know that he was talking to them about the Father.

Jesus Prophesies the Scribes and Pharisees Will Know Who Jesus Is When He Is Lifted Up on the Cross

²⁸ So Jesus told them: When you have lifted up *hypsoo* the Son of Man, then you'll know that I *ego* am *eimi* <the one> and that I can't do anything on my own. Instead, I speak as the Father taught me. ²⁹ Besides, the one who sent me is with me. He hasn't left me by myself. I always do what pleases him.

³⁰ As Jesus was saying this, many people believed in him. ³¹ So Jesus said to those Jews who believed in him: If you live by what I say, you are truly my disciples. ² You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

The Jews Claim That They Are Free Men

³³ They replied to Jesus: We are Abraham's descendants and we've never been anyone's slaves. So how can you say that we will be set free?

³⁴ Jesus answered them: I can guarantee this truth: Whoever lives a sinful life is a slave to sin. ³⁵ A slave doesn't live in the home forever, but a son does. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be absolutely free.

³⁷ I know that you're Abraham's descendants. However, you want to kill *apokteino* me because you don't like what I'm saying. ³⁸ What I'm saying is what I have seen in my Father's presence. But you do what you've heard from your father.

³⁹ The Jews replied to Jesus: Abraham is our father.

Jesus told them: If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did. ⁴⁰ I am a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. But now you want to kill *apokteino* me. Abraham wouldn't have done that. ⁴¹ You're doing what your father does.

The Jews said to Jesus: We're not illegitimate children. God is our only Father.

⁴² Jesus told them: If God were your Father, you would love *agapao* me. After all I'm here and I came from God. I didn't come on my own. Instead, God sent me. ⁴³ Why don't you understand the language I use? Is it because you can't understand the words I use?

Jesus Tells the Jews Their Father Is the Devil

⁴⁴ You come from your father the Devil and you desire to do what your father wants you to do. The Devil was a murderer from the beginning. He has

never been truthful. He doesn't know what the truth is. Whenever he tells a lie, he's doing what comes naturally to him. He's a liar and the father of lies.

⁴⁵So you don't believe me because I tell the truth. ⁴⁶Can any of you convict me of committing a sin? If I'm telling the truth, why don't you believe me? ⁴⁷The person who belongs to God understands what God says. You don't understand because you don't belong to God.

The Jews Accuse Jesus of Being a Samaritan and Demon-Possessed

⁴⁸The Jews replied to Jesus: Aren't we right when we say that you're a Samaritan and that you're possessed by a demon?

⁴⁹Jesus answered: I'm not possessed. I honor my Father, but you dishonor me. ⁵⁰I don't want my own glory. But there is someone who wants it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹I can guarantee this truth: Whoever obeys what I say will never see death.

⁵²The Jews told Jesus: Now we know that you're possessed by a demon. Abraham died and so did the prophets. But you say: 'Whoever does what I say will never taste death. ⁵³Are you greater than our father Abraham who died? The prophets have also died. Who do you think you are?

⁵⁴Jesus said: If I bring glory to myself, my glory is nothing. My Father is the one who gives me glory and you say that he is your God. ⁵⁵Yet you haven't known him.

However, I know him. If I would say that I didn't know him, I would be a liar like all of you. But I do know him, and I do what he says. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham was pleased to see that my day was coming. He saw it and was happy.

The Rabbis declared that Abraham was shown the days of the Messiah by God.

[Then Abram believed the Lord and that faith was regarded as the basis of Abram's approval by the Lord. **Genesis 15:6**]

⁵⁷The Jews said to Jesus: You're not even fifty years old. How could you have seen Abraham?

Jesus Is Greater Than Abraham. He is I AM.

⁵⁸Jesus told them: I can guarantee this truth: Before Abraham was ever born, **I *ego* AM *eimi*.**

[Then Moses replied to God: Suppose I go to the people of Israel and say to them: The God of your ancestors has sent me to you. When they ask me: What is his name? What should I tell them? God answered Moses: **I AM *haya* Who *'aser* I AM *haya*.** This is what you must say to the people of Israel: **I AM *haya*** has sent me to you. **Exodus 3:13-14**]

⁵⁹Then some of the Jews picked up stones to throw at Jesus. However, Jesus was concealed and he left the Temple courtyard.

COMMENT

This is perhaps one of the most brutal encounters Jesus has with the Pharisees, scribes, and chief priests. Jesus tells them because they sin by not believing that Jesus is the Son of God, they will spiritually die – be separated from God. Jesus will go where they cannot go.

Jesus gives his second Passion Prediction saying that when he is lifted up on the cross, these religious leaders will know who Jesus is.

After an argument where the Jews claim that as children of Abraham they have never been slaves – even in Egypt – Jesus declares they are slaves of sin as they do not believe in him as the Son of God. Then Jesus states boldly: *You are children of Satan because you want to kill me.*

The Jews reply: *You are a Samaritan, only a half-Jew, and you are possessed by a demon.* Jesus ignores their calling him a Samaritan but denies he is possessed. The Jews claim that because Jesus says his disciples, who obey what he says, will never see death, they know he is demon possessed. Abraham died and so did the prophets.

Jesus replies that Abraham saw Jesus' day coming. He saw that day coming and he rejoiced with joy. The Jews question: *You have seen Abraham?* Jesus replies: *Before Abraham was ever born, I AM. John 8:38*

Jesus has pronounced the divine name of God. He has already used it several times in this Gospel. But here he uses it in such a way the Jews want to stone Jesus right there and then.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus says he is *the Light of World*. Here is the second I AM saying. Jesus freely uses God's divine name I AM for himself, in Greek *ego eimi*. How many times so far in this Gospel has Jesus used this name for himself? Do the Jews seem to recognize he is using it?
2. Jesus uses the expression the Father who sent me again and again. **John 5:30, 37; 6:39, 44, 57; 8:16, 18, 29; 12:49**. Why don't the Jews question that Jesus came from God and will be going back to God? Or do they?
3. Jesus clearly says: *I am not from this world*. **John 8:23**. Why don't the Jews pursue this statement immediately?
4. Jesus tells the Jews: *You will die in your sins*. Why don't they question why he is saying this?
5. Jesus second Passion Prediction apparently has made no impression on the Jews. Why don't they question what he means by being *lifted up*?
6. Jesus says his disciples *will know the truth and that truth will set them free*. **John 8:32**. This word truth *aletheia* occurs 26 times in this Gospel. What is so important that his disciples know the truth? How do they know the truth? HINT: Read **John 14:26; 16:13**.
7. What does Jesus mean when he says that *Abraham saw his day coming and rejoiced*? **John 8:56**. Did Abraham have a vision of the Messiah?

EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus' clearest assertion of his divinity is not only in his use of the Divine Name for himself but when he says: *Before Abraham was ever born, I AM*. **John 8:58**. Clearly the Jews knew Jesus was claiming to be God. But Jesus was also claiming to exist before the Creation was created. Where else in this Gospel does Jesus claim this?

PERICOPE 17

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

So when Jesus found the man, he asked him: Do you believe in the Son of Man? The man replied: Sir, tell me who he is so that I can believe in him. Jesus told him: You've seen him. He is the person who is talking with you. The man bowed in front of Jesus *proskyneo*-worshiped and said: I believe, Lord. John 9:35-38

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Gives Sight to a Blind Man

⁹¹ As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who had been born blind. ² His disciples asked him: Rabbi, why was this man born blind? Did he or his parents sin?

³ Jesus answered: Neither this man nor his parents sinned. Instead, he was born blind so that God could show what he can do for him. ⁴ We must do what the one who sent me wants us to do while it is day. The night when no one can do anything is coming. ⁵ As long as I'm in the world, **I AM** light for the world.

⁶ After Jesus said this, he spit on the ground and mixed the spit with dirt. Then he smeared it on the man's eyes ⁷ and told him: Wash it off in the pool of Siloam. Siloam means *sent*. The blind man washed it off and returned. He was able to see.

⁸ His neighbors and those who had previously seen him begging asked: Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?

⁹ Some of them said: He's the one. Others said: No, he isn't but he looks like him. But the man himself said: I am the one.

¹⁰ So they asked him: How did you receive your sight?

The Former Blind Man Calls Jesus: *The Man Called Jesus*

¹¹ He replied: The man people call Jesus mixed some spit with dirt, smeared it on my eyes and told me: Go to Siloam and wash it off. So I went there, washed it off, and received my sight.

¹² They asked him: Where is that man?

The man answered: I don't know.

¹³ Some people brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ The day when Jesus mixed the spit and dirt and gave the man sight was a day of rest—a Holy Day. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees asked the man again how he received his sight.

The man told the Pharisees: He put a mixture of spit and dirt on my eyes. I washed it off and now I can see.

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said: The man who did this is not from God because he doesn't follow the traditions for the day of worship. Other Pharisees asked: How can a man who is a sinner perform miracles *semeion*-signs like these? So the Pharisees were divided in their opinions.

The Former Blind Man Says Jesus Is a Prophet

¹⁷ They asked the man who had been born blind another question: What do you say about the man who gave you sight?

The man answered: He's a prophet.

¹⁸ Until they talked to the man's parents, the Jews didn't believe that the man had been blind and had been given sight. ¹⁹ They asked his parents: Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? Why can he see now?

²⁰ His parents replied: We know that he's our son and that he was born blind.

²¹ But we don't know how he got his sight or who gave it to him. You'll have to ask him. He's old enough to answer for himself.

²²(His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews. The Jews had already agreed to put anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ *christos* out of the synagogue. ²³That's why his parents said: You'll have to ask him. He's old enough.

²⁴So once again the Jews called the man who had been blind. They told him: Give glory to God.

This expression means: Tell the truth.

We know that this man who gave you sight is a sinner.

²⁵The man responded: I don't know if he's a sinner or not. But I do know one thing. I used to be blind, but now I can see.

²⁶The Jews asked him: What did he do to you? How did he give you sight?

The Former Blind Man Says He Is a Disciple of Jesus

²⁷The man replied: I've already told you, but you didn't listen. Why do you want to hear the story again? Do you want to become his disciples too *kai?*

²⁸The Jews yelled at him: You're his disciple, but we're Moses' disciples.

²⁹We know that God spoke to Moses, but we don't know where this man came from.

³⁰The man replied to them: That's amazing. You don't know where he's from. Yet he gave me sight. ³¹We know that God doesn't listen to sinners.

Instead, he listens to people who are devout and who do what he wants.

³²Since the beginning of time no one has ever heard of anyone giving sight to a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he couldn't do anything like that.

³⁴The Jews answered him: You were born full of sin. Do you think you can teach us? Then they threw him out<of the synagogue>.

The Former Blind Man Calls Jesus Lord

³⁵Jesus heard that the Jews had thrown the man out<of the synagogue>. So when Jesus found the man, he asked him: Do you believe in the Son of Man?

³⁶The man replied: Sir, tell me who he is so that I can believe in him.

³⁷Jesus told him: You've seen him. He is the person who is now talking with you.

³⁸The man bowed in front of Jesus and said: I believe, Lord.

Jesus Says He Has Come into the World to Judge

³⁹Then Jesus said: I have come into this world to judge. Blind people will be given sight and those who can see will become blind.

⁴⁰Some Pharisees who were with Jesus heard this. So they asked him: Do you think we're blind?

⁴¹Jesus told them: If you were blind, you wouldn't be sinners. But now you say: We see, so you continue to be sinners.

COMMENT

This is a story of how faith in Jesus can be progressive. The former blind man develops from calling Jesus a man, to a prophet, to being his disciple, to Lord.

Here the Pharisees are investigating a miracle of Jesus. They can't deny the miracle so they attack the character of the person who performed the miracle. Yet they can't determine how he did the miracle. So they do the only thing possible. They keep the formerly blind man from testifying by throwing him out of the synagogue.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The Pharisees, like the disciples, think that sin is what causes physical illness. The Pharisees accuse the former blind man of being full of sin. That is what caused his blindness from birth. What does Jesus say?
2. Why does Jesus put mud on the man's eyes and then have him wash it of? Jesus could have healed him with only a word.

3. Why did Jesus do this on a Sabbath? Did Jesus choose this day on purpose just to irritate the Pharisees?
4. Why would the former blind man call Jesus a prophet? Who is he comparing him to?
5. Why did the Pharisees throw the man out of the synagogue? What does this accomplish?
6. Why does Jesus find the man and ask him to confirm belief in him?
7. When the Pharisees ask Jesus if they are blind, why doesn't Jesus simply ask them: Do you believe that I am the Son of God?

PERICOPE 18

Jesus Identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd and the Door of the Sheep

The Father loves me because I give my life in order to take it back again. No one takes my life from me. I give my life of my own free will. I have the authority to give my life and I have the authority to take my life back again. This is what my Father ordered me to do. **John 10:17-18**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Distinguishes Between Good and Bad Shepherds

^{10:1} I can guarantee this truth. The person who doesn't enter the sheep pen through the gate but climbs in somewhere else is a thief or a robber. ²But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep respond to his voice. He calls his sheep by name and leads them out of the pen. ⁴After he has brought out all his sheep, he walks ahead of them.

The Sheep Know the Voice of Their Shepherd

The sheep follow him because they recognize his voice. ⁵They won't follow a stranger. Instead, they will run away from a stranger because they don't recognize his voice. ⁶Jesus used this illustration as he talked to the people, but they didn't understand what he meant.

⁷Jesus emphasized: I can guarantee this truth. **I AM** the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before I did were thieves or robbers. However, the sheep didn't respond to them. **I AM** the gate. Those who enter the sheep pen through me will be saved. They will go in and out of the sheep pen and find food.

¹⁰A thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. But I came so that my sheep will have life and so that they will have everything they need.

¹¹**I AM** the good *kalos* shepherd *poimen*. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.

¹²A hired hand isn't a shepherd and doesn't own the sheep. When he sees a wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and quickly runs away. So the wolf drags the sheep away and scatters the flock. ¹³The hired hand is concerned about what he's going to get paid and not about the sheep.

¹⁴**I AM** the good shepherd. I know *ginosko* my sheep as the Father knows *ginosko* me. My sheep know *ginosko* me as I know *ginosko* the Father. ¹⁵So I give my life for my sheep. ¹⁶I also have other sheep that are not from this pen. I must lead them. They, too, will respond to my voice. So they will be one flock with one shepherd.

Jesus Follows His Father's Plan to Lay Down His Life

¹⁷The Father loves me because I give my life in order to take it back again. ¹⁸No one takes my life from me. I give my life of my own free will. I have the authority to give my life, and I have the authority to take my life back again. This is what my Father ordered me to do.

¹⁹The Jews were divided because of what Jesus said. ²⁰Many of them said: He's possessed by a demon. He's crazy. Why do you listen to him? ²¹Others said: No one talks like this if he's possessed by a demon. Can a demon give sight to the blind?"

The Jews Reject Jesus

^{10:22}The Festival of the Dedication of the Temple took place in Jerusalem during the winter. ²³Jesus was walking on Solomon's porch in the Temple courtyard.

²⁴The Jews surrounded him. They asked him: How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah *christos*, tell us plainly. ²⁵Jesus answered them: I've told you, but you don't believe me. The things that I do in my Father's name testify on my behalf.

Jesus Says that Only His Sheep Believe in Him

²⁶ However, you don't believe because you're not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep respond to my voice, and I know who they are. They follow me ²⁸ and I give them Eternal Life. They will never be lost, and no one will tear them away from me. ²⁹ My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than everyone else, and no one can tear them away from my Father.

Jesus Says that He Is One with God

³⁰ The Father and I are one.

³¹ The Jews had again brought some rocks to stone Jesus to death. ³² Jesus replied to them: I've shown you many good things that come from the Father. For which of these good things do you want to stone me to death?

³³ The Jews answered Jesus: We're going to stone you to death not for any good things you've done, but for dishonoring God. You claim to be God, although you're only a man

Jesus Doesn't Deny that He is the Son of God

³⁴ Jesus said to them: Don't your Scriptures say: I said: You are gods? **Psalm 82:6.** ³⁵ The Scriptures cannot be discredited. So if God calls people gods and they are the people to whom he gave the Scriptures, ³⁶ why do you say that I'm dishonoring God because I said: I'm the Son of God? God set me apart for this holy purpose and has sent me into the world.

Jesus Says: If You Don't Believe Me, Then Believe My Signs

³⁷ If I'm not doing the things my Father does, don't believe me. ³⁸ But if I'm doing those things and you refuse to believe me, then at least believe the things that I'm doing. Then you will know and recognize that the Father is in me and that I am in the Father.

³⁹ The Jews tried to arrest Jesus again, but he got away from them. ⁴⁰ He went back across the Jordan River and stayed in the place where John first baptized people.

⁴¹ Many people went to Jesus. They said: John didn't perform any miracles *semeion*-sign, but everything John said about this man is true. ⁴² Many people there believed in Jesus.

COMMENT

Jesus is still talking to the Pharisees in the Temple courtyards. First, he differentiates between good and bad shepherds. God does this a lot in the Hebrew Bible, especially in **Ezekiel 34:1-31**. The shepherds are treating God's sheep so badly God says:

So I will rescue my sheep and they will no longer be prey. I will judge between one sheep and another. I will place one shepherd over them, my servant David, and he will take care of them. He will take care of them and be their shepherd. I, the Lord, will be their God and my servant David will be their prince. I, the Lord, have spoken. **Ezekiel 34:22-24**

Jesus says he walks ahead of the sheep calling them by name and they respond to his voice. They won't follow a stranger. So Jesus says: **I AM the gate or door for the Sheep. All who enter the sheep pen through me will be saved.** Later Jesus will tell his disciples:

I AM the way, the truth, and the life. No one goes to the Father except through me. **John 14:6**

Jesus also says: **I AM the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep. I know my sheep and my sheep know me as I know the Father. So I give my life for the sheep.**

Here Jesus talks about his upcoming death on the cross and his resurrection.

Jesus expands on this saying: *I have other sheep that are not from this pen. I must lead them. They too will respond to my voice. So they will be one flock with one shepherd.*

Here Jesus speaks of the Gentile mission that his disciples will conduct after he has returned to Heaven.

Now we move from fall to December when the Jews celebrate the Feast of Hanukkah, the time when the Temple was rededicated after the Syrian King Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the altar by sacrificing a pig to Zeus and started the Maccabean Rebellion in 164 BC.

The Jews surround Jesus and ask him to declare himself as the Messiah publicly. Jesus says he already had *but you don't believe me because you are not my sheep. My sheep respond to my voice, and I know who there are. I give them Eternal Life and they will never be lost.*

No one can tear them away from my Father. The Father and I are one. **John 10:29-30**

At this the Jews attempt to stone Jesus again. Jesus asks: Why? They said *because you're making yourself equal with God and you're only a man.* Jesus alludes to a Scripture but then says *at least believe my signs. This way you will know that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.*

Jesus now leaves Jerusalem and goes back to the east side of the Jordan River where John first baptized people. Many people followed Jesus saying everything John the Baptist said about Jesus is true.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How does a person become one of Jesus' sheep?
2. What does it mean to hear the Shepherd's voice? **John 10:4**
3. Jesus says his sheep must enter the sheep pen through him to be saved? **John 10:9.** Jesus is very exclusive saying there is no other way to come to God. How did the Jews come to God before Jesus?
4. What does it mean to know Jesus? **John 10:14**
5. Jesus says he gives his life for the sheep. **John 10:11.** But Jesus never explains why he does this. Why not?
6. Jesus says he gives his life and then takes it back again. **John 10:18.** What does he mean?
7. Do the Jews understand that Jesus is going to bring Gentiles into his flock? **John 10:16.** What Scriptures could Jesus cite that says God wants him to do this?

EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus perhaps describes his identity the most clearly in this pericope. He speaks in ways people can easily understand. Yet the Pharisees still won't believe him. They are well acquainted with the Hebrew Bible. Why can't they see that Jesus is speaking the truth and that he is speaking from Scripture?

PERICOPE 19

Jesus Brings Lazarus Back to Life

Jesus said to her: I am the one who brings people back to life and I am life itself. Those who believe in me will live even if they die. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe that? **John 11:25-26**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

¹Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, the village where Mary and her sister Martha lived, was sick. ²Mary was the woman who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. **John 12:3**. Her brother Lazarus was the one who was sick.

³So the sisters sent a messenger to tell Jesus: Lord, your close friend *hos*-he who you *phileo*-love is sick *astheneo*-weak.

⁴When Jesus heard the message, he said: His sickness won't result in death. Instead, this sickness will bring glory *doxa* to God so that the Son of God will receive glory *doxazo* through it.

⁵Jesus loved *agapao* Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶Yet, when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days.

⁷Then, after the two days, Jesus said to his disciples: Let's go back to Judea.

⁸The disciples said to him: Rabbi, not long ago the Jews wanted to stone you to death. Do you really want to go back there?

⁹Jesus answered: Aren't there twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day don't stumble because they see the light of this world.

¹⁰However, those who walk at night stumble because they have no light in themselves.

¹¹After Jesus said this, he told his disciples: Our friend Lazarus is sleeping and I'm going to Bethany to wake him.

¹² His disciples said to him: Lord, if he's sleeping, he'll get well.

¹³ Jesus meant that Lazarus was dead, but the disciples thought Jesus meant that Lazarus was only sleeping. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly: Lazarus has died ¹⁵ but I'm glad that I wasn't there so that you can grow in faith. Let's go to Lazarus.

¹⁶ Thomas, who was called Didymus, said to the rest of the disciples: Let's go so that we too can die with Jesus.

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, not quite two miles away. ¹⁹ Many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. Mary stayed at home. ²¹ Martha told Jesus: Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask him.

²³ Jesus told Martha: Your brother will come back to life.

²⁴ Martha answered Jesus: I know that he'll come back to life on the Last Day, when everyone will come back to life. **Daniel 12:2**

²⁵ Jesus said to her: **I AM** the one who brings people back to life, and I am life itself. [**I AM** the Resurrection and the Life. KJV.] Those who believe in me will live even if they die. ²⁶ Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe that?

²⁷ Martha said to him: Yes Lord. I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who was expected to come into the world.

²⁸ After Martha had said this, she went back home and whispered to her sister Mary: The teacher is here, and he is calling for you.

²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. ³⁰ Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still where Martha had met him. ³¹ The Jews who were comforting Mary in the house saw her get up quickly and

leave. So they followed her. They thought that she was going to the tomb to cry. ³²When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said: Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died.

³³When Jesus saw her crying *klaio*, and the Jews who were crying *klaio* with her, he was deeply moved *embrimaomai*-groaned 5x *pneuma*-spirit and troubled *tarasso*-agitated.

³⁴So Jesus asked: Where did you put Lazarus?"

They answered him: Lord, come and see.

³⁵Jesus cried *dakryo*^{IX}. ³⁶The Jews said: See how much Jesus loved *phileo* him.

³⁷But some of the Jews asked: Couldn't this man who gave a blind man sight keep Lazarus from dying?

³⁸Deeply moved again *embrimaomai*-groaning *heautou*-himself, Jesus went to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone covering the entrance. ³⁹Jesus said: Take the stone away.

Martha, the dead man's sister, told Jesus: Lord, there must already be a stench. He's been dead for four days.

⁴⁰Jesus said to her: Didn't I tell you that if you believe *pisteuo* you would see God's glory *doxa*? ⁴¹So the stone was moved away from the entrance of the tomb.

Jesus looked up and said: Father, I thank you for hearing me. ⁴²I've known that you always hear me. However, I've said this so that the crowd standing around me will believe that you sent me. ⁴³After Jesus had said this, he shouted as loudly as he could: Lazarus come out.

⁴⁴The dead man came out. Strips of cloth were wound around his feet and hands and his face was wrapped with a handkerchief. Jesus told them: Free Lazarus and let him go.

COMMENT

Jesus knew Lazarus and his two sisters quite well. John the Baptist had sent Lazarus to Jesus as his first disciple along with Andrew. **John 1:35, 40**. So Jesus stayed with Lazarus in Bethany whenever he was in Jerusalem. **Luke 10:38-39**

Jesus and his disciples are in Perea outside the city of Jerusalem as the Jews were attempting to stone him to death there. He receives a coded message from the sisters of Lazarus saying Lazarus is quite weak and near to death. The coded message calls Lazarus *the one whom you love* using a friendship word of love *phileo*, so as to disguise his identity and location.

Jesus tells his disciples, the first time they are mentioned since the Bread of Life sermon in Galilee, that Lazarus' sickness will bring glory to the Son of God. However, Jesus did not go to Bethany immediately but stayed where he was allowing Lazarus to die. Jews believed that a dead person's soul hovered over the body for four days and then left for Sheol.

After these days, Jesus said to his disciples: *Let's go back to Judea*. Some protested as they had heard about the attempts to stone Jesus, but Thomas said: *Let's go so that we can die with Jesus*.

Jesus and the disciples arrived at Bethany where Martha met Jesus. *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now, I know that God will give you whatever you ask*. Jesus replied: *Your brother will come back to life*. Martha replied: *I know he'll come back to life on the Last Day when everyone is raised back to life*.

Jesus then said: **I AM** *the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live spiritually even if they physically die. Do you believe this?* Martha replied: *I believe you are the Messiah who was anticipated to come into the world*.

Now Mary runs to meet Jesus. She also says: *Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died*. Jesus responds by first groaning in his spirit and then saying: *Where have you put Lazarus?* They showed him the tomb. Jesus wept. This Greek word appears only once in the Bible.

Jesus then prayed to God so that people would know God was raising Lazarus by working through Jesus. Then he shouted loudly: *Lazarus, come out*. The dead man came out wrapped in grave clothes. Jesus ordered them: *Free Lazarus and let him go*.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Thomas and the Galilean disciples are quite brave to go to Judea given the reports of Jews wanting to stone Jesus. What does this say about their faith in Jesus?
2. Jesus allows Lazarus to die to give God glory by raising him from the dead. But isn't this hard on the two unmarried sisters of Lazarus? They will have no one to support them.
3. Martha makes a wonderful confession of her belief in Jesus as the Messiah. But when she reminds Jesus that Lazarus' body stinketh after four days **John 11:39**, does she really expect Jesus to raise Lazarus to life right then and there?
4. Why doesn't Jesus answer Mary's complaint?
5. What does it mean for Jesus to groan in his spirit or in himself and weep? What does that reveal about Jesus?
6. Why did Jesus shout as loudly as he could? **John 11:43**
7. How did Lazarus come out of the tomb? He was bound head to foot with linen cloths.

PERICOPE 20

The Jewish Council Plans to Kill Jesus

One of them, Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, told them: You people don't know anything. You haven't even considered this: It is better for one man to die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed.

John 11:49-50

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

⁴⁵ Many Jews who had visited Mary and had seen what Jesus had done believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council *synedrion*-Sanhedrin.

They asked: What are we doing? This man is performing a lot of miracles *semeion*-signs. ⁴⁸ If we let him continue what he's doing, everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will take away our position *topos*-place, temple and our nation.

⁴⁹ One of them, Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, told them, You people don't know anything. ⁵⁰ You haven't even considered this: It is better for one man to die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed.

⁵¹ Caiaphas didn't say this on his own. As High Priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation. ⁵² He prophesied that Jesus wouldn't die merely for this nation, but that Jesus would die to bring God's scattered children together and make them one.

⁵³ From that day on, the Jewish council planned to kill Jesus. ⁵⁴ So Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews. Instead, he left Bethany and went to the countryside near the desert, to a city called Ephraim where he stayed with his disciples.

⁵⁵The Jewish Passover was near. Many people came from the countryside to Jerusalem to purify themselves before the Passover. ⁵⁶As they stood in the Temple courtyard, they looked for Jesus and asked each other: Do you think that he'll avoid coming to the festival? ⁵⁷The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that whoever knew where Jesus was should tell them so that they could arrest him.

COMMENT

The Jewish Sanhedrin ruled Judea as Israel's High Court under the Roman Governor's permission. The High Priest was supposed to be called by God and was in office for life. An accused murderer must live in a City of Refuge until the High Priest died. **Numbers 35:25**

But King Herod the Great began appointing High Priests as he desired and the Romans continued the practice when the Province of Judea was formed by Rome after Herod's Death.

Annas was appointed by the Roman legate Quirinius as the first High Priest in the newly formed Roman Province of Judea in 6 AD. He served until 16 AD when his son Eleazar was appointed High Priest. Joseph Caiaphas was appointed in 18 AD and served until 36 AD. Yet Annas was the last living High Priest, the father-in-law of Caiaphas so he still had a say in the Sanhedrin.

The Sanhedrin had 70 members and the High Priest. It tried all cases from the lower courts and could arrest and punish offenders. However, the Roman Governor retained the right of capital punishment.

When people declared Jesus the coming Messiah who would overthrow the Romans and establish his throne in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin saw Jesus as a threat to their own power and position. The Romans might cancel Passover and close the Temple unless Jesus was taken out of the way. So from that day the Sanhedrin planned to arrest Jesus and then hand him over to the Roman Governor for execution.

Jesus wisely stayed away from Jerusalem until his hour had come.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why was Jesus' raising of Lazarus from death to life the primary reason for the Sanhedrin's decision to kill Jesus?

2. The Sanhedrin had attempted to arrest Jesus before, but their guards refused. **John 7:45**. What would they do differently this time?

3. The Jewish High Priest was supposed to have the power of prophecy. If he did, why wasn't Caiaphas afraid of God when he ordered Jesus killed? He would not only be breaking one of the Ten Commandments, he would be crucifying the Son of God? He was definitely choosing to ignore the evidence he had received. What evidence had he been given?

4. When Jesus was later arrested by the Sanhedrin, he was first taken to Annas instead of Caiaphas. **John 18:12-13**. Why?

5. Why doesn't the Beloved Disciple report a trial of Jesus by Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin as the synoptic Gospels do?

PERICOPE 21

Mary of Bethany Anoints Jesus' Body for Burial

Leave her alone. She had done this to prepare me for the day I will be placed in a tomb. You will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me with you. **John 12:7**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

^{12:1} Six days before Passover, Jesus arrived in Bethany. Lazarus, whom Jesus had brought back to life, lived there. ² Dinner was prepared for Jesus in Bethany. Martha served the dinner and Lazarus was one of the people eating with Jesus.

³ Mary took a bottle of very expensive perfume made from pure nard and poured it on Jesus' feet. Then she dried his feet with her hair. The fragrance of the perfume filled the house.

⁴ One of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was going to betray him, asked: ⁵ Why wasn't this perfume sold for a high price and the money given to the poor? ⁶ Judas didn't say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. He was in charge of the moneybag and carried the contributions.

⁷ Jesus said to Judas: Leave her alone. She has done this to prepare me for the day I will be placed in a tomb. ⁸ You will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me with you.

⁹ A large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was in Bethany. So they went there not only to see Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had brought back to life.

The Chief Priests Planned to Kill Lazarus as He Was a Living Witness of Jesus' Sign

¹⁰ The chief priests planned to kill Lazarus too. ¹¹ Lazarus was the reason why many people were leaving the Jews and believing in Jesus.

COMMENT

This Gospel sees Jesus' raising of Lazarus from death to life as the primary reason Jesus had to be eliminated. The synoptic Gospels see Jesus' cleansing of the Temple as the chief reason the Sanhedrin handed Jesus over to the Romans to be executed.

Notice that in this Gospel, this is the last time the name Lazarus appears. But in **John 13:23** *the disciple whom Jesus loved appears*. Of course, this is Lazarus. The name Lazarus no more appears in this Gospel.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why does Lazarus' sister Mary anoint Jesus' feet instead of on his head as the synoptic Gospels portray her doing? **Mark 15:3; Matthew 26:7**

2. Jesus says Israel will always have poor. But Moses says:

In any case, there shouldn't be any poor people among you because the Lord your God will certainly bless you in the land he is giving you as your possession. **Deuteronomy 15:4**

What creates poor people in the land of Israel?

3. Why would the chief priests plan to kill Lazarus? Wouldn't this violate the Sixth Commandment? **Exodus 20:13**

4. Why do I say that Lazarus is the disciple whom Jesus loved, the person who wrote this Gospel?

PERICOPE 22

Jesus Enters Jerusalem as the King of the Jews

Hosanna. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. **John 12:13**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

The King Comes to Jerusalem

^{12:12} On the next day the large crowd that had come to the Passover Festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took palm branches and went to meet him. They were shouting:

Hosanna! **Psalm 118:25**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel. **Psalm 118:26**

¹⁴ Jesus obtained a donkey and sat on it, as Scripture says:

¹⁵ “Don’t be afraid, people of Zion! Your King is coming. He is riding on a donkey’s colt. **Zechariah 9:9-10**

¹⁶ At first Jesus’ disciples didn’t know what these prophecies meant. However, when Jesus was glorified, the disciples remembered that these prophecies had been written about him. The disciples remembered that they had taken part in fulfilling the prophecies.

¹⁷ The people who had been with Jesus when he called Lazarus from the tomb and brought him back to life reported what they had seen. ¹⁸ Because the crowd heard that Jesus had performed this miracle, they came to meet him.

¹⁹ The Pharisees said to each other: This is getting us nowhere. Look. The whole world is following him.

COMMENT

All four Gospels portray Jesus entering the City of Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Zechariah's prophecy of this event is:

Rejoice with all your heart, people of Zion. Shout in triumph, people of Jerusalem. Look. Your King is coming to you: He is righteous and victorious. He is humble and rides on a donkey, on a colt, a young pack animal.

He will make sure there are no chariots in Ephraim or war horses in Jerusalem. There will be no battle bows. He will announce peace to the nations. He will rule from sea to sea and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth. **Zechariah 9:9-10**

In **Matthew 21:12-16** and **Luke 19:45-46**, after this Jesus goes to the Jerusalem Temple and cleanses it. Mark says Jesus does this the next day. **Mark 11:11**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why isn't Jesus arrested by the Romans for making a disturbance?
2. Why exactly does Jesus make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem? What does he hope to accomplish?
3. Why aren't Jesus' disciples afraid of being arrested?
4. Why is it important that Jesus do this at the Festival of Passover?
5. Why doesn't Jesus perform a teaching in the Temple after doing this?
6. Why does Jesus ride a donkey and not simply walk into the city?
7. Did Jesus actually enter the city riding on a donkey or did he get off and walk into the city after going over the Mount of Olives?

PERICOPE 23

When I am Lifted Up, I Will Draw All People to Myself

When I have been lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people toward me.
John 12:32

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Some Greeks Ask to See Jesus

^{12:20} Some Greeks were among those who came to worship during the Passover festival. ²¹ They went to Philip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee and told him: Sir, we would like to meet Jesus. ²² Philip told Andrew, and they told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied to them: The time *hora*-hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified *doxazo*.

Jesus' Only Parable in This Gospel

²⁴ I can guarantee this truth: A single grain of wheat doesn't produce anything unless it is planted in the ground and dies. If it dies, it will produce a lot of grain.

²⁵ Those who love their lives will destroy them and those who hate their lives in this world will guard them for everlasting life.

This verse appears in all four Gospels.

²⁶ Those who serve me must follow me. My servants will be with me wherever I will be. If people serve me, the Father will honor them.

²⁷ I am too deeply troubled *tarasso* now to know how to express my feelings. Should I say: Father save *sozo* me from this time *hora*-hour <of suffering>? No. I came for this time *hora*-hour of suffering. ²⁸ Father, give glory *doxazo* to your name.

A voice from Heaven said: I have given it glory *doxazo* and I will give it glory *doxazo* again.

²⁹The crowd standing there heard the voice and said that it had thundered. Others in the crowd said that an angel had talked to him. ³⁰Jesus replied: That voice wasn't for my benefit but for yours.

³¹This world is being judged now. The ruler of this world will be thrown out now.

³²When I have been lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people toward me. ³³By saying this, he indicated how he was going to die.

³⁴The crowd responded to him: We have heard from the Scriptures that the Messiah will remain here forever.

[Your royal house will remain in my presence forever. Your throne will be established forever. **2 Samuel 7:16**]

So how can you say: The Son of Man must be lifted up from the earth? Who is this Son of Man?

³⁵Jesus answered the crowd: The light will still be with you for a little while. Walk while you have light so that darkness won't defeat you. Those who walk in the dark don't know where they're going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light so that you will become people whose lives show the light.

After Jesus had said this, he was concealed as he left. ³⁷Although they had seen Jesus perform so many miracles, they wouldn't believe in him. ³⁸In this way the words of the prophet Isaiah came true:

Lord, who has believed our message? To whom has the Lord's power been revealed? **Isaiah 53:1**

³⁹So the people couldn't believe because, as Isaiah also said:

⁴⁰God blinded them and made them close-minded so that their eyes don't see, and their minds don't understand. And they never turn to me for healing. **Isaiah 6:10**

⁴¹Isaiah said this because he had seen Jesus' glory *doxa* and had spoken about him.

⁴²Many rulers believed in Jesus. However, they wouldn't admit it publicly because the Pharisees would have thrown them out of the synagogue.

⁴³They were more concerned about what people thought of them than about what God thought of them.

⁴⁴Then Jesus said loudly: Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me. ⁴⁵Whoever sees me sees the one who sent me.

⁴⁶**I AM** the light that has come into the world so that everyone who believes in me will not live in the dark.

⁴⁷If anyone hears my words and doesn't follow them, I don't condemn them. I didn't come to condemn the world but to save the world. **John 3:17.** ⁴⁸Those who reject me by not accepting what I say have a judge appointed for them. The words that I have spoken will judge them on the Last Day.

⁴⁹I have not spoken on my own. Instead, the Father who sent me told me what I should say and how I should say it. ⁵⁰I know that what he commands is Eternal Life. Whatever I say is what the Father told me to say.

COMMENT

This pericope is a summary of Jesus' public ministry. Many of Jesus' statements here will be repeated in his Upper Room Discourse to his disciples. After Jesus dies and is resurrected, Jesus will only appear to his disciples. The world will see him no more.

When Jesus hears of the Greek-speaking Jews wanting to see him, he senses the Gentile mission conducted by his disciples will soon come after his death. Jesus' crucifixion is his glorification. His hour is almost here.

Jesus' thinks of his crucifixion and the suffering it will cause but only for a moment. In the synoptic Gospels, Jesus agonizes for three hours in the Garden of Gethsemane before he is arrested.

The crowd asks: *Why must the Son of Man be lifted up?* Jesus answers them by stating the facts. The light will be with you only a little longer. Believe in me and obey my words. Then you will have light in the way you live. Then he was concealed.

Lazarus takes these opportunities to point to Jesus' close association with the prophet Isaiah. Jesus paraphrases many of Isaiah's words. Then Jesus' primary teaching of his close association with the Father is repeated. Jesus only speaks what the Father has told him to say. And he commands Eternal Life.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why will all people be drawn to Jesus when they see him crucified? **John 12:32**. Look at what Luke says the people did when they went home after the crucifixion. **Luke 24:48 KJV**
2. Isaiah has said:

The people who walk in darkness have seen a bright light. The light will shine on those who live in the land of death's shadow. **Isaiah 9:2**

Compare Jesus' teaching on light and darkness. How does a person stay in the light?

3. Why does Jesus say the Ruler of This World will be thrown out at Jesus' crucifixion? Will he be unable to continue to tempt people to sin?
4. How will Jesus' words judge a person at the Last Day?
5. Jesus emphasizes God wants people to have Eternal Life. Define it.
6. When did the prophet Isaiah see Jesus' glory? How did Isaiah speak about Jesus?
7. What difference did it make if the Pharisees threw a Jew out of their local synagogue because they believed in Jesus?

EXTRA CREDIT

Locate in **John 12 and 14-17** where Jesus repeats the things he says here.

PERICOPE 24

Jesus Teaches His Disciples Servant Leadership

If I, your teacher, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. I've given you an example you should follow. **John 13:14-15**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

^{13:1} Before the Passover festival, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go back to the Father. Jesus loved *agapao* his own who were in the world, and he loved *agapao* them to the end *telos*.

² While supper was taking place, the Devil had already put the idea of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot.

³ The Father had put everything in Jesus' control. Jesus knew that. He also knew that he had come from God and was going back to God. ⁴ So he got up from the table, removed his outer clothes, took a towel, and tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel that he had tied around his waist.

⁶ When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter asked him: Lord, are you going to wash my feet?

⁷ Jesus answered Peter: You don't know now what I'm doing. You will understand later.

⁸ Peter told Jesus: You will never wash my feet.

Jesus replied to Peter: If I don't wash you, you don't belong to me.

⁹ Simon Peter said to Jesus: Lord, don't wash only my feet. Wash my hands and my head too.

¹⁰ Jesus told Peter: People who have washed are completely clean. They need to have only their feet washed. All of you, except for one, are clean. ¹¹ Jesus knew who was going to betray him. That's why he said: All of you, except for one are clean.

¹² After Jesus had washed their feet and put on his outer clothes, he took his place at the table again. Then he asked his disciples: Do you understand what I've done for you? ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord and you're right because that's what I am. ¹⁴ So if I your Lord and teacher have washed your feet you must wash each other's feet. ¹⁵ I've given you an example that you should follow.

¹⁶ I can guarantee this truth: Slaves are not superior to their owners and messengers are not superior to the people who send them. ¹⁷ If you understand all of this you are blessed whenever you follow my example.

¹⁸ I'm not talking about all of you. I know the people I've chosen. However, I've made my choice so that Scripture will come true. It says: The one who eats *trogo* my bread has turned against me. **Psalm 41:9**. ¹⁹ I'm telling you now before it happens. Then when it happens you will believe that **I *ego* Am *eimi* <the one>**.

²⁰ I can guarantee this truth: Whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.

COMMENT

Jesus gives his disciples a lesson in servant leadership. Jesus' disciples must be the servants of all just as Jesus has been a servant of all. This is the one of the most important lessons for a disciple of Jesus. They must be humble.

Throughout the supper, Jesus lets the disciples know that one of his disciples will hand him over to his enemies. He will allude to this several times. Then he ends by saying: If you accept me, you accept my Father. Jesus' close identification with his Father will be a primary subject at this meeting.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How proud Jesus' disciples must have acted to cause Jesus to wash their feet. Are there any examples of their proud behavior in this or in the synoptic Gospels? HINT: Read the disciples' reaction after each of Jesus' three Passion Predictions.
2. Why does Peter think he knows better than Jesus what to do? **John 13:8**
3. Why does Jesus at the beginning of this Last Supper announce that one of the disciples now at the table will betray him and not wait until later?
4. Why does Jesus say all of his disciples except for one are clean? **John 13:11**
5. How does Jesus show his love for his disciples?
6. In **Luke 22:21-27**, just after Jesus has announced that one of his disciples sitting at the table will betray him, the disciples argue about who will be the greatest. Then Jesus gives a short speech about servant leadership paralleling his act of washing the disciples' feet. Then he amazingly promises that these disciples will eat and drink with him at his table in his Kingdom. Why is Jesus so compassionate with these disciples?

PERICOPE 25

Jesus Announces His Betrayer and Peter's Denial of Him

When Judas was gone, Jesus said: The Son of Man is now glorified, and because of him God is glorified. If God is glorified because of the Son of Man, God will glorify the Son of Man because of himself, and he will glorify the Son of Man at once. **John 14:31-32**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Knows Who Will Betray Him

^{13:21} After saying this, Jesus was deeply troubled *tarasso pneuma*-spirit. He declared: I can guarantee this truth: One of you is going to betray me.

²² The disciples began looking at each other and wondering which one of them Jesus meant.

The First Appearance of the Beloved Disciple

²³ One disciple, the one whom Jesus loved *agapao*, was near him at the table.

²⁴ Simon Peter motioned to that disciple and said: Ask Jesus whom he's talking about. ²⁵ Leaning close to Jesus, that disciple asked: Lord who is it?

Jesus Identifies His Betrayer

²⁶ Jesus answered: He's the one to whom I will give this piece of bread after I've dipped it in the sauce. So Jesus dipped the bread and gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot.

²⁷ Then after Judas took the piece of bread, Satan entered him. So Jesus told him: Hurry! Do what you have to do. ²⁸ No one at the table knew why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹ Judas had the moneybag. So some thought that Jesus was telling him to buy what they needed for the festival or to give something to the poor.

³⁰ Judas took the piece of bread and immediately went outside. It was night.

³¹ When Judas was gone, Jesus said: The Son of Man is now glorified *doxazo* and because of him God is glorified *doxazo*. ³² If God is glorified *doxazo* because of the Son of Man, God will glorify *doxazo* the Son of Man because of himself and he will glorify *doxazo* the Son of Man at once.

³³ Jesus said: Dear children, I will still be with you for a little while. I'm telling you what I told the Jews. You will look for me, but you can't go where I'm going.

³⁴ I'm giving you a new commandment: Love *agapao* each other in the same way that I have loved *agapao* you. ³⁵ Everyone will know that you are my disciples because of your love *agapao* for each other.

³⁶ Simon Peter asked him: Lord, where are you going?

Jesus answered him: You can't follow me now to the place where I'm going. However, you will follow me later.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

³⁷ Peter said to Jesus: Lord, why can't I follow you now? I'll give my life for you.

³⁸ Jesus replied: Will you give your life for me? I can guarantee this truth: No rooster will crow until you say three times that you don't know me.

COMMENT

Lazarus gets right down to the Last Supper in his Gospel without any preliminaries. He apparently has arranged this Upper Room for Jesus and his disciples in crowded Jerusalem as many pilgrims have come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Passover. This is the third Passover Festival mentioned in this Gospel.

Presumably, the disciples are there to recite the Passover Seder, the story of the Jews' Exodus from Egypt because of God's deliverance. But Jesus begins the event by washing the disciples' feet. How embarrassed they are. Peter refuses to have Jesus wash his feet until Jesus warns Peter to follow orders.

Jesus announces his betrayer is at the table. Peter motions to the Beloved Disciple sitting at Jesus' right hand – the place of honor with Judas Iscariot at Jesus' left. Peter says: *Ask him who it is.* Jesus hands a piece of bread to Judas after having dipped it in the bowl. Yet the disciples still don't know who the betrayer is. Then Jesus tells Judas: *Hurry, do what you have to do.* And again, still the disciples do not figure out Judas is the betrayer.

Jesus now gives his disciples a new commandment. *Love one another in the same way that I have loved you.* Peter then asks Jesus the first question: *Where are you going?* At the Passover Seder, four children ask the host four traditional questions. This certainly is not one of the traditional questions. Jesus answers Peter by saying: *You can't follow me now, but you will later.*

This does not satisfy Peter. He says: *Why can't I follow you now? I will give up my life for you.* Jesus replies: *Tonight you will say three times you don't know me.* Peter will now say nothing more. Peter obviously has not learned the lesson Jesus taught of humility and being a servant.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why is the Beloved Disciple sitting at the place of honor? Who else would the disciples allow to sit there?
2. Why does Jesus announce his betrayer is sitting at the table? How does he anticipate the disciples will react to this news?
3. Why is Jesus deeply troubled as he announces the betrayer is at the table? Jesus has known this from the beginning. **John 6:70-71**
4. Why does Jesus order Judas to go betray him? **John 13:27**
5. Why does Lazarus say Satan entered into Judas at this time? Hasn't Judas planned to do this before? It doesn't seem to be a spur of the moment event.
6. When Judas goes out, why don't the disciples conclude he is the betrayer?
7. Explain the reason Jesus gives a new commandment. What is new about this commandment?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why doesn't the Beloved Disciple present the words of the institution of the Eucharist like the synoptic Gospels do? **Mark 14:22-24; Matthew 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20**

PERICOPE 26

Jesus Promises to Send the Holy Spirit

If you love me, you will obey my commandments. I will ask the Father and he will give you another Helper *parakletos* who will be with you forever. That Helper is the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him because it doesn't see or know him. You know him because he lives with you and will be in you. **John 14:15-17**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

¹Don't be troubled. Believe in God, and believe in me. ²My Father's house has many rooms. If that were not true, would I have told you that I'm going to prepare a place for you? ³If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again. Then I will bring you into my presence so that you will be where I am. ⁴You know *eido* the way to the place where I am going.

⁵Thomas said to him: Lord, we don't know where you're going. So how can we know the way?

Here is the second of the four questions usually asked at the Jewish Seder.

⁶Jesus answered him: **I AM the way** *hodos*, **the truth** *aletheia*, **and the life** *zoe*. No one goes to the Father except through me.

⁷If you have known *ginosko* me, you will also know *ginosko* my Father. From now on you know *ginosko* him<through me> and have seen *horao* him <in me>.

Here is the third of the four questions.

⁸Philip said to Jesus: Lord, show us the Father and that will satisfy us.

⁹Jesus replied: I have been with all of you for a long time. Don't you know *ginosko* me yet, Philip? The person who has seen *horao* me has seen *horao* the Father. So how can you say: Show us the Father?

¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am *in* the Father and the Father is *in* me? What I'm telling you doesn't come from me. The Father, who lives *in* me, does what he wants. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am *in* the Father and that the Father is *in* me. Otherwise, believe me because of the things I do.

Jesus Promises His Disciples They Will Do the Things He Does

¹² I can guarantee this truth: Those who believe in me will do the things that I am doing. They will do even greater things because I am going to the Father.

Jesus Wants His Disciples to Pray to the Father in His Name

¹³ I will do anything you ask *aito* <the Father> in my name so that the Father will be given glory because of the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask *aito* me to do something, I will do it.

Jesus Promises His Father Will Give the Disciples the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ If you love *agapao* me, you will obey *tereo*-keep my commandments. ¹⁶ I will ask the Father and he will give you another *allos* Helper who will be *meno*-abide, live with you forever. ¹⁷ That Helper is the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him because it doesn't see or know him. You know him, because he lives *with* you and will be *in* you.

¹⁸ I will not leave you all alone. I will come back to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. You will live because I live.

²⁰ On that day you will know *ginosko* that I am *in* my Father and that you are *in* me and that I am *in* you.

²¹ Whoever knows and obeys my commandments is the person who loves *agapao* me. Those who love *agapao* me will have my Father's love *agapao* and I too will love *agapao* them and show myself to them.

The fourth question is asked.

²² Judas (not Iscariot) asked Jesus: Lord, what has happened that you are going to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?

²³Jesus answered him: Those who love *agapao* me will do what I say. My Father will love *agapao* them, and we will go to them and make our home *mone*-abode with them. ²⁴A person who doesn't love *agapao* me doesn't do what I say. I don't make up what you hear me say. What I say comes from the Father who sent me.

²⁵"I have told you this while I'm still with you. ²⁶However, the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything. He will remind you of everything that I have ever told you.

²⁷I'm leaving you peace *eirene*. I'm giving you my peace *eirene*. I don't give you the kind of peace *eirene* that the world *kosmos* gives. So don't be troubled *tarasso* or cowardly.

²⁸You heard me tell you: I'm going away, but I'm coming back to you. If you loved *agapao* me, you would be glad that I'm going to the Father because the Father is greater than I am.

²⁹"I'm telling you this now before it happens. When it does happen, you will believe. ³⁰The ruler *archon*-Prince of this world has no power over me. But he's coming so I won't talk with you much longer. ³¹However, I want the world to know that I love *agapao* the Father and that I am doing exactly what the Father has commanded me to do. Get up! We have to leave.

COMMENT

In this last conversation with the disciples, Jesus will mention many things he has said in the public ministry. We have a memory of the practice of the Jewish Seder as four disciples ask questions as did the four children.

First, Jesus assures the disciples that he is with them now and will always be with them. They have a vital connection with him that will never be broken if they live consistent with his words and continue to love him. This connection will be increased when he sends another Helper to them, the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the first Helper or Comforter, and the Holy Spirit is the second Helper.

The Holy Spirit will speak to the disciples. He will teach them and help them to remember the words of Jesus. Lazarus has been helped by the Holy Spirit as he writes this Gospel.

Remember that the Spirit of God has been active throughout the Hebrew Bible as he was with Moses, the Jewish elders, King David, and the prophets.

[The Lord answered Moses: Bring me 70 Israelite men who you know are leaders and officers of the people. Take them to the Tent of Meeting and have them stand with you. I'll take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will help you take care of the people. You won't have to take care of the people alone. **Numbers 11:16-17**]

[Samuel took the flask of holy oil and anointed David in the presence of his brothers. The Lord's Spirit came over David and stayed with him from that day on. Then Samuel left for Ramah. **1 Samuel 16:13**]

[Come here. Listen to this. From the beginning I have spoken nothing in private. From the time it took place, I was there. Now the Almighty Lord has sent me and his Spirit. **Isaiah 48:16**]

[But I am filled with the power of the Lord's Spirit, with justice, and with strength. So I will tell the descendants of Jacob about their crimes and the nation of Israel about their sins. **Micah 3:8**]

With his answers to the four questions, Jesus reinforces his close connection with the Father. Although Jesus has been given human form, he retains his deity that has never left him. Jesus says: *If you know me, you know the Father. If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. The Father lives in me, and I only do and say what he wants.*

Jesus encourages his disciples to pray. This means to ask the Father in Jesus name. Jesus says that his disciples will be able to do things he is now doing, and they will do even greater things. Here again, the Holy Spirit will help them.

Jesus promises his disciples will never be alone. Both he and the Father will come and make their home with the person who loves Jesus and obeys his words. With this, the disciples will have Jesus' peace – a peace that Paul says passes all understanding. **Philippians 4:7**

Then abruptly, Jesus is reminded that Judas and the Sanhedrin are coming. So he tells them: *Get up! We have to leave.* Now Jesus and his disciples walk east across the City of Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives where the garden is.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus has a difficult task with these Galilean disciples. Like he did in his Bread of Life discourse in **Pericope 13**, Jesus must help his disciples understand the difference between the physical world and the spiritual world. Jesus has a human body, but he still retains his deity. **John 1:1,14**. So when Jesus says *for those who love him and obey his commandments, the Father and the Son will come and make their home or abode with them*, he is saying they will be *in en* him. Paul will use this expression *in Christ* many times. Explain what it means to be *in Christ*?
2. Jesus says: *I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one goes to the Father except through me*. **John 14:6**. If one does not believe in Jesus, does that mean they cannot have a relationship with God?
3. Jesus wants his disciples to pray to the Father in his name. **John 14:13**. What does that mean exactly?
4. Jesus says his disciples will be able to do the things that he has done. **John 14:12**. How is this possible?
5. *God told Moses: But you can't see my face because no one may see me and live*. **Exodus 33:20**. How then can Jesus tell his disciples: *When you have seen me, you have seen God?* **John 14:7**
6. Jesus tells his disciples *the Holy Spirit lives with you and will be in you*. **John 14:17**. What does this mean?
7. Describe what *the peace of Jesus* is. **John 14:27**

EXTRA CREDIT

Did Jesus speak of the Holy Spirit before this in this Gospel. If so, where? Why will the action of the Holy Spirit be so important to the disciples after Jesus leaves the earth and returns to Heaven?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus says the world will no longer see him, but the disciples will see him. **John 14:18**. What does he mean?

What does it mean to love *agapao* Jesus? In Greek, there are four types of love: *Eros*--erotic love; *Storge*--love of family members; *Philia*--friendship; *Agape*--self-sacrificing love.

PERICOPE 27

Jesus Warns His Disciples They Must Live in Him as the True Vine

I AM the Vine. You are the branches. Those who live in me while I live in them will produce a lot of fruit. But you can't produce anything without me.
John 15:5

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus, the True Vine

^{15:1} I AM the true vine and my Father takes care of the vineyard. ² He removes every one of my branches that doesn't produce fruit *karpos*. He also prunes every branch that does produce fruit to make it produce more fruit.

³ You are already clean because of what I have told you. ⁴ Live *meno*-abide in me and I will live *meno* in you. A branch cannot produce any fruit by itself. It has to stay attached to the vine. In the same way, you cannot produce fruit unless you live *meno* in me.

⁵ I Am the vine. You are the branches. Those who live in me while I live in them will produce a lot of fruit. But you can't produce anything without me. ⁶ Whoever doesn't live in me is thrown away like a branch and dries up. Branches like this are gathered, thrown into a fire, and burned.

⁷ If you live in me and what I say lives in you, then ask for anything you want, and it will be yours. ⁸ You give glory *doxazo* to my Father when you produce a lot of fruit and therefore show that you are my disciples.

⁹ I have loved *agapao* you the same way the Father has loved *agapao* me. So live in my love *agape*. ¹⁰ If you obey my commandments, you will live in my love *agape*. I have obeyed my Father's commandments, and in that way I live in his love *agape*. ¹¹ I have told you this so that you will be as joyful *chara* as I am and your joy *chara* will be complete.

¹²Love *agapao* each other as I have loved *agapao* you. This is what I'm commanding you to do. ¹³The greatest love *agape* you can show is to give your life for your friends *philos*. ¹⁴You are my friends *philos* if you obey my commandments.

Jesus Calls His Disciples His Friends

¹⁵I don't call you servants *doulos* anymore, because a servant *doulos* doesn't know what his master *kyrios*-lord is doing. But I've called you friends *philos* because I've made known to you everything that I've heard from my Father.

¹⁶You didn't choose me, but I chose you. I have appointed you to go, to produce fruit that will last and to ask the Father in my name to give you whatever you ask for.

¹⁷Love *agapao* each other. This is what I'm commanding you to do.

Jesus Tells His Disciples to Expect Persecution

¹⁸"If the world hates you, realize that it hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹If you had anything in common with the world, the world would love you as one of its own. But you don't have anything in common with the world. I chose you from the world, and that's why the world hates you.

²⁰Remember what I told you: A servant isn't greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they did what I said, they will also do what you say. ²¹Indeed, they will do all this to you because you are committed to me, since they don't know the one who sent me.

²²If I hadn't come and spoken to them, they wouldn't have any sin. But now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³The person who hates me also hates my Father. ²⁴If I hadn't done among them what no one else has done, they wouldn't have any sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵In this way what is written in their Scriptures has come true: They hate me for no reason. **Psalm 69:4**

The Holy Spirit Will Help the Disciples Identify Jesus

²⁶The Helper whom I will send to you from the Father will come. This Helper, the Spirit of Truth who comes from the Father, will declare the truth about me. ²⁷You will declare the truth, too, because you have been with me from the beginning.

COMMENT

Jesus stresses here that his disciples must live or abide *meno* in him. Otherwise, they will be unable to perform their job as his disciples. This means they must continually love him and obey or keep *tereo* his words.

Jesus' words are important. So Lazarus in this Gospel includes most of Jesus' words. Note how Jesus emphasizes certain words, often using the same word three times in one or two sentences. We are going to hear the same words again and again from Jesus. This is also true in Hebrew poetry, especially in the Vision of Isaiah.

Jesus uses the picture of the vine and its branches to explain discipleship of him. Jesus is the vine while the disciples are the branches. If the disciples are to produce fruit for God, they must remain or abide in the vine. This close personal relationship between Jesus and his disciples enables the disciples to live in Jesus and he to live in them.

This concept of remaining in the vine means keeping Jesus' words. The Holy Spirit will help them to remember Jesus words and give them the power to do what they say.

Jesus speaks of his mission to die as a substitutional sacrificial atonement for human sin. He will give his life for his friends. Jesus makes a point of saying the disciples are not merely his servants but also his friends as he makes available to them everything he has heard from the Father.

But in contrast to Jesus' friendship with his disciples, there is a hostility of the world *kosmos* toward Jesus and his disciples. Because the prince of this world hates Jesus, he also convinces the world to hate Jesus and his disciples. But if Jesus' disciples stay attached to their vine by keeping his words, they will overcome the world as Jesus overcomes the world. **John 16:33**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. This is Jesus' most fundamental teaching on discipleship. His disciples must live or abide in him. Explain exactly what this means.

2. What is the fruit Jesus wants his disciples to produce for God?
3. How do disciples abide in Jesus' love?
4. What part does joy play in the life of a disciple of Jesus?
5. What is the difference between a servant and a friend?
6. Why does the world hate Jesus and his disciples?
7. How will the Holy Spirit declare the truth about Jesus to the disciples?

PERICOPE 28

Jesus Describes the Ministry of the Holy Spirit

When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into the full truth. He won't speak on his own. He will speak what he hears and tell you about things to come. **John 16:13**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Your Present Sadness Will Soon Turn to Joy

^{16:1} I have said these things to you so that you won't lose your faith. ²You will be thrown out of synagogues. Certainly, the time is coming when people who murder you will think that they are serving God. ³They will do these things to you because they haven't known the Father or me. ⁴But I've told you this so that when it happens you'll remember what I've told you. I didn't tell you this at first, because I was with you.

⁵Now I'm going to the one who sent me. Yet, none of you asks me where I'm going. ⁶But because I've told you this, you're filled with sadness. ⁷However, I am telling you the truth: It's good for you that I'm going away. If I don't go away, the Helper won't come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Three Ministries of the Holy Spirit

⁸He will come to convict the world of sin, to show the world what has God's approval, and to convince the world that God judges it.

⁹He will convict the world of sin, because people don't believe in me.

¹⁰He will show the world what has God's approval because I'm going to the Father and you won't see me anymore.

¹¹He will convince the world that God judges it because the Ruler of This World has been judged.

¹² I have a lot more to tell you, but that would be too much for you now. ¹³ When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into the full truth. He won't speak on his own. He will speak what he hears and will tell you about things to come. ¹⁴ He will give me glory *doxazo* because he will tell you what I say. ¹⁵ Everything the Father says is also what I say. That is why I said: He will take what I say and tell it to you.

How Long Is a Little While?

¹⁶ In a little while *mikron* you won't see me anymore. Then in a little while *mikron* you will see me again.

¹⁷ Some of his disciples said to each other: What does he mean? He tells us that in a little while *mikron* we won't see him. Then he tells us that in a little while *mikron* we will see him again and that he's going to the Father. ¹⁸ So they were asking each other: What does he mean when he says: In a little while *mikron*? We don't understand what he's talking about.

¹⁹ Jesus knew they wanted to ask him something. So he said to them: Are you trying to figure out among yourselves what I meant when I said: In a little while *mikron* you won't see me and in a little while *mikron* you will see me again?

²⁰ I can guarantee this truth: You will cry because you are sad, but the world will be happy *chairo*-rejoice. You will feel pain, but your pain will turn to happiness *chara*-joy. ²¹ A woman has pain when her time to give birth comes. But after the child is born, she doesn't remember the pain anymore because she's happy *chara* that a child has been brought into the world.

²² Now you're in a painful situation. But I will see you again. Then you will be happy *chairo* and no one will take that happiness *chara* away from you.

²³ When that day comes, you won't ask *erotao* me any more questions. I can guarantee this truth: If you ask *aiteo* the Father for anything in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ So far you haven't asked *aiteo* for anything in my name. Ask *aiteo* and you will receive so that you can be completely happy.

²⁵“I have used examples to illustrate these things. The time is coming when I won’t use examples to speak to you. Rather, I will speak to you about the Father in plain words. ²⁶When that day comes, you will ask *aiteo* for what you want in my name. I’m telling you that I won’t have to ask *erotao*-pray the Father for you. ²⁷The Father loves *phileo* you because you have loved *phileo* me and have believed *pisteuo* that I came from God.

Jesus Unambiguously Says Where He Is Going

²⁸ I left the Father and came into the world. Again, <as I’ve said:> I’m going to leave the world and go back to the Father.

The Disciples Say They Believe Jesus Came from God

²⁹ His disciples said: Now you’re talking in plain words and not using examples. ³⁰ Now we know that you know everything. You don’t need to wait for questions to be asked. Because of this, we believe *pisteuo* that you have come *exerchomai* from God. ³¹ Jesus replied to them: Now you believe *pisteuo*.

Jesus Predicts His Disciples Will Abandon Him

³² The time *hora*-hour is coming and is already here when all of you will be scattered. Each of you will go your own way and leave me all alone. Yet, I’m not all alone, because the Father is with me.

³³ I’ve told you this so that my peace *eirene* will be with you. In the world *kosmos* you’ll have trouble *thlipsis*. But cheer up. I have overcome *nikao* the world.

COMMENT

Jesus says that he has warned his disciples in advance that Satan will oppose them using the forces in this world. He has told them this so they won’t be surprised when people oppose them.

Jesus tells them he is going to the one who sent him, that is, God the Father. He has said this many times. They should be glad Jesus is leaving for then the Holy Spirit will come to them.

The Holy Spirit will do three things: He will convict the world of sin for the great sin is not believing in Jesus. He will show the world what has God's approval because Jesus is going to the Father and will not physically appear. He will convince the world that God judges it as Satan will be defeated.

Jesus says he has much more to tell them, but they can't bear to hear it now. So when the Holy Spirit comes, he will guide the disciples into the full truth.

Then Jesus says: *in a little while, you won't see me. Then in a little while, you will see me.* The disciples are completely confused. Jesus explains: It's like a woman giving birth. She had birth pains but after the baby is delivered, she has tremendous joy. This is how it will be with you. *When that day comes, if you ask the Father for anything in my name, he will give it to you.*

I'm going to leave this world and go back to the Father. The disciples said: Now you are talking clearly. We believe you came from God and are going back to God. Jesus said: *Now you believe.*

Now, said Jesus, I know that you will soon abandon me and scatter. But I'm never alone. The Father is always with me. I'm telling you this so my peace might be with you. You will have trouble in the world but remember: I have overcome Satan and the world.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How does Jesus warning his disciples in advance they will be persecuted help them endure the persecution?
2. Why won't the Holy Spirit come until Jesus leaves?
3. Jesus says the Holy Spirit will convict all people, even non-believers. What will he convict them of?
4. Jesus says the Holy Spirit will tell them the whole truth as Jesus has not been able to do so far. What additional truth could Jesus have told them?
5. How long is *a little while*? Why is *a little while* important?
6. Do the disciples really believe that Jesus came from God? How can you tell?
7. Jesus tells the disciples they will abandon him. **John 16:32**. Why don't the disciples protest?
8. How has Jesus overcome the world? **John 16:33**

PERICOPE 29

Jesus Prays to His Father for Himself, His Disciples, and Us

I not praying only for my disciples. I'm also praying for those who will believe in me through their message. I pray that all these people continue to have unity in the way that you, Father, are in me and I am in you. I pray that they may be united with us so that the world will believe that you sent me. **John 17:20-21**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

^{17:1} After saying this Jesus looked up to Heaven and said: Father, the time *hora*-hour is here. Give your Son glory *doxazo* so that your Son can give you glory *doxazo*. ² After all, you've given him authority over all humanity so that he can give Eternal Life to all those you gave to him. ³ This is Eternal Life: to know *ginosko* you, the only *monos* true *alethinos* God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent.

Jesus Prays for Himself

⁴ On earth I have given you glory *doxazo* by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, give me glory *doxa* in your presence with the glory *doxa* I had with you before the world existed.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

⁶ "I made your name known to the people you *gave* me. They are from this world. They belonged to you, and you *gave* them to me. They did what you told them. ⁷ Now they know *ginosko* that everything you gave me comes from you ⁸ because I gave them the message that you gave me. They have accepted this message and they know *ginosko* for sure *alethos* that I came *exerchomai* from *para* you. They have believed *pisteuo* that you sent *apostello* me.

⁹“I pray for them. I’m not praying for the world but for those you gave me because they are yours. ¹⁰ Everything I have is yours and everything you have is mine. I have been given glory *doxazo* by the people you have *given* me.

¹¹“I won’t be in the world much longer, but they are in the world and I’m coming back to you. Holy Father, keep them safe by the power of your name, the name that you *gave* me so that their unity may be like ours. ¹² While I was with them, I kept them safe by the power of your name, the name that you *gave* me. I watched over them, and none of them, except one person, became lost. So Scripture came true. **Psalm 41:9; 69:25; 109:6-8**

¹³“But now, <Father> I’m coming back to you. I say these things while I’m still in the world so that they will have the same joy that I have. ¹⁴ I have given them your message. But the world has hated them because they don’t belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. ¹⁵ I’m not asking you to take them out of the world but to protect them from the Evil One *poneros*. ¹⁶ They don’t belong to the world any more than I belong to the world.

¹⁷ Use the truth to make them holy. Your words are truth. ¹⁸ I have sent *apostello* them into the world the same way you sent *apostello* me into the world. ¹⁹ I’m dedicating myself to this holy work I’m doing for them so that they too will use the truth to be holy.

Jesus Prays for Us

²⁰ I’m not praying only for them. I’m also praying for those who will believe in me through their message. ²¹ I pray that all of these people continue to have unity in the way that you, Father, are in me and I am in you. I pray that they may be united with us so that the world will believe that you have sent me.

²² I have given them the glory *doxa* that you *gave* me. I did this so that they are united in the same way we are. ²³ I am in them, and you are in me. So they are completely united. In this way the world knows that you have sent me and that you have loved *agapao* them in the same way you have loved *agapao* me.

²⁴ Father, I want those you have *given* to me to be with me, to be where I am. I want them to see my glory *doxa* that you *gave* me because you loved *agapao* me before the world was made.

²⁵ O *dikaiois*-righteous Father, you have done what is right and the world didn't know *ginosko* you. Yet, I knew *ginosko* you, and these <disciples> have known *ginosko* that you sent me. ²⁶ I have made your name known *gnorizo*-declared to them, and I will make it known *gnorizo* so that the love *agape* you have for me will be in *en* them and I will be in *en* them.

COMMENT

Here Jesus prays in front of his disciples. What a holy moment this is. First, he prays for himself that his Father may be glorified as he will be glorified at the cross. Jesus speaks as if the crucifixion has already happened. Jonathan Edwards, one of my heroes, said that the reason God created the world was to extend his glory. Human beings then, and all other creations, are to reflect God's glory back to him. Jesus is intent on glorifying the Father.

Jesus says he has finished the work the Father gave him to do. Jesus will say this later at the cross. **John 19:30**. Wonderfully, Jesus defines Eternal Life as knowing God and knowing himself. **John 17:3**

John prays for his disciples God has given him. Jesus says they know that everything Jesus gave them comes from the Father and that Jesus himself came from God. These disciples believe that God sent Jesus to earth.

Jesus asks that these disciples be kept safe from the power of the Evil One. *Sanctify them by your truth, Father. Your word is truth. I have sent them into the world as you have sent me into the world.*

Jesus now prays for those who will believe in Jesus because of the disciples' message. I pray that all these continue to have unity in the way, Father, that you are in me, and I am in you. I am in them, and you are in me. So they are completely united.

Jesus prays that all those the Father has given him be where he is. I have made your name known to them so that the love you have for your Son will be *in* them and I will be *in* them.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus says Eternal Life means to know God the Father and Jesus. Explain what this means. Remember in the Prologue:

No one has ever seen God. God's only Son, the one who is closest to the Father's heart has made him known. **John 1:18**

2. Why does Jesus speak as if the crucifixion has already happened?

3. What is the most important thing Jesus wants the disciples to remember?

4. Jesus says Judas is lost, thus fulfilling Scripture. **John 17:12**. Does that mean Judas will not go to the New Jerusalem at the Last Day?

5. Jesus asks God to protect his disciples from the Evil One. **John 17:15**. How will God do this?

6. What does it really mean for a disciple of Jesus to be united with Jesus and united with God? The KJV says *they may be made perfect teleioo in eis one heis*. **John 17:23**

7. Jesus says: *I want those you have given me to be with me, to be where I am*. **John 17:24**. What a precious promise this is. Where has Jesus said this before? See **John 12** and **14**.

EXTRA CREDIT

Throughout this Gospel Jesus refers to his disciples as the ones God has *given* him. Why doesn't he talk the same way about God *giving* faith to those who will believe in Jesus through the message Jesus' disciples will preach?

PERICOPE 30

Jesus Is Arrested and Taken to the High Priest Annas

Then the army officer *chiliarchos* and the Jewish guards *hyperetes* arrested Jesus. They tied Jesus up and took him first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas.
John 18:12

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Is Arrested by the Sanhedrin and Roman Soldiers

^{18:1} After Jesus finished his prayer, he went with his disciples to the other side of the Kidron Valley. They entered the garden that was there.

²Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place because Jesus and his disciples often gathered there. ³So Judas took a troop *speira*-600 Roman soldiers ^{7x} Of soldiers and the guards from the chief priests and Pharisees and went to the garden. They were carrying lanterns, torches, and weapons.

⁴Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him. So he went to meet them and asked: Who are you looking for?

⁵They answered him: Jesus from Nazareth.

Jesus told them: I *ego* AM *eimi*.

Judas who betrayed him was standing with the crowd. ⁶When Jesus told them “I AM”, the crowd backed away and fell to the ground.

⁷Jesus asked them again: Who are you looking for?

They said: Jesus from Nazareth.

⁸Jesus replied: I told you that I AM. So if you are looking for me, let these other men go. ⁹In this way what Jesus had said came true: I lost none of those you *gave* me. **John 17:12**

¹⁰ Simon Peter had a sword. He drew it, attacked the High Priest's servant and cut off the servant's right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

This man Malchus was apparently leading the arresting party. Only Lazarus of the four Gospel writers, knew his name.

¹¹ Jesus told Peter: Put your sword away. Shouldn't I drink the cup <of suffering> that my Father has given me?

¹² Then the army officer *chiliarchos*—commander of a Roman cohort and the Jewish guards *hyperetes* arrested Jesus. They tied Jesus up ¹³ and took him first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Caiaphas, the chief priest that year, ¹⁴ was the person who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one man die for the people. **John 11:49-50**

Only the Beloved Disciple mentions Roman soldiers were at the arrest of Jesus.

Peter Denies Jesus

^{18:15} Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. The other disciple was well-known to the High Priest. So that disciple went with Jesus into the High Priest's courtyard. ¹⁶ Peter however was standing outside the gate. The other disciple talked to the woman who was the gatekeeper and brought Peter into the courtyard.

¹⁷ The gatekeeper asked Peter: Aren't you one of this man's disciples too *kai*?

Peter answered: No, I'm not.

Apparently, Lazarus, being a retired priest, was well known to Annas. And Annas apparently knew that Lazarus was a disciple of Jesus and so did his servants. Apparently, Lazarus was also able to go in and attend Annas' interrogation of Jesus.

¹⁸ The servants and the guards were standing around a fire they had built and were warming themselves because it was cold. Peter was standing there too and warming himself with the others.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

¹⁹ The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teachings.

²⁰ Jesus answered him: I have spoken publicly for everyone to hear. I have always taught in synagogues or in the Temple courtyard, where all the Jews gather. I haven't said anything in secret. ²¹ Why do you question me? Question those who heard what I said to them. They know what I've said.

²² When Jesus said this, one of the guards standing near Jesus slapped his face and said: Is that how you answer the High Priest?

²³ Jesus replied to him: If I've said anything wrong, tell me what it was. But if I've told the truth, why do you hit me?

²⁴ Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas, the High Priest. Jesus was still tied up.

This remark reveals to me that Lazarus thought it was degrading for Jesus to be tied up. Jesus had offered no resistance to the arresting party.

Peter Denies Jesus Again

²⁵ Simon Peter continued to stand and warm himself by the fire. Some men asked him: Aren't you too one of his disciples?

Peter denied it by saying: No, I'm not.

²⁶ One of the chief priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked him: Didn't I see you with Jesus in the garden?

²⁷ Peter again denied it and just then a rooster crowed.

COMMENT

Lazarus, unlike the synoptic Gospel writers, does not tell us of Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives across the Kidron River east of the City of Jerusalem. Instead, Jesus recalls his suffering only momentarily. **John 12:27-30**.

The High Priest's servant Malchus leads a group of Roman soldiers led by a "***Chiliarchos***", the leader of a thousand, and Jewish officers. Jesus goes out to meet them and asks: *Who are you looking for?* They say: *Jesus of Nazareth*. Jesus says ***I AM***, God's divine name, and the entire party falls backward. Jesus asks again: *Who are you looking for?* They say: *Jesus of Nazareth*. So Jesus commands them: *Then let these others go*.

But impulsive Peter cuts off the ear of the leader of the arresting party, Malchus. Jesus rebukes Peter. It is surprising Peter isn't arrested also. They tie Jesus up perhaps because of his commanding presence and lead him off to Annas, the genuine High Priest. Remember that Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin have already condemned Jesus to death. **John 11:53**

Peter and the Beloved Disciple follow the arresting party to Annas' house. Lazarus goes in while Peter waits outside. Lazarus vouches for Peter, and he's allowed into the courtyard. Lazarus goes upstairs to watch the interrogation. The High Priest's servant asks Peter if he is also a disciple of Jesus as is Lazarus. Peter says no.

Upstairs, Annas questions Jesus looking for ways to formulate a charge against him to present to the Romans. But he learns nothing. Jesus refuses to give him any information. So Annas ordered Jesus be taken to Caiaphas.

Downstairs, Peter in the courtyard is questioned several times about being a disciple of Jesus. Peter denies it. Then a rooster crows and Peter remembers Jesus predicting he would deny him three times. **John 13:38**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. *The Sanhedrin had decided to kill Lazarus. John 12:10.* Why then was Lazarus able to go into Annas' house with Jesus? Apparently, Annas even knew Lazarus was a disciple of Jesus.
2. Why is Jesus taken to Annas and not directly to Caiaphas? In fact, Lazarus does not record Jesus' meeting with Caiaphas. Why not?
3. Why doesn't Jesus give Annas any information? Isn't there a way Annas could force the information out of him? Couldn't he have addressed Lazarus who was standing there?
4. Annas, frustrated, sends Jesus to Caiaphas still tied up. Why didn't he untie Jesus?
5. Peter again denies knowing Jesus even when a relative of Malchus identifies him. Why is Peter so determined to deny knowing Jesus?

PERICOPE 31

Jesus Is Taken to the Roman Governor to Be Executed

Pilate asked Jesus: Are you the King of the Jews? **John 18:33.**
Jesus answered: My Kingdom doesn't belong to this world. If my Kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. My Kingdom doesn't have its origin on earth. **John 18:36**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Pilate Questions Jesus

^{18:28} Early in the morning, Jesus was taken from Caiaphas' house to the Governor's palace.

The Jews wouldn't go into the palace. They didn't want to become unclean since they wanted to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate came out to them and asked: What accusation are you making against this man?

³⁰ The Jews answered Pilate: If he weren't a criminal, we wouldn't have handed him over to you.

³¹ Pilate told the Jews: Take him and try him by your law.

The Jews answered him: We're not allowed to execute anyone. ³² In this way what Jesus had predicted about how he would die came true. **See John 12:32-33.**

³³ Pilate went back into the palace, called for Jesus and asked him: Are you the King of the Jews?

³⁴ Jesus replied: Did you think of that yourself or did others tell you about me?

³⁵ Pilate answered: Am I a Jew? Your own people and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?

³⁶ Jesus answered: My Kingdom doesn't belong to this world. If my Kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. My Kingdom doesn't have its origin on earth.

³⁷ Pilate asked him: So you are a King?

Jesus replied: You're correct in saying that I'm a King. I have been born and have come into the world for this reason: to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to me.

³⁸ Pilate said to him: What is truth?

After Pilate said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them: I don't find this man guilty of anything. ³⁹ You have a custom that I should free one person for you at Passover. Would you like me to free the King of the Jews for you?

⁴⁰ The Jews shouted again: Don't free this man! Free Barabbas! (Barabbas was a political revolutionary.)

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

^{19:1} Then Pilate had Jesus taken away and whipped. ² The soldiers twisted some thorny branches into a crown, placed it on his head, and put a purple cape on him. ³ They went up to him, said: Long live the King of the Jews, and slapped his face.

The People Want Jesus Crucified

⁴ Pilate went outside again and told the Jews: I'm bringing him out to you to let you know that I don't find this man guilty of anything. ⁵ Jesus went outside. He was wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cape. Pilate said to the Jews: Look here's the man.

⁶When the chief priests and the guards saw Jesus they shouted: Crucify him!
Crucify him!

Pilate told them: You take him and crucify him. I don't find this man guilty of anything.

⁷The Jews answered Pilate: We have a law and by that law he must die because he claimed to be the Son of God.

⁸When Pilate heard them say that, he became more afraid than ever. ⁹He went into the palace again and asked Jesus: Where are you from? But Jesus didn't answer him.

¹⁰So Pilate said to Jesus: Aren't you going to answer me? Don't you know that I have the authority to free you or to crucify you?

¹¹Jesus answered Pilate: You wouldn't have any authority over me if it hadn't been given to you from above. That's why the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.

¹²When Pilate heard what Jesus said, he wanted to free him. But the Jews shouted: If you free this man, you're not a friend of the Emperor. Anyone who claims to be a King is defying the Emperor.

¹³When Pilate heard what they said, he took Jesus outside and sat on the judge's seat in a place called Stone Pavement. In Hebrew it is called *Gabbatha*. ¹⁴The time was about noon on the Friday of the Passover festival.

Pilate said to the Jews: Look, here's your King.

¹⁵Then the Jews shouted: Kill him! Kill him! Crucify him!

Pilate asked them: Should I crucify your King?

The chief priests responded: The Emperor is the only King we have.

¹⁶Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

COMMENT

Early in the morning the Sanhedrin takes Jesus to Pilate. They merely want Pilate to execute him. But Pilate asks: *What is the charge?* They tell him and so Pilate goes inside to confront Jesus.

He asks Jesus: *Are you the King of the Jews?* Jesus replies: *My Kingdom is not of this world. So you are a King?* asks Pilate. Jesus replies: *Yes, I'm a King. I have been born and come into the world to testify to the truth.* Pilate replied: *What is truth?*

Pilate now returns to the Jews and says: *I don't find this man guilty of anything. At Passover, you have a custom that I should free one prisoner. Should I free the King of Jews for you?* The Jews shouted at Pilate: *Free Barabbas!*

Pilate now had Jesus scourged. The Roman soldiers took the opportunity to mock Jesus. They put a crown of thorns on his head and dressed him in a purple cape. They bowed before him saying: *Long live the King of the Jews.*

Pilate brought the beaten Jesus out to the Jews. Pilate again said: *I don't find he has done anything wrong.* The chief priests and guards shouted: *Crucify him! Crucify him!* Pilate again said: *I don't find him guilty of anything.*

The Jews said: *We have a law that says he must die because he claimed to be the Son of God.* Pilate was very superstitious, and this frightened him. He took Jesus again into the palace and asked him: *Where are you from?* Jesus didn't answer. So Pilate said: *Don't you understand I have the authority to free you or crucify you?* Jesus replied: *You wouldn't have any authority over me unless you have been given it from above. That is why the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.*

Pilate again spoke to the Jews attempting to free Jesus. But the Jews threatened Pilate saying: *If you free this man, you are not a friend of the Emperor in Rome.* Pilate knew he was trapped. But he decided to antagonize the Jews further. So he said: *Here is your King.* The Jews shouted: *Crucify him! Crucify him!* Pilate asked: *Should I crucify your King.* The chief priests responded: *Caesar is our only King.* So Pilate ordered Jesus crucified.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What is the Sanhedrin's charge against Jesus?
2. Why wouldn't the Sanhedrin enter the Governor's palace?
3. Did Jesus admit to being the King of the Jews?

4. Why didn't Pilate find Jesus innocent of any crime under Roman law? Claiming to be the King of the Jews without the Roman Senate's approval is sedition.
5. Why when the Jews mentioned Jesus claimed to be the Son of God was Pilate more *mallon* afraid *phobeo*? **John 19:8**
6. How did Jesus let Pilate off the hook for judging him?
7. Why did Pilate finally give in to the Jews and order Jesus crucified?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why did Pontius Pilate want to free Jesus?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus was brought to Pilate by members of the Sanhedrin very early. Pilate commanded Jesus to be crucified at six in the morning. **John 19:14**. So the crowd in Pilate's courtyard was hand-picked by the Sanhedrin as most people did not get up that early except the Romans. Why did Pilate think he could change the crowd's mind and free Jesus?

PERICOPE 32

Jesus Is Crucified and Dies

³⁰ After Jesus had taken the vinegar, he said: It is finished *teleo*. Then he bowed his head and died. **John 19:30**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus is Crucified

^{19:16} So the soldiers took Jesus. ¹⁷ He carried his own cross and went out <of the city> to a location called The Skull. In Hebrew this place is called *Golgotha*. ¹⁸ The soldiers crucified Jesus and two other men there. Jesus was in the middle.

¹⁹ Pilate wrote a notice and put it on the cross. The notice read: Jesus from Nazareth, the King of the Jews. ²⁰ Many Jews read this notice because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

²¹ The chief priests of the Jewish people told Pilate: Don't write: The King of the Jews. Instead write: He said that he is the King of the Jews.

²² Pilate replied: I have written what I've written.

²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them four ways so that each soldier could have a share. His robe was left over. It didn't have a seam because it had been woven in one piece from top to bottom.

²⁴ The soldiers said to each other: Let's not rip it apart. Let's throw dice to see who will get it. In this way the Scripture came true: They divided my clothes among themselves. They threw dice for my clothing. **Psalm 22:18**. So that's what the soldiers did.

Jesus Gives His Mother Mary into the Care of the Beloved Disciple

²⁵ Jesus' mother, her sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary from Magdala were standing beside Jesus' cross. ²⁶ Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved *agapao* standing there. He said to his mother: Look, here's your son. ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple: Look, here's your mother.

From that time on she lived with that disciple in his home.

Jesus Dies on the Cross

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that everything had now been finished, he said: I'm thirsty. He said this so that Scripture could finally be concluded.

[They poisoned my food. When I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink. **Psalm 69:21**]

²⁹ A jar filled with vinegar was there. So the soldiers put a sponge soaked in the vinegar on a hyssop stick and held it to his mouth.

³⁰ After Jesus had taken the vinegar, he said: It is finished *teleo*.

Then he bowed his head and died.

³¹ Since it was Friday and the next day was an especially important day of rest—a Holy Day, the Jews didn't want the bodies to stay on the crosses.

[When a convicted person is put to death, never leave his dead body hung on a pole overnight. Be sure to bury him the same day because anyone whose body is hung on a pole is cursed by God. The land that the Lord your God is giving you must never become unclean. **Deuteronomy 21:22-23**]

So they asked Pilate to have the men's legs broken and their bodies removed.

³² The soldiers broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus.

A Soldier Pierces Jesus' Side with a Spear

³³When the soldiers came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they didn't break his legs. ³⁴However, one of the soldiers stabbed Jesus' side with his spear, and blood and water immediately came out. ³⁵The one who saw this is an eyewitness. What he says is true and he knows that he is telling the truth so that you too will believe.

³⁶This happened so that the Scripture would come true: None of his bones will be broken. **Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20**

³⁷Another Scripture passage says: They will look at the person whom they have stabbed.

[I will pour out the Spirit of blessing and mercy on David's family and on those who live in Jerusalem. They will look at me whom they have stabbed. They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son and they will cry bitterly for him as one cries for a firstborn son. **Zechariah 12:10**]

Jesus' Body Is Placed in a Tomb

³⁸Later Joseph from the city of Arimathea asked Pilate to let him remove Jesus' body. Joseph was a disciple of Jesus but secretly because he was afraid of the Jews. Pilate gave him permission to remove Jesus' body. So Joseph removed it.

³⁹Nicodemus, the one who had first come to Jesus at night **John 3:1**, went with Joseph and brought 75 pounds of a myrrh and aloe mixture. ⁴⁰These two men took the body of Jesus and bound it with strips of linen. They laced the strips with spices. This was the Jewish custom for burial.

⁴¹A garden was located in the place where Jesus was crucified. In that garden was a new tomb in which no one had yet been placed. ⁴²Joseph and Nicodemus put Jesus in that tomb since that day was the Jewish Day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby.

COMMENT

Jesus carried the crossbar between soldiers and walked out of the city to a place called Golgotha, the Place of the Skull. Here he was crucified between two men. Pilate hung a titulus over Jesus' head: Jesus from Nazareth, the King of the Jews written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek.

The soldiers divided Jesus' garments and threw dice for his seamless robe thus fulfilling Scripture.

Jesus then handed care of his mother Mary over to the Beloved Disciple who was standing at the foot of the cross with the three Marys.

Jesus knowing everything was now finished, said: *I'm thirsty*, to fulfill Scripture. Then he said: *It is finished*. Then he bowed his head and died.

The Beloved Disciple describes the event of the crucifixion very simply and without much detail. But he does emphasize this:

The soldiers were asked to take the bodies down from the cross before evening came. To ensure the men were dead, they broke the legs of the two men. But when they came to Jesus, they saw he was dead. So a soldier pierced his side with a spear to make sure. Lazarus says he saw blood and water flow from the wound. Jesus was really dead physically.

Joseph from Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin, and Nicodemus obtain the body of Jesus from Pilate. They placed it in a nearby tomb. They bound the body in linen and laced it with spices setting it on a shelf. They finished their work quickly as the Sabbath and the Passover Festival was to begin at dusk.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The Beloved Disciple doesn't mention many of the things reported in the synoptic Gospels: the four other words of Jesus from the cross, the darkness, the veil in the Temple being torn, the chief priests mocking Jesus. Why does he fail to mention these? These were very important to the other Gospel writers.
2. Where is Lazarus' focus in this pericope? What event does Lazarus want his readers to understand without question? Why?
3. Lazarus is the only one to mention Jesus gave his mother Mary into the care of the Beloved Disciple. Why is this?

4. Lazarus reports Jesus' last word is: *It is finished*. Why is this important? What other verse in the Gospel does this refer to? HINT: Read **John 17:4**.
5. Lazarus dates Jesus' death in the afternoon before Passover when the families had taken their Passover lambs to the Temple to be killed for the Passover dinner that night. What is the significance of this?
6. If Joseph and Nicodemus were secret disciples of Jesus, why did they expose themselves and take Jesus' body to Joseph's tomb?
7. The Beloved Disciple clearly says that Jesus and the disciples celebrated the Passover on the day before the Passover Festival, the Day of Preparation. But the writers of the synoptic Gospels differ. Why is this?

PERICOPE 33

Jesus Is Raised to Life and Appears to His Disciples

Jesus told her: Don't hold on to me. I have not yet gone to the Father. But go to my brothers and sisters and tell them: I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Mary from Magdala went to the disciples and told them: I have seen the Lord. She also told them what he had said to her. **John 20:17-18**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Is Raised to Life by God

^{20:1} Early on Sunday morning the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary from Magdala went to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb's entrance. ² So she ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved *phileo*. She told them: They have removed the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him.

³ So Peter and the other disciple headed for the tomb. ⁴ The two were running side by side, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and came to the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked inside the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there but didn't go inside.

⁶ Simon Peter arrived after him and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there. ⁷ He also saw the cloth that had been on Jesus' head. It wasn't lying with the strips of linen but was rolled up separately. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who arrived at the tomb first, went inside. He saw *eido* and believed *pisteuo*. ⁹ They didn't know yet what Scripture meant when it said that Jesus had to come back to life. ¹⁰ So the disciples went back home.

Jesus Appears to Mary from Magdala

¹¹ Mary however stood there and cried as she looked at the tomb. As she cried, she bent over and looked inside. ¹² She saw two angels in white clothes. They

were sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying. One angel was where Jesus' head had been, and the other was where his feet had been.

¹³The angels asked her why she was crying.

Mary told them: They have removed my Lord and I don't know where they've put him.

¹⁴After she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. However, she didn't know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus asked her: Why are you crying? Who are you looking for?

Mary thought it was the gardener speaking to her. So she said to him: Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I'll remove him.

¹⁶Jesus said to her: Mary!

Mary turned around and said to him in Hebrew: *Rabboni*. This word means teacher.

¹⁷Jesus told her: Don't hold on to me. I have not yet gone to the Father. But go to my brothers and sisters and tell them: I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

¹⁸Mary from Magdala went to the disciples and told them: I have seen the Lord. She also told them what he had said to her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹That Sunday evening, the disciples were together behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jews. Jesus stood among them and said to them: Peace *eirene* be with you *hymen*. ²⁰When he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were glad *chairo* to see the Lord.

Jesus Gives His Disciples the Holy Spirit

²¹Jesus said to them again: Peace *eirene* be with you *hymen*. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you. **John 17:18.** ²²After he had said this, he breathed on the disciples and said: Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³Whenever you forgive

sins, they are forgiven. Whenever you don't forgive them, they are not forgiven.

[You are Peter. I can guarantee that on this rock I will build my church. The gates of hell will not overpower it. I give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you imprison, God will imprison. Whatever you set free, God will set free. **Matthew 16:18-19**]

Jesus Appears to His Disciples Again One Week Later

²⁴ Thomas, one of the Twelve, who was called Didymus, wasn't with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples told him: We've seen the Lord.

Thomas told them: I refuse to believe this unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my fingers into them, and put my hand into his side.

²⁶ A week later Jesus' disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus stood among them and said: Peace be with you. ²⁷ Then Jesus said to Thomas: Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Take your hand, and put it into my side. Stop doubting, and believe *pistos*.

²⁸ Thomas responded to Jesus: My Lord and my God.

²⁹ Jesus said to Thomas: You believe *pisteuo* because you've seen *horao* me. Blessed *makarios* are those who haven't seen *horao* me but believe *pisteuo*.

³⁰ Jesus performed many other miracles *semeion* -signs that his disciples saw. Those miracles *semeion* are not written in this book. ³¹ But these miracles *semeion* have been written so that you will believe *pisteuo* that Jesus is the Messiah *christos*, the Son of God, and so that you will have life *zoe* by believing *pisteuo* in him.

COMMENT

Mary Magdalene, who had been with Jesus' mother at the cross, runs to the tomb early on the first day of the week after the Sabbath has finished. She saw the stone had been moved

from the tomb's entrance, so she ran to tell Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple. She said: *They have removed the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him.*

The two disciples ran to the tomb. The Beloved Disciple reached there first and waited respectfully for Peter to enter first. Peter entered, saw the grave clothes and was puzzled. Then the Beloved Disciple entered. He saw and believed. **John 20:9**. Then they went home.

Mary stayed at the tomb weeping. She looked inside and saw two angels sitting on the shelf where Jesus body had lain. One at the head and one at the foot. It reminds us of the Ark of the Covenant with the two angels looking over the mercy seat. **Exodus 25:21**. The angels asked her: *Why are you crying?* She said: *They've removed my Lord, and I don't know where they have put him.*

Then Mary turned and saw a man. She thought it was the gardener. He asked her: *Why are you crying? What are you looking for?* She answered: *Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where and I'll get him.* Jesus said: *Mary!* Jesus' sheep know his voice. **John 10:4**

Mary clung to Jesus. Jesus told her: *Don't hold on to me. I haven't yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brothers and tell them: I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.* Mary went to the disciples and told them.

Later that same evening, the disciples were together with the door locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus appeared to them and showed them his wounds saying: *Shalom*. The disciples were overjoyed. Again Jesus said: *Shalom. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.* He breathed on the disciples and said: *Receive the Holy Spirit. Now administer the church.*

One week later Jesus again appeared to the disciples. Thomas, who hadn't been there a week earlier, was not present. When he had been told Jesus had visited them, he said he would not believe until he saw Jesus physically appear. Jesus immediately offered Thomas his hand: *Put your finger here. Stop doubting and believe.* Thomas cried out: *My Lord and my God.*

What a confession this is. In the synoptic Gospels, a Roman Centurion standing at the cross makes this confession. **Mark 15:39; Matthew 27:54; Luke 23:47**. Jesus then says: *Blessed are those who haven't seen me but believe.*

The Beloved Disciple now makes a statement as to why he wrote this Gospel.

These signs have been written so that you will believe *pisteuo* that Jesus is the **Messiah** *christos*, the **Son of God**, and so that you will have **Eternal Life** by believing *pisteuo* in him. **John 20:31**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Mary saw the stone was rolled away, but she didn't enter the tomb. How did she know Jesus' body wasn't there?
2. When Peter looked inside the tomb, what did he believe? When the Beloved Disciple looked in the tomb, what did he believe?
3. Mary Magdalene saw two angels sitting on the shelf, one where the head of Jesus had been and one at his foot. **John 20:12**. Why is the Ark of the Covenant a symbol for Jesus? Read **Exodus 25:10-22**.
4. If Jesus has not ascended to his Father, where has he been since his body left the tomb?
5. Why does Jesus tell Mary not to cling to him?
6. Jesus says three times to his disciples: *Peace be with you*. Why does he say this?
7. Why did Lazarus write this Gospel?

EXTRA CREDIT

The Beloved Disciple crowds many words he considers important in the last verse of this chapter. He uses the word *pisteuo* translated *believe* 100x in the KJV of this book. It seems he is ending his Gospel here. Why does he include another chapter?

PERICOPE 34

Jesus Appears to His Disciples in Galilee

Jesus told them: Come have breakfast. None of the disciples dared to ask him who he was. They knew he was the Lord. Jesus took the bread, gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. **John 21:12-13**

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT

Jesus Appears to Seven of His Disciples in Galilee

^{21:1} Later, by the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples. This is what happened. ² Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two other disciples of Jesus were together. ³ Simon Peter said to the others: I'm going fishing.

They told him: We're going with you.

They went out in a boat but didn't catch a thing that night. ⁴ As the sun was rising, Jesus stood on the shore. The disciples didn't realize that it was Jesus.

⁵ Jesus asked them: Friends, haven't you caught any fish?

They answered him: No, we haven't.

⁶ He told them: Throw the net out on the right side of the boat, and you'll catch some. So they threw the net out and were unable to pull it in because so many fish were in it.

⁷ The disciple whom Jesus loved *agapao* said to Peter: It's the Lord. When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put back on the clothes that he had taken off and jumped into the sea. ⁸ The other disciples came with the boat and dragged the net full of fish. They weren't far from the shore, only about 100 yards.

⁹ When they went ashore, they saw a fire with a fish lying on the coals, and they saw a loaf of bread.

¹⁰ Jesus told them: Bring some of the fish you've just caught. ¹¹ Simon Peter got into the boat and pulled the net ashore. Though the net was filled with ¹⁵³ large fish, it was not torn.

¹² Jesus told them: Come, have breakfast. None of the disciples dared to ask him who he was. They knew he was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus took the bread, gave it to them and did the same with the fish.

¹⁴ This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he had come back to life.

Jesus Restores Peter to Fellowship

¹⁵ After they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, do you love *agapao* me more than the other disciples do?

Peter answered him: Yes, Lord you know that I love *phileo* you.

Jesus told him: Feed my lambs.

¹⁶ Jesus asked him again a second time: Simon, son of John, do you love *agapao* me?

Peter answered him: Yes, Lord you know that I love *phileo* you.

Jesus told him: Take care of my sheep.

¹⁷ Jesus asked him a third time: Simon, son of John, do you love *phileo* me?

Peter felt sad because Jesus had asked him a third time, Do you love *phileo* me? So Peter said to him: Lord, you know everything. You know that I love *phileo* you.

Jesus told him: Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ I can guarantee this truth: When you were young, you would get ready to go where you wanted. But when you're old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will get you ready to take you where you don't want to go. ¹⁹ Jesus said this to show by what kind of death Peter would bring glory *doxazo* to God. After saying this, Jesus told Peter: Follow *akouloutheo* me.

Peter Questions Jesus' Plans for the Beloved Disciple

²⁰ Peter turned around and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved *agapao*. That disciple was following them. He was the one who leaned against Jesus' chest at the supper and asked: Lord, who is going to betray you? **John 13:23-25.**

²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked Jesus: Lord, what about him?

²² Jesus said to Peter: If I want him to live until I come again, how does that concern you? <You> follow *akouloutheo* me. ²³ So a rumor that that disciple wouldn't die spread among Jesus' followers. But Jesus didn't say that he wouldn't die. What Jesus said was: If I want him to live until I come again, how does that concern you?

Witnesses Testify to the Truth of the Beloved Disciple

²⁴ This disciple was an eyewitness of these things and wrote them down. We know *eido* that what he says *martyria* is true *alethes*.

²⁵ Jesus also did many other things. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the world wouldn't have enough room for the books that would be written.

COMMENT

Jesus now returns to Galilee for the first time since he gave his Bread of Life sermon. It is after Easter and seven of his disciples have returned to Galilee with Peter. The six others are Thomas, Nathanael, James Zebedee, John Zebedee, the Beloved Disciple, and one other. Peter says: *I'm going fishing* in the Sea of Galilee so the other six disciples join him.

They fish all night and don't catch a thing. In the morning, a figure calls out from shore: *Friends have you caught any fish?* They reply: *No*. The man calls out: *Throw the net out on the right side of the boat*. They do this and they catch an enormous amount – 153 fish in all. Peter counted them. It's the largest catch he ever had.

The Beloved Disciple tells Peter: *It's the Lord*. So impulsive Peter puts on his coat and swims to shore. He can't wait to see Jesus. The other disciples follow dragging the net.

They see Jesus has built a fire and is cooking bread and fish. *Bring some of the fish you've caught*, says Jesus. Jesus took the bread, gave it to them and also the fish.

After breakfast, Jesus questions Peter. *Simon, do you love me.* Peter says: *Yes Lord, you know I love you.* Jesus says: *Feed my lambs.* Jesus asks: *Simon, do you love me.* Peter says: *Yes, Lord, you know I love you.* Jesus says: *Take care of my sheep.* A third time Jesus asks: *Simon, do you love me?* Peter is grieved because Jesus has asked him three times. But he replies: *Lord, you know that I love you. Feed my sheep,* replies Jesus.

This is a symbolic restoration of Peter for his denial of Jesus three times in the High Priest Annas' courtyard. **John 18:15-18; 25-27**

Two words are used for love in this pericope. Jesus uses the highest form of love, self-sacrificing love *agapao* while Peter uses the friendship type of love *phileo*. But in the third question, Jesus himself changes his word to *phileo*. Jesus will accept Peter where he is. Peter used the word *phileo* because he did not feel he has demonstrated *agape* love to his Lord.

So far so good. But now Peter has to ask: *What about the Beloved Disciple?* Why is Peter inquiring about him? It seems the Beloved Disciple who is not one of the Twelve chosen by Jesus has gone a separate way. Jesus tells Peter: He is none of your business. You follow me.

Lazarus ends his Gospel with his witnesses testifying to his truthful account as they also witnessed in **John 1:14, 16-18**. Lazarus also says Jesus did much more during his earthly ministry than he could recount here.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Some consider this pericope an appendix to the Gospel as Lazarus' concluding statement in **John 20:30-31** seems to end the book. Why do some consider this an integral part of the Gospel?
2. Why are there only seven disciples in Galilee and some are not part of the original Twelve? Remember that Jesus has mentioned the Twelve only in **John 6:67, 70, 71, 20:24**. Who is the other unnamed disciple?
3. Why is Nathanael included in the group? He was not chosen as one of Jesus' Twelve disciples. **Mark 3:16-19; Matthew 10:2-4; Luke 6:13-16**
4. The disciples return to Galilee, their home. Jesus says:

But after I am brought back to life, I will go to Galilee ahead of you.
Mark 14:28; Matthew 26:32

The young man tells the female disciples at the tomb:

Go and tell his disciples and Peter that he's going ahead of them to Galilee. There he will see them, just as he told them. **Mark 15:7; Matthew 28:7**

This is contrary to Luke's account where Jesus teaches his disciples in Jerusalem for 40 days after his resurrection. **Acts 1:3**. Ten days later on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit is poured out. Matthew also reports the disciples returned to Galilee. **Matthew 28:16**

Why are the disciples back in Galilee?

5. Why does Jesus say: *Bring some of the fish you have just caught.* **John 21:10**

6. Why does Lazarus specify there were 153 fish? Is this a recalling of the miraculous catch of fish in **Luke 5:4-11**?

7. After Jesus has restored Peter, why does Peter ask Jesus about the future of the Beloved Disciple? To answer this question, locate each time Peter and the Beloved Disciple appear together in the Gospel. Is there a rivalry between the two for leadership?

EXTRA CREDIT

I have said that I believe this Gospel was written by Lazarus, a retired priest living in Jerusalem. List the things in this Gospel that suggest a retired priest living in Bethany on the Mount of Olives wrote this Gospel and why it is so different from the three synoptic Gospels.

EPILOGUE

Why Was the Disciple Whom Jesus Loved Not Named in this Gospel?

The disciple whom Jesus loved is mentioned with this title six times in this Gospel.

John the Baptist was standing with two of his disciples. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother was one of the two disciples who heard John and followed Jesus. **John 1:35, 40**

Martha and Mary sent a message to Jesus: The one whom you love is sick. **John 11:3**

One disciple whom Jesus loved, was near him at the table. Simon Peter motioned to that disciple and asked: Ask Jesus whom he talking about. **John 13:23**

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. The other disciple was well known to the High Priest. So that disciple went with Jesus into the High Priest's courtyard. Peter however was standing outside the gate. The other disciple talked to the woman who was the gatekeeper and brought Peter into the courtyard. The gatekeeper asked Peter: Aren't you one of his man's disciples too? Peter answered: No, I'm not. **John 18:15-17**

Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing there. He said to his mother: Here's your son. Then he said to the disciple: Look, here's your mother. From that time on she lived with that disciple in his house. **John 19:26**

So she ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved. She told them: They have removed the Lord from the tomb and we don't know where they've taken him. **John 20:2**

The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter: It's the Lord. **John 21:7**

Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them. When Peter saw him, he asked Jesus: What about him? **John 21:20**

From these verses can we determine who the disciple whom Jesus loved is?

My conclusion is that he is Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead **John 11:43-44**, the man who wrote the Gospel the church named According to John. **John 21:24**

We know that Lazarus lived in Bethany on the Mount of Olives with two unmarried sisters, Martha and Mary. We know that Jesus visited their home:

As they were traveling along, Jesus went into a village. A woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary. Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to him talk. But Martha was upset about all the work she had to do. So she asked: Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work all by myself. Tell her to help me.

The Lord answered her: Martha, Martha. You fuss about a lot of things. There's only one thing you need. Mary has made the right choice and that one thing will not be taken away from her. **Luke 10:38-42**

We also know that they all were good friends as the coded message to Jesus said: *the one whom you love is sick*. In the story of the raising of Lazarus, Mary and Martha know Jesus well and talk to him in a familiar way.

In this Gospel, the Beloved Disciple does not appear by this title until the Last Supper in Jerusalem. However, Lazarus does appear at the earlier supper where Mary pours perfume on Jesus' feet. **John 12:2-3**. But we learn that the chief priests wanted to kill Lazarus. **John 12:10-11**. So his name does not appear any more in the Gospel. At the Last Supper, Lazarus is sitting at the place of honor at Jesus' right hand. Who else would the disciples allow to sit in that place?

After Jesus is arrested by the Sanhedrin and taken to Annas' house, Peter and the Beloved Disciple follow. Lazarus is well known to the former High Priest and is known as a disciple of Jesus. As the former High Priest, he still holds a great deal of control. I conclude from this that Lazarus is a retired High Priest and a good friend of Annas. So Lazarus is allowed to sit in while Annas questions Jesus while Peter is downstairs in the courtyard denying Jesus several times. **John 18:15-17**

We next see the disciple whom Jesus loved at the cross. He is the only male disciple there. Jesus gives care of his mother Mary to Lazarus as he is wealthy and has two unmarried sisters. **John 19:26**

On Easter morning, when Mary finds the tomb empty, she runs to where the disciples are staying and tells Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved. Both disciples run to the tomb. The Beloved Disciple gets there first and waits for Peter to enter. Then he enters and believes. **John 20:2, 8**

Now we look at the last chapter of this Gospel. Seven disciples are in Galilee. Two are unnamed. But while in the boat, the disciple whom Jesus loves identifies Jesus to Peter. **John 21:7**. Jesus restores Peter to fellowship after his having denied Jesus in the High Priest's courtyard. But that doesn't satisfy Peter. He now wants to know about the future of the Beloved Disciple. **John 21:20**. Why does Peter want to know this?

Apparently, there was a rivalry between Peter and Lazarus. But because the Sanhedrin wants to kill Lazarus, I conclude that after Pentecost, Lazarus took Mary and his sisters and moved to Galilee or perhaps even farther north to found a charismatic group of disciples of Jesus. This is where he wrote his Gospel even before Peter went to Rome preaching. Mark wrote his Gospel based on the preaching he heard from Peter.

Now, no matter who you felt wrote this Gospel, here we have some of the most precious words of Jesus. Jesus' preaching was different in Jerusalem as he was speaking to more literary capable people, mostly priests. Jesus taught in Galilee normally using parables as he was preaching to mostly peasants although he also preached sermons like the Sermon on the Mount **Matthew 6:17-7:27** and the Sermon on the Plain **Luke 6:17-49**. Most importantly, he preached his Bread of Life Sermon in a synagogue in Capernaum in Galilee.

In Jerusalem, Jesus was attempting to get the Jewish religious leaders to recognize his identity. But they stubbornly wouldn't. Their minds were made up. A human being just couldn't be the Son of God. God would never lower himself to do such a thing. But Paul includes a hymn of the early Christians:

Although he was in the form of God and equal with God, he did not take advantage of this equality. Instead, he emptied himself by taking on the form of a servant, by becoming like other humans, by having a human appearance. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, death on a cross.

That is why God has given him an exceptional honor – the name honored above all other names – so that at the name of Jesus everyone in Heaven, on

earth, and in the world below will kneel and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **Philippians 6-II**

The humility of Jesus is emphasized by all four Gospel writers. If you would like to continue to study the life of Jesus by comparing the four Gospels to each other, you can purchase [A Harmony of the Gospels](#) that presents the Gospel accounts in parallel columns.