

Who is This

Jesus
The
Christ

Leslie Rendell

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Prelude

The story of our Lord Jesus Christ is very complicated. There are many aspects of his remarkable life that I will endeavour to cover in this book. But to cover his entire life would mean to rewrite the entire bible because that book is all about him. I will attempt to back up all the claims I make in this book from the scriptures. I am not interested in the traditions and teachings of man. Only the word of God will give us the truth on all matters. What does John 17:17 say?

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Why Study The Bible

Why should we study the bible? Isn't it enough to go to church once a week and listen to the Pastor?

Most Pastors who belong to one of the modern-day churches have to follow what the church leaders tell them. They all have their own "statement of beliefs" to adhere to, and these doctrines vary from church to church in what they see as the truth. So since they cannot all be right, then some must be wrong. What if that refers to the church you are attending, if indeed you attend any church at all? How can you

know what God sees as the truth? Well, it is up to the individual to sort the wheat from the chaff. How do we do that? Only by seeking the truth that God has concealed in his book, the bible.

Consider the following passage of scripture in the book of Proverbs.

Pro 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.

This is what God expects from us. We are to look constantly into the holy scriptures and find the truth that he has concealed there for us to discover. Please notice that God has not concealed them from us to keep it all a secret. No, he wants us to look for the truth. This is further emphasized in the following verses from the book of Isaiah.

Isa 28:9 “To whom will he teach knowledge, and to whom will he explain the message? Those who are weaned from the milk, those taken from the breast?”

Isa 28:10 “For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”

This backs up what we read in Proverbs 25:2: that we must search out a matter that God has concealed. This is a real treasure hunt. If we can seek the will of God in our lives, we are not rejecting him, but we are embracing him and his way of life. There is a glorious reward for those who are prepared to seek God with their whole hearts. Read the following verse and see what this reward is.

Rom 2:7 to those who by patience in well-doing

seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;

Therefore, we must search the scriptures. Looking for precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little. Looking for the things God has concealed. The Bible contains information on many topics, and the only way to find it is to read and search the scriptures. There is no other substitute for Bible study. If we want the truth, then we must search for these pearls of wisdom. We receive this advice from the scriptures quoted above.

Who Is Jesus Christ

This book is all about God and His son, Jesus Christ. Before we can delve into anything relating to God, we need to first decide if He even exists. Many atheists in the world simply cannot believe in the existence of an all-powerful creator, God, who brought all things into existence simply by the power of His word. Then there are millions of Christians who, by faith, believe in God.

So the first question we need to address is. Can we prove He exists?

This is a question without an exact answer. It is easy for someone to declare God does not exist, but it is impossible to prove it. Conversely, for those who believe in God, there is much evidence that speaks of His existence.

Christians Live By Faith

The whole point of this is Christians who believe in God do so by faith because of two main reasons. First, there is the creation itself, which speaks of a designer because of its complexity, wonders, and laws that keep the entire universe operating the way it does. Then we have the written word of

God, His holy bible.

Regardless of what you believe, Jesus Christ is the most influential person in all of human history. Our modern calendars all start from the date of His birth, even though there is some discrepancy about the exact year of His birth.

I will not try to persuade you that Jesus exists, because this book is all about Him. Either you are a believer or you are not. There is no half-right or half-wrong for His existence. So I will assume you are seeking proof to reinforce your beliefs. Whether you are an atheist or a Christian.

If you believe in God, then the rest is easy. Just believe what He will reveal about Himself in his amazing book, “The Bible”. And then observe His incredible handiwork in the way nature has been created: the plants, animals, insects, birds, and the vast array of living things.

If you believe in evolution. Then there are many things you must prove, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that will back up what you believe. As more science is revealing a Creator caused our existence, then the theory of evolution is becoming more difficult to prove every day.

There is no way our human DNA could have evolved. It is just too complex to be an accident of evolution.

Who Is Jesus Christ

So now let us establish who Jesus Christ is. To do this, I will look into God’s holy scriptures for an answer in the book of John. In the first eighteen verses of this book, we get a

wonderful description of Jesus and just why we believe him to be the Messiah. Or the Son Of God.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Joh 1:4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Joh 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Joh 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

Joh 1:7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.

Joh 1:8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

Joh 1:9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

Joh 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

Joh 1:11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

Joh 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

Joh 1:13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Joh 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Joh 1:15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'")

Joh 1:16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Joh 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Joh 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

What does this section of scripture tell us? From verse one, we see "The Word" was with God and he was God. Then we learn "The Word" created all things. There is nothing in all the vast universe that he did not bring into existence. This "Word" then became flesh and dwelt among us and made God The Father known to everyone who will believe.

The Lamb Of God

Whoever "The Word" may be, he is a powerful person and we can deduce from the scriptures above that "The Word" is, in fact, Jesus Christ. Joh 1:29 reinforces this thought.

Joh 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Now John, known as “John the Baptist,” sees Jesus coming to be baptised by him in the river. He declares Jesus to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

I will explain in the rest of this book how this same Jesus Christ was crucified, buried, and resurrected. By proving Jesus was, in reality, resurrected from the dead, we are also proving the divinity of Jesus Christ. We also prove the validity of those first eighteen verses of the book of John.

One thing I would like to clarify here is the name of our Lord. Jesus is his name in English, but his Hebrew name is Yeshua. The word Christ is not a name but a title that means. The anointed one, or the Messiah. So saying Jesus Christ is to say, Jesus the Messiah. The Son of God.

Jesus Christ In Prophecy

Many people in the world do not believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and therefore do not believe that he ever rose from the dead. How can we prove first that he even existed? Well, even the Jewish Rabbis from the time of Jesus did not like him or his followers. They hated him so much that they had him crucified on a Roman cross.

A terrible form of execution that caused as much pain and suffering as possible. They accused him of being a magician and of leading people away from their religion. But the one thing that they never did was to claim that he never existed. There is enough proof in history books that will prove that Jesus Christ was an actual person.

The Muslims, who hate both Jews and Christians, also believe that Jesus was a real person. They claim he was a prophet, but do not acknowledge that he is God. There is a lot of other information about Jesus apart from the bible that back up the fact that Jesus existed, and from the bible we can also believe he still exists.

Prophecies About Jesus

Then there are the many prophecies in the Old Testament of the Bible that point directly to Jesus. Some are a little obscure, but some also clearly point to the man Jesus Christ. Look at what the Prophet Isaiah wrote about this amazing man about seven hundred years before Jesus was born. His description of Jesus in chapter fifty-three is remarkable and is a perfect description of the life and death of Jesus. He told of a man who would die for the sins of the world. Read Isaiah fifty-three and observe the remarkable similarity to the life of Jesus Christ, which has been faithfully documented in the Bible.

Isa 53:1 Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

Isa 53:2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

Isa 53:3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Isa 53:4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

Isa 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Isa 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the

LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isa 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

Isa 53:8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?

Isa 53:9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Isa 53:10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Isa 53:11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Isa 53:12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

When you realise that this passage of scripture predates Jesus' arrival by about seven hundred years, you will see a

very accurate portrayal of the life and death of our Lord. There are many other prophecies recorded for us in the Bible, but I think this one gives us the most vivid picture of Jesus Christ.

I believe that when you combine historical facts with prophecies, there can be very little doubt about whether Jesus Christ was a real person. To claim Jesus never existed is to ignore the evidence in both the history books and the revelations found about him in the bible.

Once you come to believe Jesus was, and still is, real today, you are well on the road to accepting him as your Lord and God. Jesus made some amazing claims in the approximately three and a half years he was spreading the gospel. His greatest claim was that he was the Messiah, the Son of God. He even made predictions he would be arrested, betrayed, spit upon, scourged, and then killed. The similarities between his life and the prophecy of Isaiah are unmistakable. Jesus also revealed to the leaders of the synagogue and his disciples that he would be raised to life after three days. The book of Mark, chapter ten and verses thirty-two through to thirty-four, records this incredible prediction for us.

Mar 10:32 And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him,

Mar 10:33 saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over

to the Gentiles.”

Mar 10:34 And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.

It would be a very brave man indeed to make such a claim if he was not sure of his facts. Until this time, no one had ever come back from the dead.

The Jewish Pharisees and Sadducees knew their Old Testament scriptures very well. Many of them could recite the scriptures by heart. Some prophecies about the coming of their Messiah were very clear, so at about the time Jesus came on the scene, they were already expecting him to come.

They read and understood from the prophecies that their Messiah was due to arrive on the earth. The problem for them is that they did not see him coming as a suffering servant who was going to die for them to save everyone from their sins. No, what they were expecting was a conquering king who would overpower the Romans. They missed the reason for his coming, so they refused to acknowledge that Jesus could be the Messiah. Their dream of freedom from the Romans hung on the arrival of their Messiah.

Pharisees Demand A Sign

These Jewish leaders demanded a sign from Jesus to prove he was the Messiah they were looking for. Read Mat 16:1-4 and see these Pharisees and the Sadducees challenging Jesus to prove he was who he claimed to be and Christ's reply to them.

Mat 12:38 Then some of the scribes and

Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you."

Mat 12:39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Mat 12:40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus' answer to these Pharisees, and the Sadducees, was a prophecy about his soon-coming death and resurrection. Here Jesus tells them he would be three days and three nights in the tomb, the exact time Jonah was in the whale's belly. It is important to note one thing from this section of scripture. Jesus told them the "ONLY SIGN" he would give them was the sign of Jonah that we read above in verse forty.

Everything that Jesus taught, and the claim that he was the Messiah, all hinged on him fulfilling exactly the sign of Jonah. He was to be exactly three days and three nights in the tomb. If he was more or less than this period in the tomb, then he must be a fraud and an impostor. This was going to be the ultimate test of the authenticity of Jesus Christ. If you can prove that he got it wrong and that he was not in the tomb for this exact amount of time, then he is a fraud. But then if we can prove that he was in the tomb for exactly three days and three nights, fulfilling precisely the "sign of Jonah", we have found our Messiah!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The resurrection from the dead of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is one of the most important of all Christian beliefs. All Christians today must believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead; otherwise, they have nothing to base their faith in him upon. It is only by his defeating the last enemy, and that is death, that we can have any genuine hope of a future with him.

There is only one way to prove if Jesus is who he claims to be, and that is to search the scriptures for the answer and accept what we learn from these sacred words as the truth. Did he fulfill this sign he gave to the Jewish leaders of his day, or did he fail this test or sign?

One thing that is for certain, and I hope anyone, regardless of what they believe, will agree upon. If Jesus rose from the dead, as he claimed, he would. Then how can he possibly not be the Son Of God, and if he is the Son of God, then what is stopping people from accepting him into their lives?

If Jesus Did Not Rise From The Dead

If he did not rise from the dead, then he is a fake and an impostor and therefore someone we should not follow or worship. Since there is so much, depending on the truthful answer to this question, we need to be thorough and believe only what God has revealed to us.

The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, made the importance of answering this question correctly when he said the following in 1Co 15:19.

1Co 15:19 If in Christ we have hope in this life

only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

The Apostle Paul put it very well here. If Jesus is a fake, then the disciples who followed Jesus, and right down to the millions of Christians who follow him today, have believed a massive lie. We have no future in God's Kingdom and therefore no hope in all the world. That is why it is vital to study carefully this topic and come to the right conclusion.

One thing I still find amazing is the disciples who were with Jesus for just over three years did not fully understand what Jesus had told them about his death, and the amazing event that was going to follow in three days. By this time, they had seen many miracles, and they certainly understood Jesus was "The Christ". We read this in Luke chapter nine and verses eighteen through twenty.

Luk 9:18 Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

Luk 9:19 And they answered, "John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen."

Luk 9:20 Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

So, the disciples understood who Jesus was, and in the next two verses, we see Jesus telling them he must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders. But even though the disciples heard these words, they could not truly believe them. They also, like the Jewish leaders, failed to see why Jesus had come down from heaven.

Luk 9:21 And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, Luk 9:22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

Again, in these verses, we see Jesus predicting his death and that he was going to be raised to life on the third day. Remember, this was the only sign we have that Jesus Christ is our Messiah.

The Apostles Did Not Understand

Luke recorded again in Luk 18:31-34 what Jesus told his disciples about his death and resurrection. From the last verse, it becomes clear that his disciples did not understand what he was saying, as the truth was hidden from them.

Luk 18:31 And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. "

Luk 18:32 For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon.

Luk 18:33 And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.

Luk 18:34 But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

Before I get into the proof of Jesus being in the tomb

for exactly three days and three nights, I would like to see more proof that he is the “Son of God”.

So, what is the evidence that we can see in these Ancient Words that can help us believe Jesus Christ is The Son Of God and has indeed risen from the dead?

More Prophecies Referring to Jesus

Some biblical scholars have calculated there are somewhere around 300 prophecies about Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Some of these prophecies are very specific and point to Jesus Christ.

Scholars have calculated that Jesus fulfilling just 8 of these prophecies is a 1 in 10 to the power of 17 chance. That is 10, followed by 17 zeros. What would the answer be if they calculated for all 300 prophecies? The number would be astronomical.

Let us now examine just a few of these prophecies in the Old Testament and then determine where the New Testament reveals them as fulfilled.

The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ

Prophecy:

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Fulfillment:

Luk 1:35 And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the

child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.”

Jesus would come out of Egypt:

Prophecy:

Hos 11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

Fulfillment:

Mat 2:14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt

Mat 2:15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem.

Prophecy:

Mic 5:2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

Fulfillment:

Mat 2:4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

Mat 2:5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:”

Mat 2:6 “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

Jesus would use parables to teach:

Prophecy:

Psa 78:1 A Maskil of Asaph. Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth!

Psa 78:2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,

Psa 78:3 things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us.

Fulfillment:

Mat 13:34 All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable.

Mat 13:35 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."

People would not understand the parables:

Prophecy:

Isa 6:9 And he said, "Go, and say to this people: Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive."

Isa 6:10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.

Fulfillment:

Mat 13:13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they

understand.

Mat 13:14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive."

Mat 13:15 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.

Jesus was to be the perfect sacrifice.

Prophecy:

Psa 40:6 In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.

Psa 40:7 Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me:"

Psa 40:8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Fulfillment:

Heb 10:5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;"

Heb 10:6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

Heb 10:7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'

*Heb 10:8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings," (these are offered according to the law),
Heb 10:9 then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second.
Heb 10:10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

This prophecy is truly amazing. King David wrote this psalm, and he tells us "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire." Then he says, "I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart."

We learn that the old covenant has been replaced with the New covenant through the fulfilment of this prophecy in Heb 10:9. Then, in the next verse, we receive the guarantee that all those who believe in Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross are made holy.

The blessing of the Nations would come through Abraham.

Prophecy:

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you."

Gen 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Fulfillment:

Act 3:25 You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

Act 3:26 God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.

These 7 examples of prophecies all point to Jesus Christ so that we can verify his claims.

This is a perfect example of what I wrote in the "Prelude" to this book, that we must search the scriptures to find truths God has concealed for us to seek.

Pro 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.

Miracles of Jesus

Jesus performed many miracles during his time on the earth. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cured cripples, and even cleansed people from leprosy. Still, we can see from Joh 20:30 that the books of the Bible do not include most of his miracles.

Joh 20:30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

Jesus performed one powerful miracle that had a profound effect on his disciples. This miracle that involved the disciples was when they were crossing the lake and a fierce storm arose and threatened to swamp their boat. We must remember these men were all experienced fishermen and had spent their lives on the lake and would have encountered many storms. This storm was one of the worst that they had ever encountered, and we can know this from their call for Jesus to rescue them. We can read this in Matthew 8:23-27.

Mat 8:23 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.

Mat 8:24 And behold, there arose a great storm

on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.

Mat 8:25 And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing."

Mat 8:26 And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

Mat 8:27 And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

In verse twenty-seven, they ask, "What kind of man is this?". Here, they witnessed how Jesus even had control of the elements and did what no man had ever done before. He stopped the furious storm and caused a complete calmness over the lake. This miracle alone would have had them believing that Jesus had powers that only belonged to God. But I doubt they were fully convinced about who was with them in the boat. They asked, "What kind of man is this".

They witnessed another miracle, which was recorded for us in Matthew 14:22-33. This time, the disciples had left Jesus on the shore and were crossing the lake when another storm rose and threatened to swamp their boat. Suddenly Jesus appeared to them walking up to the boat on the water and again calmed the wind. This time, the Disciples make the correct connection about just who Jesus is when they say, "Truly, you are the Son of God."

There are many other miracles recorded in the Bible that the disciples of Jesus saw and marveled at. For example, Jesus fed the four thousand, healed the lepers, and cured the paralysed man who was lowered through the roof, which the

disciples saw and marveled at. These are just a few of the recorded miracles we know of, but Jesus performed other miracles that the disciples witnessed but were never recorded.

The disciples must have witnessed hundreds of miracles ranging from small and almost insignificant to some of his biggest miracles. Such as feeding the 5 thousand and calming the sea. Those three and a half years must have been mind-blowing for the disciples. Seeing the power Jesus possessed should have left no doubt in their minds if Jesus was the Son of God. But as we will see later in this book, they were not fully convinced that he was their Messiah until Jesus was resurrected from the dead.

The disciples of Jesus were with him for about three and a half years. During this time, they would have witnessed many miracles, and as we saw above, they realised Jesus was someone unique. But they did not fully understand he was God until after he rose from the dead. It was only his resurrection that fully convinced his disciples he was God. Therefore, it is vital for us today to come to the same conclusion as they came to. Jesus Christ is God.

The Disciples of Jesus Christ

The term disciple comes from the Greek word “Mathetes”. This refers to a student of a philosopher. In the New Testament, the disciples were also known as apostles.

There is a slight difference in the meanings of these words. But they are both good words to describe these twelve men who followed Jesus.

A Disciple is a student who is learning from their leader. They lived with him most of the time and tried to live according to what they were learning from him. They heard the words of Jesus, but they would have benefited more from learning about his character, witnessing the miracles he performed, and understanding how he portrayed himself.

Now the term Apostle. This means one who is sent. And this also perfectly describes who these twelve men were. They were with Jesus to learn, and then Jesus sent them out into the world to proclaim the gospel to the entire world.

So both these titles fit well with these twelve men who followed Jesus and were then given the responsibility of teaching others about the coming “Kingdom of God.”

The disciples of Jesus were with him for about 3 1/2

years. It is very interesting to see how they changed in that time. As you read the rest of this book, you will see the change in their attitudes from being afraid, to being dynamic preachers of “The Gospel”.

What is The Gospel? All this word means is the good news, and if you will believe the bible, then you will see just how good the news is for your future.

The Disciples Were Afraid

The disciples, who would have been the most convinced that Jesus was the anointed One, still did not understand what Jesus had so clearly told them. Their faith and trust in him were not strong, and they were afraid for their safety. We can see their reaction when Jesus was arrested. We can read about this in Matthew 26:54-56 when Jesus was about to be arrested in the garden of Gethsemane.

Mat 26:54 But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?

Mat 26:55 At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me."

Mat 26:56 "But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

Yes, these disciples (who all believed that Jesus was the Son Of God) fled for their safety even though they were witnesses to his miracles and believed him to be The Son of God. Even Peter was afraid of the Jews and did not want to be recognized as one of his disciples. But he was still curious

enough to follow at a distance to see what was going to happen to Jesus. We can read of this in Luke, chapter twenty-two, and verses fifty-four to sixty-two.

Luk 22:54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance.

Luk 22:55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them.

Luk 22:56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him."

Luk 22:57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him."

Luk 22:58 And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not."

Luk 22:59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean."

Luk 22:60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

Luk 22:61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."

Luk 22:62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

Peter had earlier in verse thirty-three said, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death". Yet here he was denying three times he even knew Jesus. He had earlier

declared that Jesus “was the Messiah”. But in the final crunch, Peter was anxious for his own welfare, so he took the simple way out and denied that he knew Jesus. The rest of the disciples went into hiding. These men were sure he was the Son of God, but they were still more concerned with their welfare and safety. Their faith was weak, and they needed more proof that he was who he claimed to be.

We can say the same thing about us today. Our faith in Jesus is not strong when we first believe. It is only after we have discovered more proof can we can have a strong enough faith in Jesus to dedicate our lives to him. Our faith, trust, belief, and love for him will not happen in an instant. No, it will only come from regular and consistent bible study. That is the aim of this book, to strengthen our faith and love for our Lord.

Not Expecting The Resurrection

We know the disciples were not expecting Jesus to be resurrected from the dead, because if they understood this, then they would have been waiting at the tomb after three days, ready to celebrate. Maybe with six earthen jars filled with water and hoping for a repeat of his first miracle.

But instead of waiting and looking for his resurrection, the disciples were afraid of what the leaders of the Synagogue may do to them, so they were hiding from them. Two of the disciples were on the road to Emmaus, which is a short distance from Jerusalem. They were trying to understand what had happened on Calvary.

The Romans executed the man whom they believed to be their Messiah, shattering their dreams of him setting up his kingdom on the earth. They were not expecting Jesus to be raised from the dead, so they were on their way home. A man whom they did not recognize joined these two men on their walk, and he taught them everything that was to happen to their Messiah, as was written in their scriptures, the Old Testament. Suddenly, they realized who this man was when Jesus disclosed himself to them as they were breaking bread.

The women who had followed Jesus from the first day were not expecting Jesus to be resurrected either. The events

that had taken place on the day Jesus was crucified must have demoralized them. We read in the epistles that they were preparing the spices and perfumes that were needed to prepare his body for burial. Even though Jesus had spoken of his resurrection, nobody understood just what this meant. The women went to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus. They did not expect to find that the tomb was empty.

The disciples were all afraid of the Jews. After three and a half years of following Jesus, they now had the humiliating feeling that they were the laughingstock of all Jerusalem and were too embarrassed to go out, so they hid in the upper rooms. They also feared what the leaders of the Synagogue would do to them. After witnessing Jesus being tortured and crucified, they may have feared facing the same fate if caught. I think we can understand the predicament the disciples now found themselves in.

There was no one at the tomb after the third day because no one understood what Jesus had said regarding his death and resurrection.

For me, the one event in the entire Bible that convinces me that Jesus is the real deal has to be the story of his resurrection, and how this event changes the lives of his disciples. The resurrection of Jesus turned their entire worlds upside down and changed their behavior. The Disciples went from hiding from everyone to being powerful and unafraid witnesses for their Lord. They had seen many miracles that Jesus performed during their time with him; After they had witnessed blind men regaining their sight, paralyzed men being able to walk again, Lazarus coming back from the dead must have been a convincing miracle that should have left them in no doubt just who was there with them. But it was

only after they saw Jesus rise from the dead that their trust and faith in him became unshakable.

After Jesus was crucified, and before he was raised from the dead, the Disciples must have experienced the worst time in their lives. They had found their Messiah, seen his miracles, and then witnessed the unthinkable as the man they believed was the Son of God was murdered on the cross. Can we imagine how we would have felt if we were in their shoes?

Now that we have the advantage of hindsight and know how the story ends, the disciples did not possess this advantage, and it would have left them shattered.

What was going through the minds of the Disciples? They would have felt devastated, confused, sad, and with about a thousand emotions running through their minds. These men had lost their Lord and had no one to turn to and explain to them just what had happened and just what the future may hold for them now that Jesus was dead. When Jesus was with them, they were no doubt considering their places in the Kingdom of God. Now, suddenly, their dreams were taken away from them.

Jesus Appears To The Disciples

After Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples when they were in an upper room. This is the first time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after his crucifixion. We see here that the disciples had locked the door for fear of the Jewish leaders, so they spent the last three days hiding and fearing the Synagogue leaders.

Can we imagine how the disciples felt now? Confused, happy, excited, elated, and ecstatic, there would have been another thousand emotions running through their minds. But this time they would have differed totally from those they experienced just three short days ago.

Now they had their Messiah back from the dead, and if they had any doubts about whether he was the Son of God, these doubts would now be dispelled from their minds.

This was the ultimate proof they needed, and after this, these men were so convinced of what they knew, they were prepared to suffer many things for the Lord, and indeed they did. Their lives would now never be the same.

Not a lot of information has survived about the fate of these men, but here is what's available from various sources, including the New Testament itself, apocryphal texts, early

Christian historians, legends, and lore.

Andrew was crucified.

Bartholomew was crucified.

James, the son of Alphaeus, was crucified.

James, the son of Zebedee, was killed by the sword.

John died at a good old age and of natural causes, the only one to do so.

Matthew was crucified.

Peter was crucified upside down.

Philip was crucified.

Simon was crucified.

Thaddeus was killed by arrows.

Thomas died of a spear thrust.

Some of these reports are indeed accurate and some may be a little more uncertain, but it is well believed that all the men, except for John, experienced very premature and violent deaths. All but John died at a relatively young age and their deaths were violent and no doubt painful.

The difference between before the resurrection, to after the resurrection is remarkable. These men went from hiding to being the founders of the new church. When the Holy Spirit filled them, they became unstoppable. Please read Acts chapter four and verses twenty-nine to thirty-one.

Act 4:29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats

*and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness,
Act 4:30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.
Act 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.*

The Apostles were now speaking with authority and power and there was no way the Jewish leaders, or the Romans, were going to deter them from the task that Jesus had set before them. Now they had their futures laid out before them, and that was all they needed to withstand all threats and punishments that were handed out to them. So, ten of the original twelve were martyred because of their love and trust in Jesus. (Judas, who betrayed Jesus, committed suicide). John lived to a good old age and died of natural causes. After the resurrection, the Apostles became bold in their preaching. This was when they stopped being afraid and put their total trust in their Lord.

Jesus Appears To Others

The Apostles were not the only ones to see the risen Christ, as we can read in 1Co 15:5-8.

1Co 15:5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

1Co 15:6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

1Co 15:7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

1Co 15:8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

The five hundred that he appeared to in verse six would have been the founding members of the early church, and because of persecution, they spread around the world, taking the knowledge of Jesus with them to all parts of the world.

Jesus' resurrection from the dead was witnessed by many people, and because they recorded this incredible event for us, we can all have peace of mind knowing that it is a fact of history. And we can rely upon all the other promises that have been given to us about our futures in the Kingdom of God.

The disciples all believed that Jesus was resurrected because they all saw it with their own eyes, as 1Jn 1:1-3 recorded.

1Jn 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

1Jn 1:2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us.

We must believe in the risen Jesus Christ. Then we can have fellowship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ Himself.

Our Friend Doubting Thomas

The changes that came over the disciples were incredible. But the most amazing of all, and the one that should help us all in our journey of faith, is the experience of our good friend that we know as, “doubting Thomas”. Consider his attitude after the crucifixion of Jesus and before he saw Him resurrected from the dead. In John 20:19-25, we see Thomas refusing to believe what his fellow disciples were trying to tell him about Jesus being resurrected from the dead.

Read this account in Joh 20:19-25.

Joh 20:19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

Joh 20:20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

Joh 20:21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”

Joh 20:22 And when he had said this, he

breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Joh 20:23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.

Joh 20:24 Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.

Joh 20:25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

We can see from verse 24 that Thomas was not present when Jesus first presented himself to the other disciples. We must remember Thomas had spent the last three years intimately acquainted with Jesus. Thomas had witnessed all his miracles and even heard his prophecies about his coming death and resurrection, which are recorded for us in Matthew chapter 16 and verse 21. That, along with the testimony from the other ten disciples about Jesus' resurrection, should have been enough to convince him that Jesus was indeed resurrected from the dead. But because he had not seen Jesus, he could not believe the impossible. That someone could come back from the grave. So he continued to not believe.

I can just imagine the other disciples trying to convince Thomas that the Lord had indeed risen from the dead. They would have tried every form of persuasion to get Thomas to believe them, but we can see in verse 25 what Thomas thought. He was not about to take anyone's word for it. He had to see the evidence for himself. "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, put my finger into the print of the nails, and

put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

Having already seen Jesus crucified and buried, he required concrete evidence before he could believe in Jesus' resurrection. And the longer Jesus stayed away, the more adamant, and the more determined Thomas would have been in his thoughts, and the more he would have said, "I will not believe". If Jesus had never shown Himself to Thomas, then Thomas would have never believed that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead.

We read in the next verse in John chapter 20: 26, that it was a week later before Jesus showed Himself to his disciples again. I think those 7 days between his first and second appearances to his disciples tell a very interesting and powerful story. One that is very easy to just read over and not consider the full and true meaning of this period.

Can you imagine these 7 days? If the Disciples slept for 8 hours a day, then they were awake for about one hundred and twelve hours, and just what do you think they were talking about? They may have still been arguing about who was to be the greatest in the Kingdom, who was to sit at his right hand and who at his left, and no doubt wondering how Jesus was now going to kick the Romans out of Jerusalem. But I think their major topic of conversation for those days would have been about their resurrected Lord, and how things might now change.

But what about Thomas for those one hundred and twelve hours? He must have been wondering what was wrong with the last bottle of wine the others had drunk to believe such a thing. People do not come back from the dead. We know from the next three verses that he kept this attitude for

the full seven days.

Joh 20:26 Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Joh 20:27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

Joh 20:28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Thomas had kept on doubting for the full seven days, but after seeing the resurrected Jesus, the change in him was complete and immediate. As we see in verse 28. He no longer needs any more proof that Jesus is indeed risen, or that he is the Son of God. Thomas dedicated the rest of his life to teaching about Jesus, his crucifixion, and resurrection from the dead. Tradition holds that he was killed with a sword for spreading these teachings.

I wonder why there were seven days between these two appearances, and why Thomas was not present the first time Jesus appeared to his disciples. Maybe it was for us to see the determination of Thomas sticking to his guns for seven days and refusing to be persuaded, but demanding physical proof of Christ's return from the dead. Then his total acceptance after he saw the resurrected Jesus. His story is powerful proof that our Lord is indeed alive today.

As an extra encouraging note to future Christians, and that is us, Jesus says in the next verse. Those who have not

seen Him but still believe are blessed. Read verse 29 to see this very reassuring message from our Lord.

Joh 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

It is my thoughts that God made certain that Thomas was not present a week earlier because he knew the heart and mind of Thomas and that he would stubbornly continue to say "I will not believe" until he had the absolute proof he needed.

If Jesus had not returned and shown Himself to Thomas, then our good friend Thomas, no longer Doubting Thomas, would have never believed. However, Thomas, this stubborn man, is now convinced, and we can also believe that Jesus was resurrected thanks to the change in Thomas's attitude after he saw Jesus resurrected.

The Brothers Of Jesus

James, the half-brother of Jesus, is another perfect example of someone who has seen Jesus rise from the dead. He and the other half-brothers of Jesus did not believe that he was who he claimed to be while he was alive, and we can read this in John chapter seven and verses one through five.

Joh 7:1 After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

Joh 7:2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand.

Joh 7:3 So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing."

Joh 7:4 "For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world."

Joh 7:5 For not even his brothers believed in him.

We read in verse five that his half-brothers did not believe that he was "The Christ". Yet, in verse three, they tell Jesus to go to Judea so his disciples can see the works that he does. Therefore, they must have seen, or at least heard, about

some miracles Jesus had performed. But they still did not believe. The following verses are more proof of this in Matthew chapter thirteen and verses fifty-four to fifty-eight.

Mat 13:54 and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?"

Mat 13:55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

Mat 13:56 "And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

Mat 13:57 And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household."

Mat 13:58 And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

This is an interesting passage of scripture for anyone who still believes that Mary, the mother of Jesus, remained a virgin all her life. It is very clear here that Jesus was in his hometown, so the people gathered there would have known Jesus and his family very well. The fact that Jesus had siblings, recorded here in God's bible, lets us know Mary was only a virgin until the day Jesus was born. If you doubt this, then read Mat 1:23-25.

Mat 1:23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

Mat 1:24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took

*his wife,
Mat 1:25 but knew her not until she had given
birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.*

How clear does God need to make this before people will believe the truth and accept what he has written in his precious book for our benefit? Note especially verse fifty-seven, where Jesus states a Prophet is not without honour EXCEPT in his own town and in his own home. We know from the story of Jesus' birth that Mary and Joseph were both told by the angel what was going to happen, and exactly who their first-born son was going to be. So those of "his own home" must have been others apart from Mary and Joseph, so it can only mean the half-brothers and half-sisters of Jesus.

Yet after the resurrection of Jesus, James also became a believer and wrote the book of James in the New Testament where he describes himself as "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ", Why the change now, and why not believe while Jesus was alive and performing his miracles.

The other half-brothers of Jesus also believed only after the resurrection, we can see where they gathered together with the disciples to pray in Acts chapter one and verses thirteen to fourteen.

*Act 1:13 And when they had entered, they went
up to the upper room, where they were staying,
Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip
and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James
the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and
Judas the son of James.*

*Act 1:14 All these with one accord were devoting
themselves to prayer, together with the women*

and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Here, the text includes the names of all eleven Disciples, as well as mentioning the half-brothers of Jesus. So these half-brothers were not disciples. Many people do not believe Jesus had any siblings, but here is proof positive that he had brothers and sisters. So, the resurrection of Jesus is the turning point for many to come to believe that he is the Son of God. His previously sceptical half-brothers and sisters were now fully convinced.

James, and his brothers, must have witnessed or at least heard, about the works that Jesus was performing, so why only after his death did they believe that their half brother, Jesus, was the Lord? Very simple, they had seen him crucified and buried and had mourned for him for three days, and now they had seen the resurrected Jesus. What could be more powerful proof than to witness the power of the resurrection, to see Jesus shrug off the chains of death?

The other disciples of Jesus were 100% convinced of who he was and were prepared to go through many hardships. To be persecuted and mistreated by many as they preached about Jesus. They witnessed the persecution and death of their Lord. Therefore, they must have known their own lives would be in danger if they continued to preach about Jesus and the coming kingdom of God. Yet, they did not stop preaching until the day they were killed because of their faith in Jesus.

You and I can also believe that Jesus is our Lord by the witnessing of his disciples. And the incredible changes that occurred in their lives after they saw Jesus resurrected from the dead. These fishermen and a tax collector all saw the

works of Jesus, saw his death and resurrection, and were the foundation members of Christ's Church.

For me, it is this amazing change in their attitudes and lives after the resurrection of Jesus Christ that seals it for me. How many of these men would have lived their lives this way? And have been prepared to suffer the kinds of death they experienced? If they knew that this was all just a fantastic lie? It makes no sense to think that any of them would do this.

Paul's Conversion

The conversion of the Apostle Paul stands as one of the most pivotal and Life-changing events in the history of Christianity. He initially persecuted early Christians, considering their beliefs as heretical to Judaism. However, his dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus not only altered the trajectory of his life but also became a cornerstone in the spread of Christianity.

Saul, a devout Jew and a Pharisee, fervently opposed the burgeoning Christian movement. He zealously pursued and persecuted followers of Jesus, viewing them as a threat to Judaism. His pivotal moment occurred during a journey to Damascus, where he intended to arrest Christians.

What was it that changed this man so much? He saw the resurrected Jesus. In the book of Acts, we see recorded this amazing event that changed Saul, later to be renamed Paul. This was when he changed from being a true hater of Christ's disciples to being one of their most powerful allies.

Act 9:1 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest

Act 9:2 and asked him for letters to the

synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Act 9:3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him.

Act 9:4 And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

Act 9:5 And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

Act 9:6 "But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."

Ananias, a disciple in Damascus, received a vision from the Lord instructing him to visit Saul. Despite initial reluctance because of Saul's reputation, Ananias obeyed. Upon laying hands on Saul, scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. After being baptized, he began preaching about Jesus, astonishing those who knew his previous reputation.

Paul's conversion was profound, not merely a change in belief, but a complete transformation of identity and purpose. He shifted from persecuting Christians to becoming one of the most influential figures in spreading the message of Christ.

Paul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus must have been an incredible thing for Paul to experience. He was not a member of the original Twelve, but he was an Apostle of Jesus. Paul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus must have been an incredible thing for him to experience, as it led to him going from persecuting the

church to being responsible for much of what we know today as the New Testament. The one incident that started Paul's conversion would no doubt have been when he was confronted by the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul dedicated the rest of his life to preaching about Jesus and, because of his beliefs, he was eventually beheaded. Following his conversion, Paul spent time in Arabia, then returned to Damascus as we see in Gal 1:17.

Gal 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

This is where Paul claims to have received direct revelation from Jesus Christ, shaping his understanding of the Gospel. His experiences and teachings became foundational in shaping early Christian theology and practice.

Paul's missionary journeys across the Mediterranean helped to establish Christian communities and spreading the Gospel beyond Jewish territories. His letters, comprising a significant portion of the New Testament, articulate theological concepts, ethical teachings, and guidance for the historic Christian churches.

Paul had gone from persecuting the church to being a powerful witness for Jesus. When he was writing to the Corinthian Church, he explained some suffering he had undergone for Jesus. Please read his account in 2Co 11:23-28.

2Co 11:23 Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death.

2Co 11:24 Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one.

2Co 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea;

2Co 11:26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers;

2Co 11:27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

2Co 11:28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

These are some hardships that Paul had to face, yet he never flinched or wavered from speaking the truth about Jesus. He would never have done this if he knew Jesus was a fake and not the Messiah, if he knew Jesus was not the real deal, then why would he continue to preach about him and be prepared to suffer so much punishment, his body bore many scars from the 195 lashes that he received, not to mention the other injuries he suffered. Why would he be prepared to suffer all this if Jesus was a phony?

We must remember where Paul came from. He had a very comfortable lifestyle until he met Jesus. We can see this in Philippians chapter three and verses three to six.

Php 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ

*Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—
Php 3:4 though I myself have reason for
confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks
he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have
more:*

*Php 3:5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the
people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a
Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;*

*Php 3:6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as
to righteousness under the law, blameless.*

Paul's fellow Jews held him in high regard before his conversion on the road to Damascus. They would have looked up to him with respect and admiration. He probably had the best seats at festivals and Jewish feasts. People would have sought after his opinions on all matters. He was a man of importance and held in high regard by the Pharisees and Sadducees of his day. But all this ended on the road to Damascus.

The question we must ask here is, why would he choose to give up this way of life and then face the hatred and punishment of the Jews for his ideas? Unless, of course, he knew Jesus was the real deal. And then in the next five verses, we see what the past lifestyle of Paul now meant for him.

*Php 3:7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as
loss for the sake of Christ.*

*Php 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss
because of the surpassing worth of knowing
Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered
the loss of all things and count them as rubbish,
in order that I may gain Christ*

Php 3:9 and be found in him, not having a

*righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—
Php 3:10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
Php 3:11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*

In verse eight, the term refuse, or garbage is used, but other versions of the bible are a little more graphic and use the word dung. So I think this gives us a rather powerful sign of what Paul thought of his former way of life and all the trapping of comfort and privileges that he once enjoyed. But now that he has found Jesus, he sees all this comfort and privilege to be worth nothing.

Paul was a changed man after seeing his risen Lord. The other disciples would no doubt have had a similar view of their former lifestyles. They did not have the same position in life as that of Paul, but they gave up their former ways of life to follow Jesus and to suffer for his name's sake. We can only imagine what they suffered as they preached about the Kingdom of God.

The significance of Paul's conversion extends beyond his personal transformation. It symbolises the inclusivity of the Christian message—that even one vehemently opposed to the faith could undergo a radical change and become its ardent proponent. His conversion narrative illustrates the life-changing power of encountering Christ, emphasising the universality of grace and redemption.

Paul's conversion highlights the idea of divine

intervention and purpose. His encounter with Jesus was not merely a chance, but a deliberate act to redirect his life's course. This divine intervention underscores the belief that God's plans can supersede human intentions, guiding individuals toward a higher purpose.

One cannot overstate the influence of Paul on Christian theology, ethics, and practice. His teachings on grace, faith, love, and the unity of believers continue to shape Christian thought and practice. His missionary efforts laid the groundwork to expand Christianity, affecting cultures and societies across centuries.

The Apostle Paul's conversion remains a source of inspiration and reflection for Christians. It signifies the potential for personal transformation, the embrace of grace, and the capacity for individuals to turn from hostility to fervent devotion. His life serves as a testament to the power of faith, perseverance, and the profound impact of encountering the divine.

In conclusion, the conversion of the Apostle Paul from a persecutor of Christians to a fervent believer and advocate for the Gospel stands as a remarkable testament to the transformative power of encountering Christ. His journey from Saul to Paul not only changed his life but also shaped the course of Christianity, leaving an indelible mark on its theology, teachings, and global expansion. Paul's conversion narrative continues to inspire believers and serves as a powerful illustration of divine grace and the potential for radical personal transformation.

How Long Was Jesus Christ in the Tomb

The question of how long Jesus was actually in the tomb is a very important topic for anyone to understand correctly. There are several differing thoughts on this matter, so it is vital to understand it from the perspective of the bible. We cannot rely on the thoughts and teachings that originate from man to be truthful and accurate depictions of what actually happened. Therefore, as I write about this topic, I will only take the evidence that we can find in the Holy Scriptures as the truth on the matter.

The greatest event to have ever happened in the entire world is undoubtedly the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. There has always been a great deal of controversy about the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of our Lord.

Christians have many beliefs about this all-important incident. Most Christians believe he resurrected from the dead on the first day of the week, Sunday, and they use this belief to justify worshipping God on Sundays. This is incorrect and Jesus rose from the dead on the Sabbath day. Please continue to read this book to discover the truth.

With so many ideas on this topic, I will seek the truth of this topic from the only source that matters, and that is the

Holy Bible. This amazing book, the Holy Bible, has recorded the full story in great detail from the time of Christ's crucifixion until his resurrection from the dead. You will need patience and be willing to search the scriptures to find the truth God has concealed in this book. You will not find the answer in just one place, but you will need to carefully study several original books of the Bible to uncover the truth.

The Bible is the inspired word of God and must be what influences our thoughts on all things. Keep in mind the following scripture as you read this book. Also remember this verse is referring to the entire bible, not just the New Testament. Jesus quoted the bible often, and every time he quoted only from the Old Testament. This is because none of the New Testament was written while Jesus was alive on this earth. This part of the bible was written mostly by his disciples and after his crucifixion and resurrection.

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

It is my aim in this book to follow the scriptures that describe this amazing event and find the truth that is concealed in the scriptures. If you are just seeking the truth from God's words on this very important subject, then you may be surprised by some statements I will make. But please keep referring to your bible as you read this book. To come to the right conclusion, you will need to read with an open mind. If you already have an opinion on this topic, you may find it difficult to believe what I am saying. It is much harder to "unlearn" something than it is to learn a new thing. Your own understanding always influences you, and to believe something contrary to your previously held beliefs may be

difficult.

The secret to coming to the truth is always to listen to the word of God and accept what he is saying to you. You need to put man's traditions out of your mind and allow the words of the bible to convince you of the truth. Remember, if the bible tells you something different from man's teachings, then the bible is always right and should be your only source of consideration. If you accept the words of man over the words of God, then you will never learn the reality of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

I pray that our amazing God will lead you into truth from his word, The Holy Bible. Remember, this is a controversial topic, so you will need patience and time to find your answers to this issue.

How Long is Three Days and Three Nights

Jesus used three terms to describe how long he would be in the tomb. Please examine these three terms. First “In three days” “after three days”, and finally “on the third day”.

I believe these three terms are used to show the specific period during which Jesus was in the tomb. Let us start with, “in three days”. This means inside three days, it cannot be longer than three days or 72 hours. It must be equal to, or less than, exactly three days or 72 hours.

Now let us look at the term, “after three days”. This indicates the duration of the time Jesus was in the tomb must be at least three days. It must be exactly equal to, but cannot exceed, 72 hours.

When you compare these 2 scriptures, you can understand the time Jesus had to be in the tomb had to be exactly three days, or exactly 72 hours. This is the only way it can satisfy both terms, “in three days” and “after three days”.

Now let us examine the term “on the third day”. We should always turn to God’s scriptures to uncover the duration of this, and the optimal approach is to refer to the initial book in the bible, Genesis, and examine the first 13 verses. This describes the first three days of creation. Rather than reading

these verses, let us select at three.

Gen 1:5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

We have had 1 period of darkness and one of light. A period of 24 hours. This is referred to as “the first day”. This is followed by verse 8.

Gen 1:8 And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

Now, in verse 8, we have had another night and another day. Another period of 24 hours and so we have “the second day”. A total of 48 hours from the start of creation. Now we come to the all-important verse 13.

Gen 1:13 And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

Here, the term “the third day” is used to describe the first three days of creation consisting of three nights and three days, each with 12 hours for a total of 72 hours. If you ever need a perfect description of “in three days” this is where you will find it, in the first 13 verses of the bible.

Now let us observe where these terms have been used, starting with the term “in three days”. The following verses employ it to clarify the duration Jesus spent in the tomb.

Joh 2:13 The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Joh 2:14 In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the

money-changers sitting there.

Joh 2:15 And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.

Joh 2:16 And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade."

Joh 2:17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

Joh 2:18 So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?"

Joh 2:19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Joh 2:20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"

Joh 2:21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

Joh 2:22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

In these verses, it is apparent that the Jews were interested in finding out who granted Jesus the authority to remove the money changers from the temple. Jesus, knowing that they were going to crucify him, answered he would raise the temple of his body in three days. Notice that he said, "in three days". So this would mean that he was to be resurrected from the dead within three days. No longer than three days. No longer than seventy-two hours. 2 other verses that used the term "in three days" are.

Mar 14:58 “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’”

And again, in.

Mar 15:29 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days,

Following that, to emphasize the exact duration of seventy-two hours, Jesus conveyed to his disciples that he would be resurrected from the tomb “after three days”. Also, the Pharisees remembered Jesus had told them that after three days, he would rise again. This term is clear in the following scriptures.

Mar 8:31 And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mat 27:62 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate

Mat 27:63 and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, “After three days I will rise.”

So in these passages, we see he was to be in the tomb until “after three days”. No less than three days. No less than seventy-two hours.

The last term “on the third day” is used in these verses.

Luk 24:46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,”

Act 10:40 but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear;

1Co 15:4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

So far, we have seen three different ways to describe the time Jesus was to be in the tomb. First was “in three days”, and then “after three days”, and last was “on the third day”. So starting from “in three days” we can see that this is no longer than three days or seventy-two hours. Then “after three days” means that it will not be longer than three days or seventy-two hours. The final one is “on the third day”, and we saw earlier in Genesis the third day is after three periods of night and three periods of day, again exactly seventy-two hours.

Therefore, Jesus was in the tomb for exactly seventy-two hours. Surely, if you take scripture seriously, then how can you possibly say Jesus was not in the tomb for exactly seventy-two hours? Not 71 hours, that is not long enough, and 73 hours are too long. They would have laid Jesus out in the tomb seventy-two hours before his resurrection. Otherwise, by his own words, he is an impostor and not the Son of God.

Therefore, with this information, we can see the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead had to coincide exactly with the time Jesus was laid out in the tomb. This means if Jesus was laid out in the tomb at 5 pm, his

resurrection from the dead had to be at precisely the same time, 5 pm three days and three nights later.

Many people want to use the measuring of three days and three nights by using other than biblical methods of measuring time or using man's traditions. I am more than happy to go with the word of God on this and say that three days and three nights are equal to exactly seventy-two hours. Some will claim any part of a day will count as 1 day. Therefore, if you count days from five minutes before the end of a day, that five minutes counts as one day. If you use this method of calculating the time Jesus was in the tomb, it can vary from about forty-nine hours to seventy-two hours. This certainly is not biblical, as we saw from the Genesis 1:13 account of the term "The third day".

This is where you must decide if you will believe the written word of God, the Bible. Or are you going to accept the words and the traditions of man? This might be one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. This is where we must remember what Jesus told his accusers in.

Mat 12:39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Here it states the only sign he will give them is the sign of Jonah. He will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. It is not possible to squeeze this time frame into a Good Friday crucifixion and a Sunday morning resurrection. At the most, you will get one part day, Friday, and one full day, Saturday, and only two nights, Friday and Saturday. Certainly not the required amount of time to prove Jesus is the

Messiah. Earlier I said if he was not in the tomb for the time he predicted, then he is an impostor and not the Son of God as he claims to be.

Now we know the time of the day Jesus was laid in the tomb. This is recorded in Luk 23:52-54.

Luk 23:52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Luk 23:53 Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid.

Luk 23:54 It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning.

Since the Sabbath was approaching, verse 54 implies that Jesus was placed in the tomb just before sunset. We have already established the fact Jesus had to be in the tomb for exactly 72 hours to fulfil the prophecy of the “sign of Jonah”. This can only mean Jesus was resurrected from the dead exactly 72 hours later, or just before sunset three days and three nights after he was placed in the tomb.

In the chapter titled “on what day was Jesus crucified”, I will determine the day of our Lord’s death and burial. Then, from there, we can easily deduce the exact day, and the time of the day, Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead.

When Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, he gave us some important information we must also consider. And this is Jesus was crucified, buried, and resurrected “according to the scriptures” as we see in 1Co 15:1-4.

1Co 15:1 Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received,

in which you stand,

1Co 15:2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain.

1Co 15:3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

1Co 15:4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

To come to any other conclusion is to ignore what the Bible has plainly told us, and to believe in a man-made theory that is definitely not Biblical. Once more, I will emphasize that I have relied solely on the teachings of the Bible for my evidence. Anything different will not stand the test of scripture.

The Sign of Jonah

Let us start the search for the truth when some of the Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign that He was their Messiah. Jesus answered them, as we see in Matthew 12:38-40.

Mat 12:38 Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you."

Mat 12:39 He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Mat 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law did not recognise Jesus as their Messiah. Even though they understood the scriptures very well, they knew their Messiah was due at about this time. So they were looking for their Messiah to come, but they did not recognise Jesus as being their Lord. That is why they ask Jesus in verse 38 for a sign, or a miracle, that he was who he claimed to be.

Notice in verse 39 that Jesus tells them He would give

them only one sign. Even though he had already performed many miracles, they wanted a powerful sign to prove who he was. Something that would prove conclusively that he was the Messiah. So, as we see in verse 39, Jesus gave them the only sign that would satisfy their demand for absolute proof. He gave them the sign of the Prophet Jonah. Jesus tells them He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, or the tomb. Since this is the only sign, then it is vital He was actually in the tomb for that period of time.

There is a vital clue to the whole question about the burial and resurrection of Jesus. But we must understand exactly what Jesus meant when he said the only sign he would give them was the sign of Jonah, as recorded in Luke 11:29.

Luk 11:29 As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah."

The Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign to show that He is the promised Messiah, and the answer Jesus gave them is absolutely vital for us to understand correctly. Jesus said that the **ONLY SIGN** that he would give them is that He would be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**. The same time Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish.

Please notice that this is the **ONLY SIGN** that He was going to give them. Therefore, if He was not in the heart of the earth for that exact amount of time, then He is not who He claims to be, the Son Of God. If He is there for either a longer or a shorter period, then He is an impostor, a fraud, and not the Son Of God. But if he fulfilled this sign, then he is who he claims to be. Our Lord and our God.

In the book of Jonah, we can see the reference to this term Jesus used as His only sign that He is the Messiah in Jon 1:17.

Jonah 1:17 Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of

the fish three days and three nights.

This is the sign of Jonah. Three days and three nights in the fish's belly. In Luke 11:29 and Matt 12:39, we see Jesus saying that He would give only one sign He was the Messiah, and that was the “sign of Jonah”.

Surely there is enough proof in these verses to show that Jesus was in the tomb for exactly three days and three nights. And in the example from Genesis in the next chapter, we can clearly see that it cannot be anything less than a full 72 hours.

What is a Preparation Day

Hopefully, by now we can see that Jesus was exactly three days and three nights in the tomb. If you still refuse to accept this, then I suggest you listen again to the evidence I have provided and listen carefully to the scriptures quoted. The evidence I have provided for the time Jesus was in the tomb is according to scripture.

Now I will show the days and times when Jesus was buried and resurrected.

Two very important days occurred at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. The meaning of these days is vital to understand. But remember, these days are Jewish days. So the only way to understand their meaning is to look into the scriptures describing this event. Again, you will need to search the scriptures for the answer, but it is there. The two days that occurred at the time Jesus was crucified were called "preparation day" and "Special Sabbath". It is very important to understand the meaning of these days, and when they occur concerning the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

Preparation day, as observed in Judaism, is the day immediately before any Sabbath day. To enforce their strict observance of the Sabbath day, the Sadducees and Pharisees

were to make preparations for the Sabbath well before the actual starting time of the Sabbath. All meals were to be prepared before sunset, so the only thing to do on the Sabbath day was to serve the food. This practice ensured that no work of any kind was done on the Sabbath. Therefore, the day before any Sabbath is called a preparation day.

Another tradition the Jews kept was to not have any bodies left hanging on the cross during the Sabbath. Therefore, they approached Pilate to have the body of Jesus, and the two thieves that were crucified with Him taken down and buried before sunset. Mar 15:42-43 clearly states this.

Mar 15:42 And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath,

Mar 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

In verse 42 it clarifies that the day Jesus was crucified was the “preparation day.” This was followed by a Sabbath day, and from Joh 19:31 below it was not an ordinary Sabbath. But it was a “Special Sabbath”. After Jesus died on the cross, the Jews approached Pilate and requested that he allow them to bury the bodies before the Sabbath day began, as recorded in Joh 19:30-31.

Joh 19:30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Joh 19:31 Since it was the day of Preparation,

and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

Notice it was on “the preparation day” that the Jews asked for the bodies. The following day was not just an ordinary Sabbath. It was a “Special Sabbath”. The weekly Sabbath is never called a “Special Sabbath”. They only use this term for special holy days throughout the year, not for the weekly Sabbath. In the next chapter, I will further explain what a “Special Sabbath” is and when they occur.

The New Testament refers to the title ‘Preparation Day’ 6 times, and each mention specifically identifies it as the day when Jesus was crucified. This day was followed by a special Sabbath.

Joh 19:31 Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

They crucified and buried Jesus on this “preparation day”. We can see this from Joh 19:31. On this day, the chief priests went to Pilate and requested that the bodies be taken down from the crosses so they could be buried before the “Special Sabbath” began.

Without a proper understanding of these scriptures, many people will assume the term “Special Sabbath” refers to the normal weekly Sabbath. And that the preparation day was on a Friday, but this is not correct. I will elaborate more on this in the next chapter.

The most important thing I hope you will understand from this chapter is that the Sabbath following the burial of Jesus was a “Special Sabbath”,

Those who believe in the Good Friday Crucifixion of Jesus accept the day of preparation mentioned in the above verses, refers to the preparation day just before a weekly Saturday Sabbath. But notice that in the book of John 19:31, where this Sabbath is called a special Sabbath.

They placed Jesus Christ into the tomb just before the day of preparation ended, the day before a special Sabbath. Just before the special Sabbath was about to start. Now let me prove to you that this is not the usual Saturday Sabbath, but is the day before the Passover. This is clear from John 19:14-15.

Joh 19:14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!”

Joh 19:15 They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

One very important passage here is in verse 14. It is evident that the day Jesus was crucified coincided with the preparation day for the Passover, and not with the weekly Sabbath. This is where many people mistake this preparation day as being just before a weekly Sabbath, but it is just before the Passover Sabbath on the fifteenth day of the first month. Please read carefully the following explanation of what a “Special Sabbath” is.

What is a Special Sabbath

People in the Western world do not follow the practices of the Jews for the time when days start and finish. We have also abandoned the holy days of the bible for the new Christian seasons like Advent, Lent, Christmas, and Easter. Our days begin and end at midnight instead of the biblical time of sunset.

We need to understand the Hebrew calendar to fully understand the activities of Jesus during his earthly ministry and especially how the holy days relate to his crucifixion, death, and burial.

The first month on the Hebrew calendar is Nisan. On the 14th day is Passover and the 15th day is the first day of unleavened bread, as we can see in Num 28:16-18.

Num 28:16 “On the fourteenth day of the first month is the LORD's Passover,”

Num 28:17 and on the fifteenth day of this month is a feast. Seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.

Num 28:18 On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work,

The 15th is a high day Sabbath because it is the first day

of the feast of unleavened bread. The last day of this feast is also a holy day recorded in verse 25.

Num 28:25 And on the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work.

There are seven high days, or “Special Sabbaths” throughout the year, that are observed by Jews and a minority of Christians. These days, set on special dates in each month, can fall on any day of the week.

The “Special Sabbaths” are on appointed dates in a month and therefore do not fall on a weekly Sabbath. The Passover is always during the first month of the year according to the Jewish calendar, as we can see from Num 28:16-18 above.

These 2 high day Sabbaths during the feast of unleavened bread are the first 2 high day Sabbaths for the year. The other 5 “Special Sabbaths” are Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, and two during the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Jews never refer to the weekly Sabbath as a high day unless a high day falls on the weekly Sabbath. This can happen because these days are on monthly days and not weekdays.

From this information, we can see that Passover, which is not a high day Sabbath, is followed by the first day of unleavened bread that is a high day. Therefore, they put Jesus into the tomb on Passover just before this high day Sabbath began.

On What Day Was Jesus Crucified

The best and most accurate way to find the day and time of Christ's burial and resurrection is to follow the activities of the women between the time of his death and burial until his resurrection. They hold the answer to the question of when Jesus was buried and resurrected from the grave.

One point I found very interesting about this is that the women hold all the clues that will lead us to the correct conclusion on this matter. Yet, in the days of Jesus Christ, society considered women as lower-class citizens and courts assigned very little value to their testimonies. This is much the same today in many countries around the world.

I believe God reveals the truth to us through the activities of the women. Follow their responses to what happened on that fateful day. Observe their obedience to the Sabbath commandments for both the weekly Sabbath, and the Sabbath marking the start of the feast of unleavened bread.

God used these remarkable women to show us He does not regard our women as lower-class citizens, but sees us all as equals. Jesus had many women following him during his ministry, and most of them supported him financially, as some of them were wealthy women in their own right. Jesus never looked at women as being inferior, but saw all of his

followers as brothers and sisters.

I believe God used the activities of the women to reveal when these events happened from the time Jesus was crucified until he rose from the grave. Maybe this is God's way of telling us we are all equal in his eyes.

This most important day in all of our history has many parts to it, and the women hold the key to unlocking the truth about the day, and the time Jesus was crucified, buried, and resurrected from the dead. Follow their story for yourself and uncover the lies many believe about our Lord's last hours and his resurrection from the dead.

Let us start with the narrative from Luk 23:46-56 and observe that all the women were present when Jesus was crucified and placed into the tomb.

Luk 23:46 Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

Luk 23:47 Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!"

Luk 23:48 And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts.

Luk 23:49 And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Luk 23:50 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous

man,

Luk 23:51 who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God.

Luk 23:52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Luk 23:53 Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid.

Luk 23:54 It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning.

Luk 23:55 The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid.

Luk 23:56 Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

In verse forty-nine, the women who had followed Jesus were all there, standing at a distance. Verse fifty-five informs us that the women saw the tomb and observed how his body was laid. Therefore, they were at the tomb very late on the day Jesus was crucified, and the “Special Sabbath” was about to begin. So the women would not have had time to buy the spices necessary to anoint Jesus’ body before the start of the Sabbath. Also, note that ALL the women were there, so no one could have purchased the spices before the Sabbath starting.

The women were all there witnessing the crucifixion and burial of Jesus (verse fifty-five). Then, in verse fifty-six, the women went home and prepared the spices. This sounds like they prepared the spices on that same day, the preparation day when Jesus was crucified. But if you look at Mar 16:1, it

is clear they purchased the spices AFTER the “Special Sabbath”.

Remember, I said at the start of this book that you will not find the answer in just one place, but that you will need to carefully study several unique books of the bible to find the truth. Let us now look into what Mark said in chapter sixteen and verse one.

Mar 16:1 When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.

The women would not have had time to buy these spices before the High Day Sabbath started. They were there to witness Jesus being laid out in the tomb right at sunset, and verses 54 and 55 of Luke chapter 23, shows the Sabbath was drawing near. Therefore, they would not have had time to purchase the spices before the Special Sabbath started. Purchasing and preparing the spices on the special Sabbath would have violated the Special Sabbath day law. Apart from that, any shopkeeper who would have sold these spices would have closed shop by now to prepare for the Sabbath.

We need a reminder of what we read in the last chapter to emphasize that this Sabbath mention here is actually a special Sabbath and not an ordinary weekly Sabbath.

Joh 19:30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Joh 19:31 Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high

day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

Mar 16:1 informs us it was after the Special Sabbath that the women purchased the spices. So we can see that one Sabbath day has passed since Jesus was laid out in the tomb. And it is after this Sabbath the women purchased and prepared the spices.

Back to Luk 23:56, explains the women prepared the spices and then rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment before going to anoint Jesus' body. Now we have a second Sabbath in the story. After resting on the first Sabbath, the "Special Sabbath", the women purchase the spices they need and prepare them. Then they rested on the Sabbath. This one is the usual weekly Sabbath.

From Joh 19:31, we know that the Sabbath that was about to begin after Jesus was buried was "The Special Sabbath" and not the weekly Saturday Sabbath. So now, if we follow the timetable of these events, we have to come to the following conclusion.

After witnessing the burial of Jesus very late on the preparation day, too late to purchase the spices before the Special Sabbath began. The women rested on the Special Sabbath. Then they purchased and prepared the spices the day after the special Sabbath. This is clear from Mar 16:1. Then, after preparing the spices, the women rested again on the weekly Sabbath, as is clear from Luk 23:56.

Luk 23:56 Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

From these verses, we can see two Sabbaths with one ordinary day in between. If we compare the details in both Gospels, we see where Mark tells us the women bought spices after the Sabbath (Mar 16:1). Then Luke relates they prepared the spices before resting on the weekly Sabbath (Luk 23:56). This shows two different Sabbaths being mentioned. The first, as John 19:3 tells us, was the “high day”, or “Special Sabbath”, which was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The second Sabbath is the weekly Sabbath.

We saw the timetable of the events a little earlier. But now let us look at these events in reverse order to come to the exact day Jesus was crucified and buried. We know Jesus spent exactly seventy-two hours in the tomb (Three days and three nights). They placed him in the tomb at the very end of the day of preparation, as the day was ending. Therefore, he must have risen at the same time of the day three days later.

Very early on the first day of the week, and that is Sunday, the women went to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus. But note that Luke chapter 24, verses 1-3, recorded what happened: very early on the first day of the week, which is Sunday, the women went to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus.

Luk 24:1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared.

Luk 24:2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,

Luk 24:3 but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

They placed Jesus in the tomb at sunset on the day he

was crucified, and he had to remain in the tomb for exactly seventy-two hours. This was to fulfill the prophecy he gave to the Jewish leaders that he would be in the tomb for the same time Jonah was in the whale's belly. Let us recap on that section of scripture.

Mat 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you."

Mat 12:39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Mat 12:40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Since he had already risen very early on the first day of the week, Sunday, he could not have risen on this day because he had to rise as the sun was setting. This only leaves the day before on the weekly Sabbath as the day for Him to be resurrected from the dead.

To determine what day Jesus was crucified, we simply count backward from the time of his resurrection for exactly seventy-two hours. Starting at the end of the regular weekly Sabbath. Count back one day and this is Friday. Friday, the day after the Special Sabbath, and the day the women purchased and prepared the spices. Count back one more day and it is Thursday. This is the Special Sabbath that follows Jesus' crucifixion. This was the first day the women rested. Therefore, the day of preparation, the day of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ, had to be on the Wednesday. Just

before sunset.

They buried Jesus just before the sunset on the “day of preparation” on Wednesday. Therefore, he would have left the tomb just before sunset on the weekly Sabbath, exactly seventy-two hours, or three days and three nights, from the time of his burial.

This timetable fits in perfectly with the definition of “three days and three nights”. Jesus told the leaders of the Jews he would be in the tomb for this exact amount of time, the same time Jonah was in the belly of the enormous fish. And this was to be the ONLY SIGN Jesus was going to give. No other sign will conclusively prove he is our Messiah.

Even though Jesus performed many miracles, pointing to Him being God. This one sign, three days and three nights, is all he gave as the conclusive proof he was who he claimed to be. God in the flesh. The Messiah of the Jews. Our Messiah.

Also, note how the other expressions “in three days’ and “after three days” fit perfectly into this timetable.

Tearing of the Curtain

The temple that stood in Jerusalem in the days Jesus Christ was on the earth was a magnificent building. According to the book of John chapter 2 verse 20, it took the Jewish people 46 years to build. When Jesus turned the tables of the money changers over in the temple courts, the Jews demanded to know by what authority Jesus had to do this. Jesus answered them as we see in John 2 verses 18-21.

Joh 2:18 So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?”

Joh 2:19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Joh 2:20 The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?”

Joh 2:21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

The Jewish temple had several parts, and each served a particular purpose in the worship of God. The innermost room was called the “Holy of Holies” and where God’s presence was in the temple.

Only the High Priest could enter the “Holy of Holies”,

and then only once a year on the “Day Of Atonement”, to atone for the sins of Israel. To enter this part of the temple at any other time of the year, or by any other person, was a sure death sentence.

This room, the holy of holies, was separated from the rest of the temple by a massive curtain or veil. The exact size of the curtain is unknown, but according to Jewish tradition, the curtain was about 60 feet high. It was very thick with a thickness of about 4 inches.

So it was a massive curtain. The book of Exodus tells us how they made the massive curtain. They made it from blue, purple, and scarlet materials along with twisted linen.

The veil represents the separation of a Holy God from sinful humanity because our sins have separated us from God, as we see in Isa 59 verses 1 and 2.

Isa 59:1 Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.

Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

As we can see from verse two, our sins have separated us from God. He designed the temple in a way to keep us separated from himself. This was the purpose of the curtain or veil.

It is well worth reading the rest of Isaiah 59 to see why the curtain was in place to make a dividing line between God (holiness) and humanity (sinfulness).

The Significance.

As recorded for us in Matthew 27 verses 50 and 51, the massive curtain in the Temple was torn in half from the top to the bottom the very moment Jesus died on the cross.

Mat 27:50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

Mat 27:51 And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

The height and thickness of this veil make what happened when Jesus died on the cross even more remarkable. From verse 51, we see the curtain was torn from the top to the bottom. This would have required a massive amount of energy to tear such an enormous curtain in two. It is also interesting to note that the tearing occurred from the top to the bottom. Signifying that it was God the Father himself who tore this massive curtain.

This was a very dramatic sign that showed us that this incredible sacrifice of Jesus was sufficient atonement for the sins of all humanity. The shedding of His blood paid for our sins and freed us from the death penalty. This opened the way into the “Holy of Holies” where the presence of God resided.

Before this amazing sacrifice of Jesus, only the high priest could enter this part of the Temple, and then only on one day of the year. What this did for us was amazing. It gave us the right to come before the “Throne of Grace” without fear. To approach Almighty God with our prayers and requests.

Now, all people, both Jews and Gentiles, have access to the holy of holies for all time. God also abandoned the temple and no longer lives in a dwelling made by human

hands. God was now finished with the temple in Jerusalem and the Romans finally destroyed it in A.D. 70.

We read in

Act 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,

The temple needed to be removed because as long as it stood, the old covenant would continue with its sacrifices. To fully establish the new covenant, it was necessary to make way for the removal of the temple, as shown in Hebrews 8 verse 13.

Heb 8:13 In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 9 verses 8 and 9 make this even clearer.

Heb 9:8 By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing
Heb 9:9 (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,

The temple is no longer needed. We are now permitted to enter the very presence of God through this torn curtain. The writer of the book of Hebrews describes this beautifully in Hebrews 10 and verses 19 to 23.

Heb 10:19 Therefore, brothers, since we have

confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,

Heb 10:20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,

Heb 10:21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

The veil in the temple was a constant reminder to us that sin has no place in the presence of God. No amount of animal sacrifices could truly atone for the sins of humanity. But Jesus Christ, through his death on the cross, has now removed all barriers between God and man. We may now approach the throne of grace with boldness and confidence as revealed to us in Hebrews 4 and verse 16.

Heb 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We no longer need the services of a human high priest or animal sacrifices for our forgiveness. Now we have our Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven. The only one who can intercede for us with our Heavenly Father as recorded in Hebrews 7 verse 25.

Heb 7:25 Consequently, he is able to save to the

uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

The death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ paid for our sins. The tearing of the curtain made it possible for all humankind to approach God. And as we can see in 1 Ti 2:5, Jesus is the only mediator between us and God.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

Many people today still rely on a priest to confess their sins to. This is no longer necessary. Understand 1 Timothy 2:5 and see there is only one mediator between God and man, and that is Jesus Christ. No one else can intercede for us. No one else, no saint, no angel, no man, and definitely no woman has the authority to intercede between God and humanity. Only Jesus Christ has the prerogative to intercede between God and mankind.

The Thief on The Cross Alongside Jesus

What lessons can we gather from the thief who was crucified on the cross alongside Jesus? Why was this incident recorded at all, and can we learn anything important from this event?

First, let us consider who this person was. There is nowhere in recorded history for us to determine what the lifestyle was of this thief. But we can presume he was not an amiable person. He was a thief, and who knows what other crimes he may have committed to earn the death sentence? In the book of Luke, we see the confession of this criminal. He admits he is guilty and deserving of the penalty he is now about to pay.

It is very important to note here that he also says Jesus has done nothing wrong. Then he calls Jesus Lord and then asks Jesus to remember him when He comes into His Kingdom. In doing this, he is acknowledging Jesus as his Messiah. Showing Jesus he has faith in who he is. Maybe this thief heard of some miracles Jesus had performed. Or maybe he had seen some of these miracles for himself. This we do not know, but from the comments he made about Jesus, I feel he must have had some limited knowledge of who Jesus was. Luke recorded this event for us in verses 39 to 42 of chapter

23.

Luk 23:39 One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!"

Luk 23:40 But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"

Luk 23:41 "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

Luk 23:42 And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Luk 23:43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

When we consider this event, we realise the following points about this criminal. He would not have been baptised. Nor had he ever followed Jesus nor prayed to Him. By his own confession, he was a thief and deserving of his penalty. He was only a matter of a few hours from his death when he asked Jesus to remember him.

A very late conversion and declaration of his belief in Jesus as "The Son Of God". This fits in very well with what we hear in the book of Acts 2:21.

Act 2:21 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This thief was calling on the name of the Lord. Therefore, he qualifies as one who can be saved. So even with his very late declaration of Jesus being the "Son of God". He qualifies for a place in God's kingdom. Now read the amazing

response this thief got from Jesus in Luke 23 verse 43.

Luk 23:43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus tells this thief he will be in paradise. This is the reward for the thief after his confession that Jesus is the Christ. Millions of other people have also been promised this reward because of their faith in their Lord.

But this is also where we come upon what may be a major error in interpreting this verse. Most people will more than likely disagree with me. But if you listen to the end, I am sure you will see what I mean.

The first thing to realize is that when the original Greek text was written, there was no use of punctuation marks. Therefore, the comma used in this verse was not in the original. Those who interpreted this verse put the comma where it best suited their own beliefs and understanding. Some earlier books have the comma before the word today, while others put the comma after the word today. Consider the 2 versions of this verse below. One with the comma placed before today. Then consider the same verse with the comma after the word today, and see how it completely changes the meaning of the verse.

When the comma comes before today, as in this version. "Assuredly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise". This interpretation can mean the criminal will be in paradise on that very day with Jesus. But now read the same passage with the comma after the word today. As in the following version of the verse.

"Assuredly I tell you today, you will be with me in

Paradise.” Here Jesus tells the criminal he will be in paradise with him. But he does not say when this will happen. It will be in the future, but how long in the future Jesus does not say.

Upon his resurrection from the dead, he will enter paradise. The same as every other person who has died in faith.

To establish which one of these verses is correct. We must consider other passages from the Bible that concern the time when all the saved will receive their rewards and be in paradise. We must work out when each of those who have died in faith will indeed enter paradise. Will it be on the very day they die? Or will all the faithful enter the kingdom at a yet future date?

The apostle Paul teaches us that all believers who die will come forth from the graves. But only when Jesus Christ returns. The recording of this is found in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 20 to 23.

1Co 15:20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

1Co 15:21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

1Co 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

We see in verse 23 that Christ is the “firstfruits”. He is the very first person to be made alive, or to be resurrected from the dead. This has to include all the people from the Old

Testament times who lived before the time of Jesus, otherwise, Jesus could not be the first person to be resurrected from the dead. They are all still waiting their turn to be resurrected.

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is commonly known as the “faith chapter”. Here you can read the names of many of those who have lived since the world was first created. Some famous names such as Abel, Noah, Abraham the father of the faithful, and Moses. Plus others who did mighty deeds in the name of God. So now let us examine from the evidence from the bible when these mighty men and women of God received their just rewards. The proof is in the following amazing passage of scripture that describes how they lived and how they were treated. They received promises, as we see in verse 33, but they have never received those promises, as we see in verse 39. Please listen to Heb 11:32-40.

Heb 11:32 And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets

—

Heb 11:33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

Heb 11:34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

Heb 11:35 Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life.

Heb 11:36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment.

Heb 11:37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—

Heb 11:38 of whom the world was not worthy— wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Heb 11:39 And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

Heb 11:40 since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Verse 35 here tells of women receiving their dead raised to life. This temporary raising to life does not grant them eternal life; otherwise, they would still be here with us today. How long they lived we do not know, but they died again and returned to their graves.

These amazing people who served God before Jesus came to the earth, are yet to receive their rewards, as we can see in verse 39. Then, in verse 40, they will not be made perfect without the apostles. They will not enter God's kingdom apart from, or before, the apostles of Jesus Christ.

In all of Paul's writing, there is nowhere he ever tries to comfort the living by telling them that their deceased loved ones are already with Jesus in heaven. He always attempts to bring peace into their hearts by reminding them of the resurrection of the dead.

This I will show you in the following sections of scripture. First, in the book of John, then in 1 Thessalonians, and then again back in the book of John. Listen to what we are told in John 5:28-29.

Joh 5:28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice

Joh 5:29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Notice in these verses that all those in their tombs, or their graves, will hear his voice and come out of their graves and be resurrected. All those mean everyone who has ever lived and died. Some resurrected to eternal life, and some to judgment.

When Lazarus, the brother of Martha, died, Martha was aware of the fact that Lazarus would be resurrected from the dead on “the last day”. This is clear from her conversation with Jesus just before he went to the tomb of Lazarus and raised him from the dead. Recorded in Joh 11:23-25.

Joh 11:23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

Joh 11:24 Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”

Joh 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,”

Lazarus, a wonderful friend of Jesus, will be raised from the dead on “the last day” when Jesus Christ returns in

all power and glory. This we saw in the book of John above when all who are in their graves will come out. Now, let us look at when this resurrection is going to take place. Listen to 1Th 4:15-18.

1Th 4:15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

1Th 4:18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Here in verse 16, we can see when this resurrection of the dead will take place. It will be when Jesus returns from Heaven and not before.

Paul again talks about the resurrection of the dead, and not only his hope for the resurrection but also the hope of the Pharisees of his day. They also believed there would be a resurrection of the dead, both for the just and the unjust. Paul confesses his faith in the resurrection of the dead in Acts 24 verses 14 and 15.

Act 24:14 But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing

*everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets,
Act 24:15 having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.*

In these scriptures, we see the dead will be rewarded and resurrected from the dead at the resurrection of the righteous. This will happen only when Jesus returns, not before.

Now let us return to the story of the thief on the cross. How can we claim that the criminal crucified with Jesus went into paradise the day he died on the cross? If this is the case, then he would be the only one to have ever died and gone straight to Heaven that same day.

There is one vital piece of evidence we are yet to look at. The day Jesus died, they placed him in the tomb where he remained for three days and three nights. Then, at the end of this time, Mary met him when she was looking for his body. We read about this encounter in John 20 verses 16 and 17.

Joh 20:16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

Joh 20:17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

It is very important to understand what Jesus said the Mary in these verses. Remember, he has been in the tomb for three days and three nights since the day he died on the cross.

He said to her. “Don’t hold me, for I haven’t yet ascended to my father”. Do you understand what this means? Three days and three nights after he died on the cross, he still has not ascended to Heaven. Then he tells Mary. “I am ascending to my Father and your Father”. Now he tells Mary he is about to go to his Father in Heaven. Therefore, if he has not yet ascended to his Father before meeting Mary at the tomb, then he did not ascend on the day he was crucified. If Jesus did not ascend on the day he was crucified, then the thief also could not have ascended on that day.

Let us look again at

Luk 23:43 And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

If, as in the example above, the coma comes before the word today, then Jesus and the thief went to Heaven on the day they were crucified. But as we have just witnessed, Jesus did not ascend to his Father for another 72 hours. Therefore, it was not possible for the thief to have gone to Heaven on the day he was crucified. The only plausible explanation is that the coma was in the incorrect place in Luk 23:43. When the coma comes after the word today, it all makes perfect sense. Jesus told the thief he would one day be in paradise, at the same time all other believers in Jesus would enter paradise.

This thief who had done nothing to deserve God’s grace, except to call upon the name of Jesus, is now assured by Jesus he will enter paradise. This will be with the rest of the resurrected dead at the return of Jesus Christ at the very end of this age. The example of this thief in the Bible is to make very clear to us the meaning of John 3:16. Whoever believes in Him, and it does not matter how late they believe, all that

matters is that they believe. They will be in paradise.

It is important to realize that regardless of how late in your life you believe in Jesus Christ, he guarantees you a place in his kingdom. If you doubt this, then read the parable of the workers in the vineyard recorder in Mat 20:1-16.

Mat 20:1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard."

Mat 20:2 After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Mat 20:3 And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

Mat 20:4 and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.'

Mat 20:5 So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same.

Mat 20:6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?'

Mat 20:7 They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.'

Mat 20:8 And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.'

Mat 20:9 And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius.

Mat 20:10 Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius.

Mat 20:11 And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house,

Mat 20:12 saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'

Mat 20:13 But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?"

Mat 20:14 Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you.

Mat 20:15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?

Mat 20:16 "So the last will be first, and the first last."

In this parable, we see the householder in verse one, paid the workers who only worked for the last hour of the day the same amount as those who worked the entire day. Their rewards are the same. This principle is the same with those who come to accept Jesus Christ as their lord and saviour very late in their lives. God wants to treat us all the same and give us all the same reward, eternal life in his kingdom. And as we observed in the thief's example on the cross, Jesus assured him entry into paradise even though he had only a few brief hours to live. All believers get the same reward. Entry into paradise.

Faith in “The Son Of God” is all that matters to be saved. No good work will ever get you there. Only faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and saviour will save you. But just like the criminal on the cross, you will not receive your reward until Jesus Christ returns and resurrects all people from all times. Some to eternal life and some to the judgment.

Why is the resurrection so important

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb is the most important belief for any Christian to hold and believe. To acknowledge the death of Jesus on the cross and all that means for Christians is important. This is because, by his death, he died for the forgiveness of our sins. Without this amazing self-sacrifice, we would all still be in our sins.

Christ's dying on the cross is one thing, but his resurrection from the dead is the centre of redemption for everyone. If there is not an empty tomb, then there is no resurrection. And if there is no resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ, then he is not who he claims to be. The Son of God, our Messiah. Without the resurrection, what Jesus came to do must end in defeat and disillusion for us all.

It is only from the words we see in Mat 28:1-7 that we can have confidence in Jesus Christ having the power over death and Satan.

Mat 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

Mat 28:2 And behold, there was a great

earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.

Mat 28:3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.

Mat 28:4 And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.

Mat 28:5 But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified."

Mat 28:6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.

Mat 28:7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.

All four gospels end with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, makes it very clear how important the resurrection is. Please read the following verses and understand the meaning they contain.

1Co 15:12 Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

1Co 15:13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

1Co 15:14 And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

1Co 15:15 We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about

God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.

1Co 15:16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.

1Co 15:17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

1Co 15:18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

1Co 15:19 If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

These verses describe the situation we would find ourselves in if Jesus had not told us the truth, and if Almighty God had not raised Him from the dead. The millions of people who profess to follow Him would do so in vain.

If Jesus did not rise from the tomb, then Christians have nothing to put their trust in. The bible would be irrelevant and there would be very little purpose in our lives. But because we can believe in Jesus' resurrection, everything changes and we have certainty about our futures in God's Kingdom.

If there was no resurrection

Many people do not believe in God. Therefore, they do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ or any other resurrection. When they die, they just disappear and they have no future after death. A very sad thought and ending for anyone. So let us examine what the future holds for us if we assume that Jesus Christ was not resurrected from the dead. Please consider the following points.

1. Every promise Jesus has given us would be untrustworthy. Jesus promised many times he would rise from the dead. So if he failed to accomplish this, then he is to be pitied as an impostor and someone we cannot rely upon for anything. When you consider that almost the entire bible, old and New Testaments, speak of Jesus. Then his failure to beat death by not being resurrected would make the entire bible a sham.

By keeping the promise of his ability to defeat death, we can now depend completely on every other promise he has made. What could be more difficult than to beat death? So if he can do this, then every other promise would be easy for Him.

2. The resurrection is the endorsement of God the Father that Jesus Christ is the risen Lord of Lords and King

of Kings. He is no longer as he was before his resurrection when he was born of a woman and lived like any other human being. Now, he reveals and makes clear his divine son-ship and deity.

Rom 1:4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

His shed blood on the cross now covers our sins and is a sure sign he will also resurrect those who believe and trust in Him. Just as he promised in the following verses from the book of John.

Joh 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Joh 6:40 "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

Eternal life and resurrection from the dead are certain for all those who look to Jesus as the Son of God.

3. Without the resurrection, we would not have any foundation for the church. It was only the resurrection that turned the first Christians into faithful and unafraid followers of their Lord. When you compare the attitudes of Christ's disciples from before to after his resurrection, you see a massive change in their lives. They went from being afraid and hiding from the Synagogue leaders, to boldly proclaiming the good news about Jesus.

The disciples were all killed at a relatively young age (except for John) because of their preaching. They trusted Jesus to care for them in life and death. They had witnessed Jesus defeat death and believed in his promise to raise them from the dead on the last day.

It is inconceivable to think these disciples would be prepared to suffer and die the way they did if they knew Jesus was an impostor and not the real Son of God.

The gospels are all centered on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But the cross does not have a lot of meaning without the all-important resurrection. Any “gospel” that does not put the cross and the resurrection together as both vital for the Christian to understand and proclaim, is not complete and not the authentic message given to us by Jesus and his disciples.

The following passage of scripture in the book of Hebrews is very reassuring. We see Jesus crowned with glory but still working to save his elect. He is the creator of all things, but he still calls us brothers and sisters.

Heb 2:9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Heb 2:11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he

is not ashamed to call them brothers,

4. The millions of Christians who have been martyred would never find justice without the resurrection.

There would not be any final reckoning for sin. Satan, who has caused our pain and suffering in this world, would have won his struggle against God. But the resurrection of Jesus has shown us who is ultimately in control. Satan's days are numbered, and that number is growing less every day.

Jesus will return soon, even though fewer and fewer people believe this any more, and when he returns it will be in great power and not as the suffering servant from his first appearance on the earth.

Mat 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

5. Jesus Christ led by example and taught us the principles for living a good life. In the book of Matthew, Jesus instructs us we must sacrifice our self-centered and uncaring lifestyles and consider the needs of others. He put it clearly by saying if we lose our lives for his name's sake, we will actually find life. It sounds like an oxymoron, but it is the way to live if we want to see the resurrection become a reality in our own lives.

Mat 16:24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Mat 16:25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will

find it.

Mat 16:26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

Many people witnessed the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He has promised to return and we can be sure this will happen. It does not matter if anyone does not believe this, it will happen regardless. When this happens, he will resurrect those who are faithful to Him.

The scriptures show us that Jesus was resurrected from the dead, and we can have faith that he will do the same thing for us upon his return.

Mockers of Jesus Christ

The first thing I must do here is to define exactly what the word mocker means. One description of a mocker from the dictionary is “someone who jeers or mocks or treats something with contempt or calls out in derision”. Other words that can describe a Mocker are Scoffer and Sneerer.

These mockers will actively oppose anyone who has a different perspective on life to their own beliefs. They are aggressive and hostile and want nothing more than to demean those who act differently to them. They will not listen to another person’s ideas, but are quick to talk over their opponents.

Those we know today as “The Woke” fit this description perfectly. They, along with many governments, want nothing more than to control all people, so we all have the same understanding and beliefs. The “woke” do not want anyone to have their own thoughts and beliefs. They expect everyone to conform to their ideas.

It will be the wise followers of Jesus Christ who take his advice as we see in.

Rom 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that

by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Mockers will try to draw you away from what you know is the truth. It will be difficult to resist them, but if we do not, then we will not be pleasing to God.

Mockers have been around for thousands of years. Listen to what Job from the Old Testament had to say.

Job 17:2 Surely there are mockers about me, and my eye dwells on their provocation.

Mockers have always been with us and will still be with us right until the end, when Jesus Christ returns. Listen now to what 2Ti 3:1-5 has to say.

2Ti 3:1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.

2Ti 3:2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

2Ti 3:3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,

2Ti 3:4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

2Ti 3:5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

Most of the traits we see recorded here fit the description of a Mocker.

Ever since the time Jesus Christ was first here on this earth. People have been waiting for his return as He promised

to do. It has now been the best part of two thousand years since Jesus was crucified, resurrected from the dead, and ascended into heaven. He made a promise to return but told no one how long it would be before He came back. Many Christians are now asking the question. “When will He return?”. While many other non-believers are saying, “He will never return”.

Well, there are many signs in the world today that show Jesus' return is close. Closer than most people believe. One sure sign is mockers will become more prevalent. They will mock sin and make light of it, they will openly commit it and glory in it. And mostly they will scoff at religion. These are the people the Apostle Peter wrote about in his letter to the Church and recorded for us in 2Pe 3:3-4.

2Pe 3:3 knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

2Pe 3:4 They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.”

In this modern age, we can see these mockers, or scoffers, becoming more numerous and vocal. As we see from the previous verses, we must expect to encounter these people at the last times. Therefore, encountering these people should not come as a surprise to us; it is inevitable.

These mockers, or corners, are becoming more evident every day as we see our world changing quickly. And most times it is not for the better. Read the following passages from the book of John to observe some ways our world is

predicted to change in these “last days”. We are very close to this time in man’s history. Therefore, we must be ready for what our futures hold.

Joh 15:18 “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.”

Joh 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Christians must be prepared to be slandered, ridiculed, and persecuted in the years ahead. We have some sound advice from the Old Testament. Listen to what we are told.

Pro 9:7 Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reprove a wicked man incurs injury.

Pro 9:8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

You can see the difference between correcting a mocker and a wise person. The wise will listen and repent. But the mocker will just make your life as hard as he can. In the book of Proverbs, there are other examples of scoffers or mockers. Listen to these three examples.

Pro 13:1 A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Pro 22:10 Drive out a scoffer, and strife will go out, and quarreling and abuse will cease.

Pro 29:8 Scoffers set a city aflame, but the wise

turn away wrath.

Now we can turn our attention to the New Testament and the book of Jude. Here we can see more evidence that mockers will be around in the last days. They will be out to satisfy their own desires and lusts. God will have no part in their lives. Listen to.

Jud 1:17 But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jud 1:18 They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions."

Jud 1:19 It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

Now we understand mockers will play a big part in the years ahead, but unfortunately, they will only be a small part of our problems. Listen to how the writer of the book of Romans describes what lies ahead for all people.

Rom 1:29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips,

Rom 1:30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

Rom 1:31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Rom 1:32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

This paints a very poor description of what our society will become. I know many people will believe that our world is too modern and sophisticated to stoop to these low levels. But over the past few decades, we have seen these characteristics becoming more prevalent, and no doubt we will see more of this type of behavior in the coming years. This world will go from bad to worse. These people will be the mockers who do not believe in Christ's return. Social media has much to answer for regarding this type of conduct in our society. And it is not limited to the young only. Many older people also enjoy the sleazy side of social media.

Time is no barrier for God. He is outside of time because He created all things, including time. God is working on His own timetable and most certainly not ours. God is not rushing into His return. He patiently waits for as many people as possible to turn to Him and be saved.

Many people will say, "Just show us Jesus and we will believe". Well, I am afraid that will not work. Remember what happened to Jesus when He was here the first time? Most people did not believe it. And even though they saw many of His miracles, it made little difference. They finally had Jesus put to death on the cross. So I doubt it would make any difference to most people today if they saw Jesus or not. They will still want to pursue their own interests, and would reject Jesus and His teachings again. They are more interested in doing their own thing.

Can you honestly imagine the paedophiles, drug barons, and those who profit from the trans-gender industry turning to God for forgiveness? No, these people will continue to mock not only the return of Jesus but also his holy name. We can be sure of this because God has warned us that this is in our

future. Listen to Rev 22:11.

Rev 22:11 "Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

There is one thing you can rely upon, and that is God will force no one to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. He gave us all free will, but Satan has used this amazing gift from God to influence us into doing what is evil in the sight of God. This causes our troubles, but God will never take away our free will. God created us in His image so that we can have a relationship with Him. He does not need another flock of sheep. He wants us to turn to Him of our own free will.

When you see and hear people mocking the return of Jesus Christ. You can be sure it is a sign of the times. A sure sign of the return of our Lord. So do not worry when you see these mockers in the world. Just keep your eyes and mind on the return of Jesus and the promises He has made to you.

Conclusion

This book covers only a tiny part of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have covered a few different topics to give you an overview of Jesus, his miracles, and prophecies in the Old Testament regarding his first coming.

I believe the author of the book of 1 John sums up why I wanted to write this book. Read what he had to say in 1 John 5:13.

1Jn 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

About The Author

Leslie Rendell worked most of his life in an agricultural support industry, mostly in the supply of spare parts for machinery. Since his retirement in 2014 he has dedicated much of his time to bible study and writing books as he comes to understand biblical topics.

He understands the bible is a very complex book and one that is easy to misinterpret and believes this is one of the main reasons why there are so many different version of the bible and different religions around the world.

What he writes is his own interpretation of God's holy scriptures. He studies the thoughts of other writers to try to see things from their point of view, but always comes back to the bible as the final authority on any topic. His main aim in writing, is to give anyone who is seeking the truth from God's words a starting point in their own research.

Leslie's other interest are photography, and his growing family.