

***“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”***

Gospel Of John

Day 1: John Chapter 1

Meditation

“God has always been, He has no beginning and no end, God Is, & God shall ever be! God Was always Three in One. The Son Was always at the Father’s side. God always had an immutable plan in mind. The darkness tries to stamp out the Light, but it cannot it. God has sent His Messengers ahead of Him since He created Us. John the Baptist was His Chosen Messenger in the Days when He Sent His Only Son into the World to take on our frailty, our human form, our sicknesses, our infirmities, our sorrows and our tears. He came that we might be reunited with the God, Whom we chose not to follow or to honor with our hearts and minds. We have all come to know God Our Father through His Only Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord. He alone has revealed God to us all!”

“John was ridiculed and harassed, he was laughed at and mocked, he was questioned and not believed, he was alone and rejected, he was wrongly accused and imprisoned, he suffered and was killed for His Witness & His Faith! He preached and taught about the Coming Kingdom of God, he baptized and prayed for lost souls. He mentored and raised up a younger group of believers and handed them off to Jesus before he mission was finished, and his time had come. John was full of the Holy Spirit & Fire!”

“Some of John’s followers whom he taught and mentored become Jesus’ followers! Including some we know to this day by name and action, and one we do not, who forever remains the mystery disciple, the disciple whom Jesus loved!”

“Jesus called all of His followers by Name, He has also called me by Name, and I have answered the call, simply because it is, He Who has called, and because I believe, like they before me, I obey!”

“Those who are called and answer the call have a responsibility to call others!” Oh that I may have a bold and courageous spirit like the men and women who have gone on before me, marked by the sign of faith and of martyrdom. I pray that I might remain true even unto death!”

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Day 2: John Chapter 2

Meditation

“Jesus performs His 1st Sign & Wonder, His First Miracle by Changing Water into Wine, so that his neighbors at their own Wedding Feast might save face and not be disgraced. He thinks of others first, rather than Himself. He is obedient to His mother, and to His Father God! Jesus wishes to bless us with the very best of food and drink and earthly needs, He gives to us His Very Best & To His Utmost!”

“Jesus never backs away from injustice or from false teaching or false actions in the world! He stands His ground in Righteousness and in Truth! He makes others to see the error of their ways and gives them an opportunity to repent! Jesus is Zealous to the do the work of His Heavenly Father; and so must I be Zealous, like Him! I will pray to be Zealously filled by His Spirit!”

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Day 3: John Chapter 3

Meditation

“I pray that when I do not understand the deeper things of God, that I will be diligent to study, meditate, pray and wait upon God’s Holy Spirit to teach me all things. I pray for a constant Spirit of Curiosity and of Correction, that I might understanding may become His!”

“I pray that I might have the opportunity to help others find their way and to give them an opportunity to be born again of Water, Spirit, & Fire!”

“I pray that I might offer to others the Love of God, that spared not the Life of His Only Son, and to help them to understand that Jesus came into this world not to condemn us, but to save us! That God does not condemn anyone, that God’s gives us a freewill to make a choice to love Him back or to reject His Love!”

“I need to spend time with people, to listen to them, to talk to them, to share with them, to minister to them. I must handoff what I have learned and what I have received from God. I must diminish and He must increase!” I must remember He will give me what I ask for, and what I need to ask for is the Fullness of His Spirit within me.”

“I must tell others the truth, ‘Whoever believes in the Son of God has eternal life and the long war and enmity with God is finished for the have been forgiven of their sins, but whoever rejects and does not believe in the Son of God will not enter into eternal life, for their enmity with God and their sin remains, and therefore, God’s wrath abides with them still!’”

“I must testify to the Truth - to Him: to His Forgiveness, to His Grace, to His Presence & to Eternal Life in Him!”

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Day 4: John Chapter 4

Meditation

“How important is it that I pray for direction to go where I would not think of going? I must spend time in prayer and reflection so that I may be given direction to take the road less traveled and visit those who others pass by and who others do not associate with! Jesus chose to visit this woman who was not part of the established religious community, who was ostracized because of her syncretism belief system that borrowed from the Jewish traditions and other eastern and middle eastern religions. To a woman who had no hope, no direction, no future. To a woman who traded here dignity to live with a man to simply get through life, because she was unable to provide for herself in her culture. To a woman who was searching for something better, who was searching for direction, who was searching for Truth! So Jesus, humbled himself and went out of His way, and outside the norms of His religious community and even to being in the future ostracized himself to help this woman of Samaria find hope, peace, and joy in finding a new relationship with her Creator God, who loved her and longed for her to know Him!”

“I must pray for direction, humility, and for sensitivity to understand another’s needs and hurts and pain. I must pray for the compassion and love that God has for me in abundance, that I might give it away to another. I must be bold and loving at the same time to proclaim the Truth: ‘That God is not concerned with how we worship, what songs we sing, how much we do, this or do that; but that we enter into a deeply committed selfless relationship with Him and with others in Spirit and in Truth through His Son Jesus Christ The Lord! The fields around my house are ripe and ready to be harvested, I must go and labor in those fields. Even if, like Jesus, I am not welcome in my own town, I must continue to try to reach those who do not know God for their sake and for His Glory!’”

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Day 5: John Chapter 5

Meditation

“Today I encounter Jesus as God Himself visiting His People on the **‘Feast of Shavuot – Pentecost’**. This is the Feast Remembering the giving of the Law from God Himself to Moses on Mount Sinai. So this is when ‘God visits His People in all of His Glory’ as he did long ago to Moses, and Moses was forever changed (shining face that had to be covered) with the Glory of being entirely sanctified and made holy by God’s Presence coming near to him. So Jesus (God in all of His Glory veiled in human form) decides to forever change the life of the crippled man at the Sheep Gate Pool of Water called **‘Bethesda’**, which means in **Aramaic – ‘House Of Shame & Disgrace’**; but in **Hebrew means – ‘House Of Mercy & Grace’**. And here I also encounter the **‘Angel of the Lord’** (Who was a Special Person in the Old Testament). This title meant one would have a direct visit from God - an Epiphany! In fact, this Angel was not an actual Angel; but **God Himself** in the form of the **Pre-Incarnate Son of God, the Christ!** In the Old Testament He is referred to as all of the following: **‘Angel of the Lord / Angel of God / His Angel & Angel of His Presence’.**”

“So often, I find myself wanting to stay where I am, even when I need to change, or to be healed from not only a physical ailment, but a mental or spiritual underlying illness. I can as a human being at times resist change, resist moving forward, because it is painful. I am at times content to stay miserable, or say ‘What can I do anyway, it’s useless to fight, its useless to share hope, no one seems to care anyway!’ Notice in this reading today, Jesus asks the man who was crippled for 38 years, **‘Do you wish to get well?’ – ‘Well do I?’**”

“I also find myself being a Pharisee or Sadducee (a religious person) at other times in my life. I complain about my pastor, my church, church people, because I do not want change, or I do want change, and how could anyone think differently about this issue, after all I am so passionate about it! And I end up opposing those who God has put into my life. Or worse I try to stop change to bring change because it will be good for me, even if it means someone else will be hurt. But Jesus reminds me that was the way the people who said they loved God treated Him as well, and He was indeed God in the Flesh!”

“Jesus reminds me, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My Word, and believes Him Who Sent Me, has Eternal Life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of Death into Life. “Truly, truly, I say to you, an Hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the Voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will Live!’ ... ‘Do not marvel at this; for an Hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His Voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a Resurrection of Life, those who committed the evil deeds to a Resurrection of Judgment!’ Then I am stopped in my tracks, and I am reminded that I cannot even in my own zealously to do God’s Work, trample of defame, or bring down another, for the means never justify the end! For the end is to bring Life, Eternal Life, to bring Jesus to others is My Life’s Purpose!”

“In the end, Jesus reminds me, not to put my faith in the past, in my accomplishments, in my knowledge, or in my own understanding; but rather in Him alone! For many have and will put their faith in history, in other people’s understanding or writing, in science, in money, in possessions, in relationships, in themselves; but they, will in the end, all fail! I hear again today, His Voice calling out, **‘Some trust in horses, some trust in chariots, but we trust in the Name of the Lord Our God – Jesus the Christ!’**”

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Day 6: John Chapter 6

Meditation

“Jesus feeds a hungering multitude, so large, that there are not enough resources at hand to feed them. So he tests His Followers Faith! A child proves to have more faith than the adults. How long has it been since I trusted God like I did as a child? How long has it been since I did all could I do and really believed that God would do the rest, no questions asked, no doubts?”

“During this current crisis, I have been asked to rethink almost everything I do as Pastor. I have been asked to reorganize how I go about the Lord’s Business and helping others in my flock to do the same. But what great need has been left undone, what great need for the community still needs to be filled. I believe there are many areas to investigate, but one in particular has caught my attention today. I sat in my home and church today with no power for about 8 hours. In the darkness of my office and living room it came to me. There is a hunger for information, for updates to our current state of affairs, a need for things to return to normal as soon as possible.”

“But is returning to normal. For almost everyone that will be never opening their bibles, never praying, never listening for God’s Voice in my busy day, never even giving God a second thought! Why? Because I got this, life is usually predictable, it has rhythms, it has routine, it keeps going, same old, same old! Then I heard God’s Spirit speak to me, “Knowledge abounds, it increases day by day, but my people suffer for lack of knowledge!” I asked, “How Lord do they suffer?” He replied, “Feed my people!” I said, “But how?” He said, “Provide My Word to them without asking in return, without gold and without silver!” Then I understood, God was saying, “People perish for lack of Truth, for lack of knowing, My Will for their lives, for lack of time spent with Me in My Presence!” So I must get my fellow followers of Jesus to unite, to feed them!”

“Jesus wants us to be so tied to Him that we know what He is thinking, what He is feeling, what He desires to do in the world today. Everyone is spending so much time working or trying to get back to work in order to work for food that sustains day to day but in the end is futile. Jesus is asking His True Followers to open the eyes of our brothers and sisters who live around us to this one fact, this world is passing away, and everything in it will soon be gone. Therefore, we must encourage them by our words and actions to work for the food and to consume the food that never perishes, the Word & Will of God for Us His People! Jesus wants us to find our hope, our joy, our livelihood, our very life in Him alone! For He said, “I AM the Bread Of Life, that has Come Down from Heaven! Anyone Who Eats This Bread & Drinks This Cup Will Be Granted Eternal Life!”

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Day 7: John Chapter 7

Meditation

Necessary Background Information for Chapters 7 through 10:21

“Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand!” John 7:2

The **Setting of the “Feast of Tabernacles”** is especially important as John uses it as a **Backdrop** for all the **Scriptures** he recorded From **John 7:1 – 10:21**. I will remind you from time to time as we go through this section of John’s Gospel when we need to again focus on the importance of this feast as the backdrop for what is going on in the foreground between Jesus & us His people.

Feast Of Tabernacles – Sukkot

Sukkoth Was A Place In The Desert At The Very Beginning Of Their 40-Year Journey Just Outside The Land Of Goshen. **Deuteronomy 16:13-17 & Leviticus 23:34-43: “So they took their journey from Sukkoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness.”**

Annual Date is between **September & October** depending on the year as the Jewish calendar revolves around the Cycles of the Moon and not the Cycles of the Sun like our calendar does.

Meaning

- 1) Remembrance Of 40 Years In The Desert In The Days Of The Exodus
- 2) This Earthly Life Is A Transient Journey To The Next Life - Eternal Life
- 3) Being Led By The Spirit of God In This Earthly Life

Preparation - The building of a Temporary Shelter - **“Sukkah”** in the Wilderness to live in for 7# days found in **Leviticus 23:34-43**

Music - **Psalms 113 - 118 / “Hallel” & Psalms 119 - 134**

Part of the Covenant - 1 of 7 Annual Covenant Feasts & 1 of 3 of the Annual Pilgrimage Festivals

Command Of God – Every law abiding/obedient Jew was to make the 3 Annual Pilgrimage Festivals

- 1) **Pesach / Passover** – March or April
- 2) **Shavuot / Pentecost** – May or June
- 3) **Sukkot / Tabernacles** – September or October

4 Other Covenant Feasts for a Grand Total of Completion of 7# Festivals

- 1) **Rosh Hashanah Feast of Trumpets** - Festival Jewish New Year - Early September
- 2) **Yom Kippur Feast of the Day of Atonement** - Festival Freedom From Sin - Middle September
- 3) **Hanukkah Feast of Dedication** - Festival of Lights - December
- 4) **Purim Feast of Deliverance** - Festival of Lots - February or March

“Right away when ever Jesus tries to reveal to anyone His true identity, people scoff, people become skeptical, people become indignant. Why? Because Jesus exposes that He is God and We are Not! I do not like to hear that! Why? I would rather be in control of my own life, making my own decisions, pursuing my own goals, becoming successful, gaining importance, taking pride in my accomplishments, securing my future on my terms and in my ways! But Jesus keeps probing my thoughts, my intentions, my desires, whenever He is Present and I listen to Him, invite Him into my life. He invades my space; he questions everything I am and everything I hope to be!”

“So, too it was for the religious authorities of Jesus’ Day. They resented anyone exposing their power, their prestige, their importance, their pride! Jesus probes my innermost being, He says to me, He says to all of us, **‘If anyone wills to do God’s Will, the shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My Own Authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but he who seeks the Glory of the One Who sent Him is True, and no unrighteousness is in Him.’** Makes me really question my intentions and my motivations in serving God and others as a pastor, as a human being!”

“Then, as now today Jesus declares to me and to you, His True Identity, that He is both God and man. **‘You both know Me, and you know where I AM from; and I have not come of Myself, but He Who Sent Me Is True, Whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I AM From Him, and He Sent Me!’** Clearly, he is not just a mortal. Now I am confronted, and I have only three choices to make considering such a statement. As **C.S. Lewis** pointed out so long ago and I paraphrase, ‘Either Jesus Christ is a: **1) Liar** - of the greatest proportion, akin to the devil himself, or **2) Lunatic** - of the worst kind, with a greater delusion of grandeur than anyone else in all of human history ever had, or **3) Lord** – of all, of heaven and of earth, from all eternity God Himself, just as He claimed to be!’

“He cannot be a mere man if number 3# is true. And He cannot be a mere good man or good teacher or good philosopher if numbers 1# or 2#, or both are true!”

“Notice In response to the last statement of Jesus recorded here, everyone makes a decision, a conclusion, a conscious choice regarding Jesus’ True Identity, **‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his very heart will flow Rivers of Living Water!’**”

“Either I want the Holy Spirit of God living in me, and I am willing to die to self, or I do not want God’s Spirit in my life, for I want to live for only myself! *‘Oh Lord, may I always desire to be found in You alone, under your command, under your care and love for me, may I always desire more of you and less of me! Come Holy Spirit & Flood My Soul With Your Life-Giving Presence & May I Allow Myself To Overflow You To Others Around Me!’*”

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I have chosen to break my Mediation on John Chapter 8

Into 2 Parts: Part I – Prologue 8:1-11 & Part II – The 7 Great I AM Statements 8:12-59

Day 8: John Chapter 8:1-11

Part I: Prologue

Meditation

“During the Feast of the Tabernacles - Just 7 Months before Jesus would be die on the Cross and be raised again to Life; the religious leaders decided to try and trap Him by bringing a woman caught in the act of committing adultery. The entire situation is wrought with hypocrisy and evil intent, both toward Jesus and the woman. First of all if they who were supposed to be concerned about the woman’s soul and her eternal destiny, would have actually been concerned they would have brought the man who acted with her. But of course they do not bring the man, only the woman. In their highly dominant patriarchal society and misreading on purpose of the scriptures – ‘that all are made in the divine image of God (man and woman alike) by special creation and divine literal inspiration of life by the breathing of an immortal soul’; they again show their evil intent and hypocrisy.”

“Their real intent was to get rid of Jesus of Nazareth and get back to ruling people and controlling access to God and the knowledge of God according to their evil intentions, pride and power. Therefore, instead of helping both the man and the woman to find repentance and make right their sin before God and man they opt for an extreme reading of the Law of Moses, and just go straight to stoning her to death. Hoping Jesus will slip up and try to counterman the Law of God and thus be guilty of heresy and thus a penalty of death Himself, they throw the helpless woman at His feet and wait.”

“But Jesus once again points out my sin, my ill intentions, my hidden selfish pride, and sense of superiority by simply saying to me, ‘You there, you without any sin, you without any ill intentions, you without a sinful prideful nature, judge now yourself; and than cast the first stone at your brother or sister for their fault!’ And once again I am crushed under the weight of my own inadequacy, my own sinful thoughts, my own ill intentions, my own helplessness without God in My Life, without my spirit yielded completely to His Spirit!” Let us not tear one another down, but less us offer grace and mercy to those who are apart from God their Father, let us be heard with every good and holy intention to repeat Jesus’ words to the woman that day, ‘Friend, I choose not to condemn you, just as God chooses not to condemn you, but go and sin no more!’ Let us offer grace, love, mercy, and encouragement to those who have fallen within the body of believers and let us offer grace, love, mercy, and faith to those who do not know Him, with the hope that they will come to know Him as we do today!”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
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Day 8: John Chapter 8:1-11

Part II: The 7 Great I AM Statements

Meditation

I have chosen to break my Meditation on John Chapter 8

Into 2 Parts: Part I – Prologue 8:1-11 & Part II – The 7 Great I AM Statements 8:12-59

Part II - The 7 Great I AM Statements

Necessary Background Information

Chapter 8 Has The Greatest Number Of **“I AM”** Sayings In Any Single Chapter Of John’s Gospel! There A Total Of 7x In All! With The Final One Of The Seven Being The Greatest Of All The **“I AM’s”** Ever Spoken By Jesus Christ! Here Is A List Of All Seven Denoted By # Endnotes

Verse 12: Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, **“I AM the Light of the World!”**¹

“He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the Light of Life!”¹

Verses 14 – 16: Jesus answered them, **“Even if I bear Witness of Myself, My Witness Is True, for I know where I came from & where I am going; but you do not know where I come from & where I am going. You judge according to the flesh; but I judge no one! And yet if I do judge, My Judgment Is True; for I AM² not alone, but I AM With The Father Who Sent Me²!”**

Verses 17 – 18: **“It is also written in your Law that the testimony of two men is true. I AM One³ Who bears Witness of Myself, & the Father Who Sent Me bears Witness of Me!”**³

Verse 23: He replied, **“You are from beneath; I AM from Above⁴!”**

“You are of this world; I AM not of this World!”⁴

Verse 24: **“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins;**

for if you do not believe that I AM He⁵, you will die in your sins!”

Verses 28 – 29: Then Jesus said to them, **“When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM He⁶, & that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He Who Sent Me Is With Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”**

Verse 58: Jesus replied, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM!”**⁷

This is the 7th of 7 **“I AM”** Statements in 7 x 7 verses = 49. This is also the highest form of all of the **“I AM”** statements is made here as a climax to reveal Jesus’ True Identity to everyone in John Chapter 8!

This Highest Form & Name For God Is: “I AM!” = “I AM THAT I AM!” = “Yahweh!”

Meditation

“Jesus here confronts me, with My True Identity; just as He reveals His True Identity to me! His True Identity becomes obvious as He declares Himself to be Co-equal with God the Father and the God the Spirit, ss God the Son; both Son of Man (Human) & Son of God (Divine), God in the Flesh! He continues to tell me that He alone is the Light of the World! The Light that shown in the darkness, in the void, the Light that Created All Things, even me. The Light that continues to shine in the Darkness, a Light the Darkness in me and in the world, cannot comprehend or put out. A Light that only a life and soul surrounded to Him, can understand, can embrace, can be made whole again! Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles – The Festival commemorating ‘God Visiting His People in Glory – In His Shining Light’ says to me today, ‘I AM the Light of the World, I AM the Light of Your Life, I AM the Light that Illuminates You, Heals You, Warms You, Sustains You, Guides You, Protects You, & Makes You Whole!’”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
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Day 9: John Chapter 9
Meditation

“First a disclaimer - This meditation will seem quite different compared to many of my reflections. Second After Reading, Praying & Meditation upon the Blind Man, The People of Jerusalem, & the Religious Leaders, & This Healing Event – All I Can Say Is **Wow, Just WoW! A Brand-New Thought Was Given To Me TODAY! Wow!**”

“This new thought is profound and has to do with the name of the pool where Jesus found this blind man. And it is rooted in the way all three groups of people respond in kind to the healing and restoration of the Man’s New Site!”

“1st) The Pool’s Name: **‘Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam’ (which means, “Sent”)! So, the man went & washed, & came back seeing. Notice Jesus uses ‘Being Sent’ as a command, an imperative in the man’s life – and in my life! So, ‘I am created and brought into this world to be Sent by God!’”**

“2nd) The Different Ways the Different Groups of People Respond: **A) The Religious Leaders** who say they believe in God and say they serve God and others, but in reality only serve themselves and even reject God’s Will when it is made known to them, **B) The People of Jerusalem** – represented by the man’s parent. This people group worries more about the approval of man than the approval of God. Therefore whether they believe in God or do not believe in God, they openly serve themselves first and foremost, & **C) The Blind Man** - who is healed, who even after receiving his site (a new life) is unsure of what he believes about the person – Jesus of Nazareth who healed him. He simply states what he knows, **‘I once was blind, but now I see!’”**

“Now let us look at the way Jesus only seeks out the Blind Man Who Is Healed, no one else, not the People of Jerusalem, & not the Religious Leaders. Remember the man is unsure how to read the events, the miracle, and especially the identity of the Man Who healed him. And when Jesus finds the man - let us look at the conversation carefully: **‘Jesus said to him, “Do you believe in the Son Of God?” The man answered, “Who Is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He Who is talking with you.” Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped (bowed down before) Him there.’** The man now knows what he believes both about the healing, the miracle, and the Man Who healed him!

“Finally, notice the group that say they believe in God, serve God, and serve others go to seek out Jesus. Jesus does not seek them out! And while still in the presence of the man he healed look what He says - Let us carefully listen in: **Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind!” Then some of the Pharisees who were listening to Him heard these words, and said to Jesus, “Are we blind also?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see!’ Therefore, your sin remains!”**

“My Old Thought before today was there are four kinds of people in the world: 1) People who openly do not believe in God and only serve themselves, 2) People who are unsure about their belief in God, say they would like to know for sure; but in the end only serve themselves, 3) People who say they believe in God, but they never get past their statement of belief; and never really show any fruit in their lives of real faith, & 4) People who say they believe in God and live their lives accordingly in line with that belief.”

“New Thought TODAY: ‘Everyone is **‘Sent’** with the knowledge of God into this World - Knowing they are created, knowing there is a God, knowing they have a purpose. But the circumstances of life, it really does not matter what circumstances push that out of us. All are led to eventually reject this fundamental understanding of their own reality either in a tragic way by being: abused, neglected, maltreated, unloved, or worse; or by their own choice through open rebellion against everyone, including God, and a lifestyle of selfishness and sin that follows. But only three groups emerge from this fall from original perfection that God gave us when He **‘Sent Us’:** **1) People Who Openly Do Not Believe In God, but only serve themselves,** **2) People Who Say They Believe In God, but only serve themselves.** They are not hypocrites, they are not self-deceived; but rather they are openly selfish, even in their supposed need for a belief in God to save them from hell’s fire, or in the credit they take for doing good deeds, or in their open judgment of other believers thoughts, words, & actions, **& 3) People Who Say They Believe In God, who serve only Him and others and not themselves!”**

“Oh, that I would be found to be **#3** in Him always, even unto my death, or unto His Second Coming! For I am **‘Sent now’**, as **‘He was once Sent!’** I am **‘now Sent’** by My Heavenly Father – My Creator & Sustainer, By His Son – My King & My Lord, & By His Spirit – My Strength & My Counsel into the world!

‘So, I must remember & I must be obedient to what I was **‘Sent’** to do!

Q: “What is a True Believer ‘Sent’ to do?”

Jesus said, **“The reason I was ‘Sent’ into the world, was to ‘serve and not be served’, and to ‘seek and save the lost!’”**

ONWARD THEN I AM SENT, & SO ONWARD I GO!

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I have chosen to break My Meditation on John Chapter 10:1-21

Into 2 Parts: Part I – The Good Shepherd & God’s Voice Alone

Part II – Listening To God’s Voice Alone & Shining As A Light In the World

Day 10: John Chapter 10:1-21

Part I: The Good Shepherd & God’s Voice Alone

Meditation

“The first half of John Chapter 10 from verses 1-21 concludes the same weeklong celebration of the Fall Feast of Tabernacles. The final confrontation of this festival is the religious authorities saying Jesus must be possessed. Today we hear so many voices: 1) Listen to the authorities and save lives! 2) Listen to your conscious and your heart and save lives! 3) What about your god given unalienable rights and freedom and command to come together and worship him? So many voices, your friends and family on Facebook, Instagram, Snap chat, and so many more places all with their voice on what we all must do. **‘But how do I know what to do?’ ‘How do I know what God is saying right now?’”**

“It was the same in Jesus’ Day too! Today voices might sound like this *‘Christians they are so delusional, they actually believe prayer to an unknowable god, wait strike that, to a fictitious god, who only lives in their superstition or in their world of hopeful make believe can answer them in these times of crisis.’ ‘They are possessed, wait strike that, they are insane, and they want us to let them freely worship, so they can endanger us all. Crazy people I tell you.’* But they were saying the same thing about our Lord and Savior 2,000 years ago.”

“Today we hear *‘God is not our answer, we are our best answer. Follow the rules, listen to the science and the math, listen to the educated who went to our institutions of higher learning, listen to the authorities, but aside our certain unalienable rights, just for a little while, until this passes, and things get back to normal.’* We hear everyone saying, *‘After all, you want to do the right thing, the bible says protect the innocent, the vulnerable, the sick, the weak, the marginalized, doesn’t it?’* *‘Well Yes it does!’*, we reply. Then we hear, *‘After all, you want to do the right thing, the bible says listen to those God has appointed over you, to rule over you in government, doesn’t it?’* *‘Well Yes it does!’*, we reply.

“Then we think to ourselves, *‘We do not want to hurt our witness in the world and so we know this is the best course of action, we close our doors, we stay home, we keep quiet, we do not rock the boat, we do not dare protest, for the greater good we tell ourselves, for the greater good!’*”

But Then I Read Today

‘I AM the Door to the sheep pen, where My Sheep are sheltered, fed, nourished, and kept safe!’

‘I AM the Doorkeeper of the sheep pen and I guard My Sheep against every other voice that is in the World, there to bring them down, there to steal their peace, hope and joy, there to kill their spiritual and mental and physical well being, there to destroy their witness, testimony, and service to their community!’

‘I AM the Good Shepherd, I freely sacrifice myself for My Sheep, I have the power to lay it down, and the power to take it up again, this command is from My Father God and no power in the heavens, or on the earth, or under the earth can take it from Me! I choose to Freely Give My Life For My Sheep!’

‘I AM the Good Shepherd and My Sheep know My Voice, above the other voices, they know My Voice, and any other they will not hear or listen to, for they know My Voice above all the others!’”

“I need to listen carefully to the Voice of God My Father and not let anyone, even my own voice to change my mind, my heart, or my faith in Him Alone, especially when the trials and tribulations come my way or His People’s way! Come what may I will be obedient to the Lord’s Voice no matter the consequences!”

“Reflections Of A Hermit: On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”

Day 10: John Chapter 10:22-42

Part II: Listening To God’s Voice Alone & Shining As A Light In the World

Introduction

“The second part of John Chapter 10:22-42 deals with yet another Holy Feast of the Jewish People – Hanukkah! We see this is the true by this factual statement of the Apostle John, *‘Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter.’* Before I move on with my reflection, it is worthy to note here that the Feast of Dedication was the rebuilding of the House of God, the Temple after its desecration, and destruction at the hand of the ruling government of the people in those days about 168 years before Jesus was born in Nazareth. The people eventually had to revolt because they wanted to worship God freely once more, because their way of life, their livelihood under heavy taxation and rules was severely threatened, their faith and religion were suddenly considered outcast and illegal to be observed in any way; they eventually had no choice but to stand with God no matter what happened to them.”

“With that said, I will now highlight in detail the exact situation and the miracle that resulted to bring us the modern day understanding of the Feast of Hanukkah. The Feast Of Hanukkah is the Dedication of Us as God’s People to His Service & Worship and The Celebration that God’s Son Came into the World as the Light of the World, then instructed us to receive His Light within us and to shine it before all the people that they might see God’s Glory shining through us and give Him the Glory that is due to His Holy Name! **My Meditation is below clearly marked if you decide to skip over it due to its length – it is after all history and needs a little bit of explaining.**”

Necessary Background

The ***Feast of Dedication*** is also known as ***“Hanukkah”*** and also as the ***Festival of Lights*** ***“Hanukkah”*** is unique because it is not mentioned in ***“Torah”*** (first five books) - ***“Law of Moses”***.

“To fully understand & appreciate this ancient Jewish festival we must find its origins in the 430 of silence from Malachi the 2nd to last of the Old Testament prophets before the arrival of the final Old Testament prophet, John the Baptist. This period of time we are really interested in is referred to as the Hellenistic Period: 334 B.C. It is the period of the domination of the world by Alexander III of Macedon, called “Alexander the Great”, until his death in 323 B.C. up to the final defeat of Greece at Corinth in the Fourth Macedonian War that ended in 148 B.C.”

“After Alexander's death, there developed a political and power vacuum in Alexander's Kingdom. The result of the inner squabbling and power struggles led to a four-way splitting of the empire among Alexander's top four generals. Israel & especially Judea was caught in a power struggle for 125 years between the successors of Ptolemy & Seleucid with the Seleucid (Syrian) empire winning out under the leadership of Antiochus III in 198 B.C. His son, *Antiochus IV (Self-Titled “Epiphanes”)* was a very wicked and evil man bent on total unification of his empire under his authority alone. Almost immediately Antiochus IV enforced a policy of assimilation into *Hellenism (Greek Cultural Identity)*. Irrespective of the culture and beliefs of the captured peoples, the Seleucids required submission to the Greek way of life. The Greeks thought that to be truly effective this assimilation must apply to all aspects of life including language, arts, schooling, government, and religion. Everything was to conform to the Greek way of life and values. Hellenism consists of a pantheism of gods that the Greeks worshipped.”

“Finally, Antiochus IV gave an ultimatum that either the Jewish community give up its distinctive religious practices: Celebration of the Holy Feasts, Sabbath, the Reading of the Torah, Circumcision & Dedication of Children, etc.) or be put to death. To prove his resolve, Antiochus IV marched his troops into Jerusalem and desecrated the Holy Temple. The altars, the utensils, even the golden Menorah were all defiled, destroyed, or torn down. Next, he ordered that a pig be sacrificed on the holy altar and erected an image of the Greek god Zeus as the new point of worship in the Temple! Finally, *2) Antiochus IV* Called himself, *“Epiphanies” (God Manifest in Human Flesh on Earth)*. This was an act called the *2) “Desolation of Abomination”* - thereby making himself an *Antichrist*, who had to be answered by condemnation & destruction by God and His people according to Jewish Law & Tradition!”

“This act had happened once before in history, when *1) Nebuchadnezzar's Son, Belshazzar*, profaned the Holy Vessels of God and proclaimed Himself to be God in the Flesh. *Handwriting on the Wall Came Next!*”

“The murmurings and stirrings of a revolt were heard in Israel and an actual revolt was planned in a small village called *Modi'in (Modein)* in *Judea*. Living in this village was an old, godly priest named *Mattathias Ben Yochanan Hasmonean* and his *Five Sons: Eliezer, Simon, John, Johnathan, & Judah*. He was chosen by the Seleucid soldiers to be the priest to lead the people in the pagan ceremony of declaring Antiochus IV to be God Himself in the Temple. It was the straw that broke the camel's back for Mattathias' sons, and they reacted with holy indignation & anger. Enough was enough! Here again anew the cry of an ancient Jewish priest!

The Lament of Mattathias Ben Yochanan Hasmonean Maccabeus

1st Maccabees 2:1-14

In those days Mattathias the son of John, son of Simeon, a priest of the sons of Joarib, moved from Jerusalem and settled in Modein. He had five sons, John surnamed Gaddi, Simon called Thassi, Judas called Maccabeus, Eleazar called Avaran, and Jonathan called Apphus. He saw the blasphemies being committed in Judah and Jerusalem, and said, “Alas! Why was I born to see this, the ruin of my people, the ruin of the holy city, and to dwell there when it was given over to the enemy, the sanctuary given over to aliens? Her temple has become like a man without honor; her glorious vessels have been carried into captivity. Her babes have been killed in her streets, her youths by the sword of the foe.” “What nation has not inherited her palaces and has not seized her spoils? All her adornment has been taken away; no longer free, she has become a slave. And behold, our holy place, our beauty, and our glory have been laid waste; the Gentiles have profaned it. Why should we live any longer?” And Mattathias and his sons rent their clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourned greatly before the Lord!

Final Blessing of Mattathias Ben Yochanan Hasmonean Maccabeus

1st Maccabees 2:49-69

Now the days drew near for Mattathias to die, and he said to his sons: “Arrogance and reproach have now become strong; it is a time of ruin and furious anger. Now, my children, show zeal for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of our fathers. Remember the deeds of the fathers, which they did in their generations; and receive great honor and an everlasting name.” “Was not Abraham found faithful when tested, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness? Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment and became lord of Egypt. Phinehas our father, because he was deeply zealous, received the covenant of everlasting priesthood. Joshua, because he fulfilled the command, became a judge in Israel. Caleb, because he testified in the assembly, received an inheritance in the land. David, because he was merciful, inherited the throne of the kingdom forever.” “Elijah because of great zeal for the law was taken up into heaven. Hannaniah, Azariah, and Mishael believed and were saved from the flame. Daniel because of his innocence was delivered from the mouth of the lions. And so, observe, from generation to generation, that none who put their trust in him will lack strength. Do not fear the words of a sinner, for his splendor will turn into dung and worms. Today he will be exalted, but tomorrow he will not be found, because he has returned to the dust, and his plans will perish.” “My children, be courageous and grow strong in the law, for by it you will gain honor. Now behold, I know that Simeon your brother is wise in counsel; always listen to him; he shall be your father. Judas Maccabeus has been a mighty warrior from his youth; he shall command the army for you and fight the battle against the peoples. You shall rally about you all who observe the law and avenge the wrong done to your people. Pay back the Gentiles in full, and heed what the Law’s commands tell you all the days of your life!”

“His sons heeded his words and they began their revolt in 167 B.C. when the brothers killed the soldiers who caused the death of their father and started a revolt against their oppressor Antiochus IV. One of the sons, Judah, rose to lead the people. The family was renamed the **“Maccabeus”**, meaning the **“Hammers of War”**. Spurred on by their firm conviction that the God of Israel was the One True God and that He would remain Faithful to them, the Maccabees went on a **Holy Crusade!**”

“In the year **164 B.C.** in the Hebrew Month **Kislev (December)** they drove out the Syrians and recaptured the Temple in Jerusalem. The Maccabees and their followers quickly cleansed the altars and restored all of the holy furnishings. Of great importance to them was the broken **“Menorah”** which symbolized the Light of God in the world. They restored it and lit it, but they only had enough holy consecrated oil to keep it lite for one day. It takes seven days for the priests to make new oil to be used for the Temple. They had a true dilemma and a true need! They decided it was better to light the **“Menorah”** anyway; at least the **“Light of God”** would shine forth immediately and His Presence would be again dwell among His people. To their amazement, the oil burned not only for one day, but for eight more days until new sacred oil could be made and consecrated on the eight day by the priests!”

“The Temple was restored and rededicated to the glory of the God of Israel and an eight-day holy festival was established forever. It is called **“Hanukkah”**, which means **“To Dedicate”**. Every year, starting on the twenty-fifth of Kislev, the Jewish community recalls the **Two-Fold Miracle: 1) The Miraculous Multiplying Oil & 2) The Miraculous Military Victory** over the overwhelming forces of evil.”

“So, Every year, starting on the twenty-fifth of Kislev, the Jewish community begins its eight-day celebration. The holiday focuses on the **“Hanukkiah”**, the eight branched **“Hanukkah Menorah”**. The usual **“Menorah”**, is a traditional **Seven Branched Tree of Lights**. The **“Hanukkiah”** is a **Special Menorah** an **Eight Branched Tree of Lights with a center 9th light** to remind us of the eight-day multiplying miracle of oil that came from only a 1-day supply.”

The “*Festival of Dedication & Lights*” is rekindled into flame each year. The *Center Branch of Light* (with four branches on either side) stands out. It is used to light the other candles but is not part of the eight-day miracle of multiplying the oil, is called the “*Shamash*”, meaning “*Servant*”. It takes God’s servants in the world to shine His light and this middle candle is a reminder to us all of our part in God’s divine plan as Jesus Was the Father’s Servant of Light to the World!”

“So, as Christians we are to be God’s servants shining His Light to a Dark World Remembering Jesus’ Teaching: **“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”** **Matthew 5:14-16**

Meditation

“Once again we hear the many dissenting voices of Jesus’ Day, just like Our Day! Jesus told them then, and we know today, that almost no one seems to hear His Voice anymore. Why you ask? Jesus’ answer: *‘I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s Name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My Sheep, as I said to you. My Sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and they Follow Me. And I give them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My Hand. My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s Hand. I and My Father are One!’*”

John 10:25-30

“And then all the voices that knew what to do, decided to seize Him, arrest Him, and punish Him, even put Him to death for violating what they knew was best for everyone else. **Except, He was God, and He Alone Knows What Is BEST For His People! Doesn’t He?** *‘I will choose this day, and tomorrow, and the next day; to hear One Voice and One Voice Alone, My Lord & Savior Jesus Christ, The Coming King of Kings, & Lord of Lords!’*

“With all the people seemingly shedding light on what is really going on in the world today, with so many supposed facts and figures and schemes and plans – *‘I will choose instead to be God’s Light showing others His Glory & His Grace, so that all may see my good intentions, my good deeds, my acts of service and my words of truth from Him that will be their Light to Illuminate Him in All of His Glory to their heart, mind, and soul!’*

“Choose you this day whom you will serve?”

**“But As For Me & My House We Will Serve The Lord,
No Matter What Comes Our Way, No Matter What Our Fate Is”**

“I hope you will join me?”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”**

Day 11: John Chapter 11

Meditation

“Ever wonder what is going on these days?” ‘Ever wonder where is God in all of this madness?’ ‘Ever wonder what God is doing?’ ‘Ever wonder what God is thinking?’ ‘Ever wonder why God doesn’t respond right away?’ ‘Ever wonder why God doesn’t respond the way I want him to, or the way I think He should?’ ‘Ever wonder why God doesn’t heal everyone we pray for?’

“When Lazarus was really sick, and barely hanging onto life, I am sure his sisters Mary & Martha were wondering all these things too. I know I think this way at times, especially over the last few months. I wonder why God would allow such madness, hysteria, sickness, pain, suffering, death, & evil to abound. Yet, like Mary & Martha, I continue to cry out to God and to trust in Him even when He doesn’t answer, even when He doesn’t respond as fast as I would like, or in the way I would like.”

"In this retelling of the events surrounding the life, illness, death, and resurrection of Lazarus of Bethany, we see God is always aware of what is happening to all of us. He always hears our prayers, and He always responds. But we also see He only responds according to His Good & Perfect Will, and only in His Timing!"

Notice: Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha ... Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "*Lord, behold, he, whom You love is sick.*" When Jesus heard that, He said, "*This sickness is not unto death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God may be Glorified through it.*" Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister Mary, and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, "*Let us go to Judea again.*"

"*Why did God wait, for Lazarus to grow weaker and die?*" Jesus answers this in a way we never seem to think about For God's Glory to be revealed to more than us: to the whole world, to unbelievers, to those who believe they believe, but are actually not sure or skeptical at heart! The hard part is waiting in faith and really trusting in God to respond and waiting for His timing and then accepting His Choice – His Will!"

"Next, I encounter like Martha, the question inside of me asking: '*Why Lord, Why couldn't You have showed up earlier, Why couldn't have You stopped this from happening, Why couldn't you have healed my loved one, Why couldn't have You stopped them from dying, Why couldn't have You stopped this world wide event from occurring?*'"

"**Notice What Jesus Does First!** He confronts with Truth and provides compassion in comforting those who are hurting. Let us look at the conversation Jesus has with Martha: **Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."** Jesus said to her, "*Your brother will rise again!*" (**Notice – Truth, Assurance, & Comfort Provided By Jesus!**) Martha said to Him, "*I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day!*" (**Notice – The Truth, Assurance, & Comfort Provided By Jesus Is Received With A Truth Statement of Her Beliefs In Return!**)"

"**Notice What Jesus Does Second!** Jesus questions what we believe about what is happening to us and what is really important to us. He wants to know what we Truly Believe, Understand, and in Whom do we place our Trust. Let us again look at the conversation Jesus has with Martha: "**Jesus said to her, "I AM the Resurrection & the Life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"** (**Notice – The Truth & Gravity Of Jesus Really Is – Is Presented To Martha, To Me, To You! What Do I Really Believe – Really Matters!**) Martha said to Him, "*Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, Who is to come into the world!*" (**Notice – That Martha Responds In Truth, Faith, & Acceptance That Jesus Is God, Jesus Holds Her Brother's Future & Her Future, and That Future Is Assured!**)"

"Jesus showed us His True Humanity, His True Love For Another Human Being for the scripture says: '**Jesus said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."** **Jesus wept!** Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" Jesus feels everything I feel, Jesus knows everything I am going through, Jesus cares deeply for me at all times and in every situation of my life!"

"Jesus showed us He Is Truly God Himself! '**Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone!"** Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "*"Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."* Jesus said to her, "*Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the Glory of God?"* ...

... Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, ***“Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You Sent Me.”*** Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, ***“Lazarus, come forth!”*** And Lazarus who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ***“Loose him, and let him go.”***

“I respond in awe, in majesty, in humbleness, in glory, in adoration, in hope, in wonderment, in joy unending!” But others, most of the world responds differently! Let us see how the religious leaders, religious people, and most of the so-called believers responded that day, and still respond today: ***“Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”*** And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, ***“You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”*** Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. Therefore, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, ***“What do you think, will He not come to the feast?”*** Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, they should report it, that they might seize Him.”

“Notice this is how the so-called followers of God responded to the Miracle of Raising Jesus From The Dead. In time, both they and the pagan – unbelieving world would hunt down and declare faith in Him as a Christian, even after His death and resurrection and ascension into heaven to be outlawed. The world would hunt them down and many, many of them would pay a martyr’s death to continue to Witness to the Name of Jesus Christ as Lord. Today it continues around the world, many of our fellow believers are still being persecuted and martyred around the world for their Witness & Testimony to Our Risen Savior & Lord!”

“Now for the first time in human history, worship of Jesus Christ is being ***“Lawfully”*** stopped for the ***“Greater Good”*** in every place, in every country, in every land, even here in the United States of America – In The Land of the ***“Free & the Home of the Brave”!*** ***“What have we lost that our brothers and sisters who have gone on before us marked with the sign of faith had?”***

“Answer: 1) A Close Daily Abiding In God’s Spirit – so that we know when we are being deceived and so we know what God’s Will is at all times! ***2) A Complete Reliance on God*** – for our daily bread, our daily health, our daily protection, our daily existence! ***3) A Willingness Courageous Faith To Guard The Trust (Our Testimony & Witness To God)*** – so that we do not fear the decrees, or the unlawful rules of man over us, rather we are fearful of God’s Laws & Rules over us as His Obedient Children. We are ready to face any persecution, any punishment, even death itself, in order to be His Voice, His Witness, & His Presence in the world!”

“It is time for me to forget my comfort! It is time for me to forget my own wants & desires! It is time for me to commit fully! It is time for me to count the cost! It is time for me to take a stand! It is time for me to stop being quiet! It is time for me to go to a lost and broken world! It is time for me to accept embarrassment, humiliation, persecution, suffering, & even death in order to tell everyone, ***“Jesus Christ Is My Resurrection & My Life & He Wants To Be Yours As Well.”***

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”**

Day 12: John Chapter 12

Meditation

“Am I Prophetic, Do I See Visions, Do I Have Deep Understandings Of The Things That Must Soon Come To Pass?” Mary the sister of Lazarus was prophetic in Jesus’ Day! She could see by the leading of the Spirit of God, that Jesus would soon be dead and buried. It’s funny no one else could see the obvious. After all she did not benefit from following Jesus every day like His closest followers, who heard Jesus say, time and time again, **“The Son of Man must be arrested, and handed over into the religious leaders, and wicked men, who will condemn Him, whip Him, and put Him to death, but He will arise on the third day!”** Mary’s act of incredible faith, insight, and love by anointing Jesus feet showed to Whom she belonged. She showed where her heart, mind, and soul were. She was prophetic in her day! **“But what about us everyone, are we aware of the signs of our days, of these days in which we live?”**

“The people of Jesus time mostly rejected His claims about being God’s Only Son! And most of those who were left and said they believed in Him decided that day to proclaim Him as their King and Ruler. But not as the King He had come as, but rather they welcomed Him as long as He would do what they wanted Him to do! **“How often do I want God to do what I want Him to do for me or my family or my church?”** **“What I should be doing instead is calling Him the Lord & Master & King over my life, over my will, over my every dream, goal, & desire. It is our humility, our submission, and our obedience that Jesus Becomes Our Coming King, and not in our demanding, wishing, and desiring for a better day, a better situation, a better life!”**

“The Greeks coming to talk with Jesus, reminds me of all the peoples on the earth that are inquiring about the world, their life, their purpose, and their understanding of all things! This is the human situation, unsurety, but wanting to be sure, always questioning, but wanting answers! And Jesus, uses the simplest of language in helping us to understand the understandable! He used a farmer’s parable about planting a seed and how it grows and bears fruit in due season. However, He is also speaking of the Science of Astronomy and the Constellation Virgo – the Virgin. **“Why so simple and so complex at the same moment?”** Jesus knows that there are so many philosophies, minds, and ways of thinking and so he says one thing but reaches everyone with the truth that He was sent to live perfectly for us, to die for us, and to be God’s sacrifice to repay our debts to His Father! He uses His Presence, His Spirit, and the Universe He Created to speak to us, His People He Made in His Image!”

“God the Father next provides a Divine Sign and Wonder by speaking from heaven Himself. But still almost now one believes in Him, or they only want to believe in Him for their own benefit or according to their own plans. The rest plot even more to kill Him and get rid of Him, so they do not have to change their hearts and minds and submit their souls and their desires to God!”

“Jesus reminds them of the consequences of their unbelief. He again says He will not judge anyone, instead every person will judge themselves by their belief, their conviction, their thoughts, their desires, and their actions!” Jesus told us what the TRUTH IS! He told us about the plan, the heart, and the love of God for us! It is up to us to accept all that God has for us; or to make our own plans, keep our hearts to ourselves and reject His Love but not loving Him back!”

“Those who choose God’s Will, His Plan, & Accept His Love; walk in His Light & have the Light of Life within them by the Presence of God’s Spirit! Those that choose Their Own Will, make Their Own Plans, Reject His Love; walk in Darkness, & do not have His Light or Life in them, but instead are deceived by their own spirit or the evil one’s spirit!”

"The Apostle John sums up the longing of my heart and soul. ***"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."*** 1st John 1:5-7

"Oh Lord May I Live In The Light As You Are In The Light!"

***"Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!"***
Day 13: John Chapter 13
Meditation

"Service to all, that is our commission, that is God's Command. First within the church, the Body of Christ and then to the whole world! We are called to service out of the love God has for us and the love He gives to us that may overflow to others, who need His Love! Jesus demonstrated the call to selflessness, humility, and service by taking the lowliest job His day, being a servant or slave in the household. God's Son who had already humbled Himself by leaving His Co-Eternal Throne with His Father in Heaven, not further humbles Himself to serve His Disciples at the lowest rung of their society in order to prove the depths of God's Love for them, for us!"

"Jesus then uses this act of service as a backdrop to remind me, to remind you of our calling in this life – To Serve: ***"You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I AM. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."*** John 13:13-17

"God's eternal love, His forgiveness that He wishes for all to receive is next on display in Jesus interaction with Judas Iscariot. Judas is not predestined to reject God, nor is Judas born condemned. Instead Jesus offers His true friendship and loyalty to the man who will betray Him only after Judas turns down His Lord's offer of communion and fellowship with Him as His Best Friend. Let's look at the interaction and it's significance in Jesus Day and in our Day: **When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, & testified, saying, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me!"** (There is God's Omniscience and Foreknowledge Again) ... Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His Disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, **"Lord, who is it?"** Jesus answered, ***"It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it."*** And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. John 13:21-26

There used to be a time, not long ago in American History, when you gave your word, shook hands on it, and it was as good as done! It was the same in the time of Jesus as well! in the days of Jesus if you wanted to prove your sincerity & truth on a particular subject or your allegiance in friendship with someone else you kissed each other on both cheeks. Or if you threw salt over your shoulder. then that person could be trusted to tell you the truth about anything! also, in the days of Jesus if you broke bread together, more specifically if you shared a loaf of bread by tearing it into two pieces & dipped it together at the same time in a bowl. and if the host shared that piece of dipped bread with you, you were considered signaled out. in so doing, you & the other person had declared an unfailing love & trust in the other person; just as if you had taken a blood oath of friendship to remain forever loyal even it required dying in the place of your friend!"

"This gives a whole new meaning to what Jesus told them next about True Love: ***"This is My Commandment, that you Love one another as I have Loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends!"*** **John 15:12-13**

Now Think About The Significance Of Judas Being Called As One Of The Chosen Friends Of The Lord To Be Invited To His Passover Meal & Receiving From The Lord The Piece Of Bread He Had Dipped!"

"What Was Jesus Trying To Convey To Judas' Heart, Mind, & Soul In That Sacred Moment?"

The answer: I Call You Friend! I Trust You With My Life! I Love You As My Father God Loves You! I Want To Be In An Everlasting Relationship With You!"

"Judas Betrayed Jesus! But In A Just A Few Hours, Peter Betrays Jesus As Well! It is predicted right here. The difference between the two? One repented, asked for forgiveness and remained loyal to God's Only Son even to a martyr's death – Peter; the other Judas, asked not forgiveness, and in shame committed suicide and once again denied God's Will for His Life – that of forgiveness, grace, mercy and acceptance and traded it one last time for his own will and took the selfish way out!" Free will, free choice is up to us, God's love and willingness to forgive and restore is not optional it is forever if we accept our fault and receive His grace!"

"Jesus gives us a New Commandment here greater than all the other's that came before it: ***"Love one another, as I your Lord have loved you, as I your did love you, as I your Lord continue to love you!"*** Let me, Let us, dear People of God show others His Perfect Never-Ending Love in all that we intend, in all the we plan, in all that we say, and in all that we do!"

***"Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!"***

Day 14: John Chapter 14

Meditation

Jesus asks us to do only one thing in this life: ***"If you love Me, keep My commandments!"*** Oh, boy, that is asking everything of me. I do not know about you, but I do know about me. I want what I want, I want to do what I want to do! I am not very good at taking orders or letting anyone else call the shots! And yet, My Creator, My Sustainer, My Savior, My Lord, & My King says, ***"If you want to prove you love me perfectly, as I have always loved you, than simply obey!"*** The Truest Test of My Faith, My Commitment to God, and My Real Intentions is My Willingness To Obey! Period, full Stop! No more deflections, no more wrangling, no more trying to get my way, no more justifying my ill behavior. Either I belong to God, or I don't, either I honor God, or I don't! Period, full Stop!

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, was quoted in his book, ***"The Cost Of Discipleship"***, as saying this before He was executed by his own people in Germany during World War II, ***"Those who truly believe, already obey and those who already obey, truly believe! ... Everything else is a reliance on cheap grace ... and cheap grace cannot and will not save anyone!"***

"Notice Jesus did not give us an alternative to this command, nor did He give an alternative way to get to heaven and to be in His Presence. The beginning of the text today is very clear about this fact as well, **Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way (to where you are going)?"** Jesus replied, ***"I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me!"***

"Wow! Obedience and Faith Only In Him Alone or Else! That seems repugnant, harsh, over the top, overbearing, demanding, even ridiculous, to the heart and mind of anyone who is still living for themselves, doesn't it? But to the heart and mind of a believer it seems, good, right, holy, deserving, and even expected! "Why the difference?"

“Because to the Faithful Obedient Believer in God, to the Loyal Follower of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior - Three Promises come with the imperative to have Faith, Remain Obedient, and Stay Loyal! **1) Jesus Promises to Never Leave Us Orphans – Alone** “If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you ... He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him ... If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” **2) Jesus Promised That Whatever We Asked For In Faith In His Will & His Name in Prayer - He Would Give Us** “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the Works that I do he will do also; and Greater Works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My Name, that I will do, that the Father may be Glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My Name, I will do it.” **3) Jesus Promised Us When This Life Is Through Here On Earth, We Would Be With Him In Eternity Forever** “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know ... Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give to you; not as the world gives do, I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe!”

So, let me, let us this day, sing praises to our God in the words of this old hymn:

When we Walk with the Lord in the Light of His Word,
 What a Glory He sheds on our Way!
 While we do His Good Will, He Abides with us still,
 And with all who will Trust and Obey.

Trust and Obey, for there's no other Way
 To be Happy in Jesus, but to Trust and Obey.

Not a Shadow can rise, not a Cloud in the skies,
 But His Smile quickly drives it away;
 Not a Doubt or a Fear, not a Sigh or a Tear,
 Can Abide while we Trust and Obey.

Trust and Obey, for there's no other Way
 To be Happy in Jesus, but to Trust and Obey.

Then in Fellowship sweet we will sit at His Feet.
 Or we'll Walk by His Side in the Way.
 What He Says we Will Do, where He Sends, we Will Go;
 Never Fear, only Trust and Obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other Way
 To be Happy in Jesus, but to Trust and Obey.
 Oh, Trust and Obey, for there's no other Way
 To be Happy in Jesus, but to Trust and Obey.

Tis' so Sweet to Trust in Jesus,
 Just to take Him at His Word;
 Just to Rest upon His Promise,
 Just to know, "Thus Saith the Lord!"

Jesus, Jesus, how I Trust Him!
 How I've P{roved Him o'er and o'er;
 Jesus, Jesus, Precious Jesus!
 Oh, for Grace to Trust Him More!
 Oh, for Grace to Trust You More!

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”
Day 15: John Chapter 15
Meditation**

“The final of the #7 Great I AM statements made by Jesus Christ is found here! 5x He disclosed His True Identity as God, just as He had disclosed Himself to Adam & Eve in the Garden, To Abraham on 4 separate occasions, to Moses at the Burning Bush, etc. ... The last 2x He only disclosed His Identity to His Inner Circle of Followers at the Last Supper. And this is the last of those 2x. This disclosure of Identity as God Himself also explains the whole reason He came from heaven to earth, to restore our relationship with God Our Father and to give us **“ETERNAL JOY”**. This is apparent as the first 17 verses of John Chapter 15 is a pair of bookends with the center of the message focusing in on verse 11, **“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”**”

Jesus also reminds us that His Joy is only present in us as long as we are directly connected to Him alone. He also tells us that this joy is not of our ourselves and that we possess it and know we have it by abiding in His Love and sharing it with others who do not know Him, **“I AM the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I AM the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is Glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My Disciples.”**

Jesus also reminds us that He desires to Love Us Perfectly and that we have His Love as long as we love Him in return by demonstrating our willingness to be obedient to Him, **“As the Father Loved Me, I also have Loved You; abide in My Love. If you keep My Commandments, you will abide in My Love, just as I have kept My Father's Commandments and abide in His Love.”**

Jesus after announcing an eternal joy, a supernatural joy, a joy not dependent on our circumstances in life, next warns us immediately that we will be persecuted for our faith in Him: **“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the Word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My Word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My Name's Sake, because they do not know Him Who Sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the Works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the Word might be fulfilled which is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause!'"**

Then Jesus, ends with hope that will bring and keep His Joy in us forever, the Gift of His Divine Spirit to live within us: **“But when the Helper comes, Whom I shall Send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth Who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness because you have been with Me from the beginning.”** Our Joy comes from within - from God the Holy Spirit Who lives in us! Our Mission is to spread that joy to others, even when they reject us, hate us, persecute us, and even want to silence us!”

“Let Me, Let Us Be People Of God About His Work Here On Earth – Let Us Share The Joy Of The Lord With Them!”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”
Day 16: John Chapter 16
Meditation**

“Jesus after telling us that we needed to be attached to Him in every way in the preceding passage continues at the Last Supper to speak of more persecution to come for His Name’s Sake, both in His Follower’s Time & Today in the Future, **“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers Service To God! And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.”** John 16:1-3

“Jesus then tells them His persecution and death are now imminent! That they are to remember to wait for the coming of His Gift – His Spirit Who is Coming to them soon to strengthen, to empower, to teach, to guide, to comfort, and to bring them into all Truth! Jesus tells them they are not yet ready to receive everything God has for them, but when the Spirit Comes, He Will Guide Them Into All Truth, **“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into All Truth; for He will not speak on His Own Authority, but whatever He hears He will Speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will Glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”** John 16:12-15

“Jesus next speaks in a parabolic parable of a time and time and the time between the times! **“A little while, and you will not see Me; and again, a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.”** Then some of His disciples said among themselves, **“What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father’?”** They said therefore, **“What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.”** Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, **“Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’? Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore, you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.”** John 16:16-22

This Requires Some Explanation!

The Parable: *“In A Little While” – Sorrow & Anguish / Weep & Lament, Followed By - “In A Little While” – Joy & Peace / Rejoice & Peace*

CONTEXT – Parable Deals Directly With The Following Three Days In The Life Of The Apostles Good Friday To Easter Sunday! The Parable Can Also Mean A Time When We Await The Last Days/Three Days Before The Second Coming Of The Lord Again From Heaven! Matthew 24:29-30

The First Occurrence: *“In A Little While”*

The Trial, Scourging, Crucifixion, & Death Of Jesus Christ On The Following Day On Good Friday. These Events Would Cause His Family & Followers To Have: **“Anguis & Sorrow”** & To **“Lament & Weep”**

The Second Occurrence: *“In A Little While”*

The Resurrection Of Jesus Christ Three Days Later On Easter Sunday. This Event Would Cause His Family & Followers To Experience An **“Irrepressible Joy”** & An **“Irremovable Peace”**
Jesus Likens The Sorrow & Joy They Will Experience In Those Three Days To Childbirth!

Jesus Also Likens The Sorrow & Joy Of Childbirth To The Experiences Of The End Of The Age! And Jesus answered them, “See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in *My Name*, saying, ‘*I AM the Christ*,’ & will mislead many. You will be hearing of wars & rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, & kingdom against kingdom, & in various places there will be famines & earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs!”

Matthew 24:4-8

Jesus Reminds Us That No Matter How Much Anguish, Pain, & Sorrow Is Going On Around Us, & Even To Us, We Will Forget It All At The Discovery Of New Life, Eternal Life, & At His Second Coming, The One Day That Will Bring Us Only His Presence, His Joy, & His Peace Forever!

Paul Also Continues This Analogy Started By Jesus Concerning End Times As Well!

“Now as to the times & the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the *Day of the Lord* will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, ‘Peace & safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, & they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the *Day* would overtake you like a thief; for you are all *Sons & Daughters Of Light* & *Sons & Daughters Of The Day*. We are not of night nor of darkness; so, then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert & sober.”

1st Thessalonians 5:1-6

Then Jesus reminds us all these things will happen before the end comes, including immense world tragedies, famines, plagues, pestilence, wars, rumors of wars and then the end will finally come upon all of us when we still think we have it all figured out, when we think we have it all under control, “*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have Peace. In the world you will have Tribulation; but be of Good Cheer (Great Joy), I have overcome the world!*”

John 16:33

Peter, A Follower Of Jesus Who Experienced First-Hand This Very Message That Night Long Ago, Followed By The Death, & Resurrection, & Ascension Of Jesus Reminds Us, “Humble yourselves under the mighty Power of God, & at the right time He will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries & cares to God, for He cares for you. Stay Alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand Firm against him & be Strong In Your Faith. Remember that your Christian brothers & sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. In His Kindness, God called you to Share in His Eternal Glory by the means provided through Christ Jesus. So, after you have suffered a little while, He will restore, support, & strengthen you, & He will place you on a firm foundation. All Power & Glory be to Him forever! Amen!”

1st Peter 5:6-11

“We are living in crazy, unprecedented times, the time is drawing near, now more than ever, for open persecution of God’s People to start up in every place in this world. Therefore, My Dear Brothers & Sisters, If God so loved us that he willingly & with great joy & goodwill toward us, gave us the life of His Only Son, Jesus Christ; then what an “*Irrepressible Joy*” and “*Irremovable Peace*” is ours today just for the asking! Today, the Spirit of God bids us to come & experience the “*Irrepressible Joy*” and “*Irremovable Peace*” of Our Lord Today as we dwell daily in His Abiding Presence & He with us!”

“Reflections Of A Hermit:

On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”

Day 17: John Chapter 17

Meditation

“I am going to encourage you all to meditate with me, ‘The Hermit’, on this beautiful and perfect prayer of Our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ! In this prayer I invite you to find, comprehend, pray & meditate upon a minimum of 21 themes that Jesus prayed about the night He was betrayed. Remember He had You In Mind when He Prayed!”

John Chapter 17

“Themes of Jesus’ Last Prayer”

- 1) Glorify the Son - Glorify the Father
- 2) Offer All Eternal Life
- 3) Finishing His Earthly Mission
- 4) Making Known God to the World
- 5) Given God's Word To His Followers
- 6) Given A New Relationship With God
- 7) Given The Joy of the Lord
- 8) Protected from the Evil One
- 9) Given Power To Be In The World, But Not Of It
- 10) Sanctified Holy By God
- 11) Given Truth, Knowledge, & Understanding
- 12) Given A Mission To Complete Jesus’ Mission
- 13) Sent By God Into The World As Jesus Was Sent Into The World
- 14) A Mission Which Includes: Prophecy, Preaching, Teaching, & Witnessing
- 15) A Mission Which Includes: Service To All & Seeking The Lost
- 16) Loved By God Perfectly To Love Him & Others
- 17) Unity & Oneness With God And Each Other In The Church
- 18) Given God's Abiding Glory In Order To Display His Presence Within Us
- 19) Promised An Eternal Inheritance With Him
- 20) Preserved & Protected By His Amazing Grace & Power
- 21) Called To Finish Our Mission Faithfully Unto Death For His Glory

“Reflections Of A Hermit: On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”

Day 18: John Chapter 18
Meditation

“Three important statements are made by Jesus during His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane that night before the Passover celebration - **This Includes Two “I AM” statements**

- 1) ***“I AM He!”*** (Doublet) **Verses 5b & 8a**
- 2) ***“Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way!”*** **Verse 8b**
- 3) ***“Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”*** **Verse 11b**

1) ***“I AM He!”*** (First Declaration) **Verses 5b**

Notice that at the first mention of the phrase ***“I AM He!”*** the Roman Soldiers and Jewish Temple Guards are afraid of Him and His ability to perform miraculous signs and wonders that many of them associated with demonic supernatural abilities and forces! Therefore, in response to Jesus self-identifying statement they retreat and fall down to protect themselves from His mighty power because He acted in the authority and power of God! Ironically this is reminiscent of the prediction that when Jesus Christ returns again to earth the Bible says He will judge all people and all of us will be forced to give Him glory and honor, willingly by those who chose to worship Him here and now and unwillingly by those who chose to reject Him:

“Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated Him to the place of highest honor and gave Him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!” **Philippians 4:6-11**

Then He asked them again, ***“Whom are you seeking?”*** And they said, ***“Jesus of Nazareth.”*** Jesus repeats his questioning of the mob. **Jesus answered, *“I have told you that I AM He! Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,”* that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, *“of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”***

1) *“I AM He!”* (Second Declaration)

Verse 8a

This Completes The Doublet Declaration That He Is Equal With God The Father!

2) *“Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way!”*

Verse 8b

He had just prayed and stated that He had not lost anyone the Father had given Him while He was on earth! Jesus Says This First To Fulfill His Own Prophetic Words! ***“While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your Name which You have given Me; & I guarded them & not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.”***

John 17:12

He also said it to physically save His disciples from persecution and death so that later after He leaves the earth to return to heaven they will be able to fulfill their mission to preach His name, testify to His name and teach His Word and Will in this world to others who have not yet heard the Good News that God loves them, forgives them, desires to bless them and wants to have an eternal relationship with them in His presence! This statement is effective as it is spoken with the authority of God. The mob chose only to arrest Him which was their primary mission given to them by the Jewish Religious Leaders in the Sanhedrin and they let the others go. This is especially true of Peter in light of his attack with his short sword on the High Priest’s servant.

3) *“Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”*

Verse 11b

Jesus says this to Peter and to all who were listening to Him at that moment to train Peter about truly allowing God’s will to work in His life and not to hinder his future witness and testimony to God in Christ by using physical means to bring about his will versus the will of God! Jesus also says this so that what must happen, that is God’s Divine and Sovereign Will designed from the beginning of time to bring about the redemption of the entire human race and to provide a suitable sacrifice worthy of bringing about the forgiveness of all of the sins of the whole world! Jesus knew at that moment that He must be allowed to finish the mission for which His Father had originally sent Him; to die in place of all of His creation and thereby restore the lost relationship with God we all have inherited by our own actions, by our own sins! **Jesus Shows His Resolve To Fulfill His Mission & To Show Us All His Father’s Unending & Perfect Love For You & Me.**

Jesus Now Begins His 1st of # 6 Separate Trials over a period of about 3 hours!

1) Trial Before Annas & Minority Of Sanhedrin (The Father-In-Law Of Caiaphas & Co-High Priest)

Verdict: Insufficient Evidence – John 18:12-14 & 19-24

2) Trial Before Caiaphas & Minority Of Sanhedrin

Verdict: Blasphemy – Matthew 26:57-68 & Mark 14:53-65

3) Trial Before Caiaphas & Majority Of Sanhedrin

Verdict: Guilty – Matthew 27:1, Mark 15:1, & Luke 22:66-71

4) 1st Trial Before Pontius Pilate

Verdict: Not Guilty – Matthew 27:11-23, Mark 15:1-14, Luke 23:1-5, & 13-22, & John 18:28-19:7

5) **Trial Before Herod Antipas**

Verdict: Insufficient Evidence – Luke 23:6-12

6) **2nd Trial Before Pontius Pilate**

Verdict: Not Guilty – Matthew 27:24-26, Mark 15:15, Luke 23:23-25, & John 19:8-16

“And at the same time as Jesus is facing trial, tribulation, and temptation to save His Own Life, Peter a Follower, just like me, also faces the same! But where Jesus was Courageous, Stalwart, Unmovable, Unshakable, & Victorious in His Steadfast Spirit, I like Peter, have fallen time and time again. In this past 60 days I started off this latest trial and tribulation with nothing more than abject failure and even denial of My Lord. I allowed today’s authorities to chase me away and I like Peter ran as the Shepherd was struck and hid in my failure, my fear, and my cowardice! I will resolve this day to be like Jesus and stand in the gap and declare my Faith in Him – NO MATTER WHAT COMES NEXT!”

I hear 3 x times, Jesus say, just as Peter heard after Jesus rose from the dead, **“Do You Love Me Simon (Scott)?”** I respond each time like my brother, Peter Today: **“I Love You Lord!”** I also hear just as Peter heard, **“Do not worry about another’s life, another’s fate, keep your eyes on Me alone! Listen to My Voice alone! Obey Me Only!”** This is a paraphrase of **John 21:21-22**.

I also hear Jesus say, just as Peter did, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, Peter clothed yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will bind you and carry you where you do not wish.”** This Jesus spoke, signifying by what death Peter would Glorify God. And when Jesus had spoken this, He said to him, **“Follow Me!”** **John 21:18-19**

“I must follow as Jesus tells me; another may follow differently; and yet another different still; but I must follow where He Leads! No Matter the Situation, No Matter the Consequence, & No Matter the Outcome! From Here On Out I Will Simply Follow & Obey My Lord!”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”
Day 19: John Chapter 19
Meditation**

“The Many Trials Of Jesus. **How Many?** An Incomplete 6x Trials To Be Exact! **When Is the Next Trial Of Jesus?** In will not be to figure out who Jesus is; but rather it will be to figure out who each of we are! Because it will not be man trying Jesus, but rather Jesus trying us in the 7th, **Final, & Complete Last Trial of All – The Day of Judgment to come in the future.** As it is here is a list of the those 6x Trials in the past:

1) **Trial Before Annas & Minority Of Sanhedrin (The Father-In-Law Of Caiaphas & Co-High Priest)**

Verdict: Insufficient Evidence – John 18:12-14 & 19-24

2) **Trial Before Caiaphas & Minority Of Sanhedrin**

Verdict: Blasphemy – Matthew 26:57-68 & Mark 14:53-65

3) **Trial Before Caiaphas & Majority Of Sanhedrin**

Verdict: Guilty – Matthew 27:1, Mark 15:1, & Luke 22:66-71

4) **1st Trial Before Pontius Pilate**

Verdict: Not Guilty – Matthew 27:11-23, Mark 15:1-14, Luke 23:1-5, & 13-22, & John 18:28-19:7

5) **Trial Before Herod Antipas**

Verdict: Insufficient Evidence – Luke 23:6-12

6) **2nd Trial Before Pontius Pilate**

Verdict: Not Guilty – Matthew 27:24-26, Mark 15:15, Luke 23:23-25, & John 19:8-16

“What is even more curious about this chapter of John’s Gospel is that 6x Trails and a sham verdict, followed by a public execution and burial of Jesus allows for the Believers in God’s Son & the Unbelievers’ in God’s Son to make **7x Bold Proclamations of His Divine Kingship.**

1st The Roman Soldiers Who Taunted & Mistreated Jesus

Verses 2 – 3: And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns & put it on His head & put a purple robe on Him; & they began to come up to Him & say, **“All Hail, King of the Jews!”** & to give Him slaps in the face.

2nd The Jewish Religious Authorities & Teachers Of The Law

Verse 12: **“If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend!**

Whoever makes Himself a King speaks against Caesar!”

3rd The Roman Governor Pontius Pilate

Verse 14: Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour.

Pilate said to the Jews, **“Behold, Your King!”**

Verse 15a-b: So they cried out, **“Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!”**

Pilate replied, **“Shall I crucify Your King?”**

4th Pontius Pilate Makes A Further Declaration On A Titulus Placed On the Cross of Jesus

Verse 19: Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, **“Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.”**

Verse 20: Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; & it was written in Hebrew, Latin & in Greek.

Which when read in Hebrew is this:

Jesus Of Nazareth

King Of The Jews

Yahweh In The Flesh

5th Jewish Chief Priest Insists That Pontius Pilate Change The Inscription On The Titulus

Verse 21: So the chief priest of the Jews were saying to Pilate,

“Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews’; but instead He claimed, ‘I AM King of the Jews.’”

6th Pontius Pilate’s Responds With A Further Direct Confirmation

Verse 22: Pilate answered, **“What I Have Written, I Have Written!”**

7th Two Jewish Sanhedrin Pharisees & Priests Answer In Silence By Their Actions:

Reverence, Attention To Details, & The Lavish Expense Spent To Care For The Body Of Jesus

Verses 38 – 41: After these things **Joseph of Arimathea**, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; & Pilate granted permission. So Joseph came & took away His body. **Nicodemus**, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh & aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus & bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

“Let me, let us, take time today and contemplate the King of Kings & Lord of Lords of our lives, The Lord Jesus Christ and let us give me the Throne of Our Heart to Live & Reign There!”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”
Day 20: John Chapter 20
Meditation**

“As we open this 20th chapter of the Gospel of John we immediately encounter 5 different sections and 4 different stories surrounding the Resurrection of Jesus Christ!

1st Story of the Resurrection on Sunday Morning: **Mary Magdalene** arrives at the tomb and sees it is empty and runs to get help from the followers of Jesus hiding in the Upper Room. Two of them – **Simon Peter** & a Mystery Disciple – **“The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved”** run to the tomb with her. What they encounter is a missing corpse, and **two interesting pieces of the ceremonial burial garments** which the two pharisee priests, **Joseph of Arimathea**, and **Nicodemus of Galilee**, wrapped Jesus’ corpse in on Friday afternoon. This story is actually about the physical evidence of the event of the Resurrection before anyone actually encounters the Risen Son of God!

These two burial cloths are probably still with us to this very day as the **“Shroud of Turin”** & The **“Face Cloth of Oviedo”**. So. Much has been documented and written on these two cloths. But more so, has been written on the Shroud of Turin. In the early years of investigation in the 1970’s the Shroud of Turin was suspected of being a medieval forgery. However, the most recent more modern work shows it to not be a forgery at all, but rather a garment who’s existence bears time and time again a Witness to the Resurrection of a Jewish man who was killed by crucifixion in the 1st Century AD! When compared to the Shroud, the Face Cloth of Oviedo shows a 99.5% correlation of the same materials, the same blood type, and a complete overlay of matching facial features, etc. with the outer cloth (Shroud). So God the Father left us Scientific Proof of the Greatest Miracle to date in all of human history.

For the skeptics out there, nearly everyone today, and for Christians who always say, Faith must be believing in what is Unseen, actually in this case - **“Seeing Is Indeed Believing!”**

2nd Story of the Resurrection on Sunday Morning: Tells us that Mary meet two angels and then met face to face with her Risen Lord & Savior Jesus Christ. The Love and Joy she experiences she shares with everyone immediately. Again we encounter something unusual to our understanding of faith: **“Seeing Is Indeed Believing!”**

3rd Story of the Resurrection on Sunday Evening: Jesus Appears to His Followers All Together and Gives To Them 5 Possessions That Are Eternally Ours As Believers:

1) His Presence , 2) His Peace , 3) His Commission , 4) His Spirit , & 5) His Authority

Once Again, “Seeing Is Indeed Believing!”

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, **Jesus came & stood** ¹ before them, & said, **“Peace be with you!”** ² When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, **“Peace to you!** ² **As the Father has sent Me, so I send you!”** ³ And when He had said this, **He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit!”** ⁴ **“If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained!”** ⁵ **John 20:19-23 (NKJV)**

4th Story of the Resurrection on the Following Sunday: Jesus Appears To His Followers Again In Order To Not Leave Out Anyone From Seeing Him, Meeting Him, & Believing In Him; Not Even Thomas Who Had Gone Home & Went Missing In Action For A Week!

Once Again, “Seeing Is Indeed Believing!”

Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, **“We have seen the Lord.”** So, he (Thomas) said to them, **“Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my**

hand into His side, I will not believe.” And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving but believing.” And Thomas answered Him, “My Lord and My God!” Jesus said to him, “Thomas because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” [John 20:24-29 \(NKJV\)](#)

“There is a new caveat this time though beyond **“Seeing Is Indeed Believing!”** Now for the first time, we are told, to believe without seeing, for faith is greater if we will believe what we cannot fully comprehend, grasp, or see, **“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”**

“Oh Lord, that I may always believe in You, especially when I do not see what You are doing, why You are doing, what You are doing, when I am confused, when I am persecuted, when life is bitter, hard, and there seems to be n relief in sight, then may you give me the faith to believe and trust you with all I am!”

**“Reflections Of A Hermit:
On A Journey Toward Wind & Fire!”
Day 21: John Chapter 21
Meditation**

“Jesus forgives us time and time again. He is looking for commitment and recommitment when we fall. Even after Peter denies Jesus three times, Jesus forgives him 1x for every time. Jesus wants our full obedience and are full loyalty, these are things I need to work on in my life to keep me honest and sincere all the time.

Jesus also shows us here even after His Resurrection that He has come to serve – in this case reassurance and a warm breakfast. Jesus also reminds us that we are sent as fishers of men, notice the similarity in this story to another time in their ministry and life together where Jesus provides a large catch. The fields are ripe with harvest, the waters are full of fish, God wants to give us an overflowing and full catch or an abundance of yield in our service to others and in seeking and saving the lost. There is also one unique little detail involving the **“Number 153”** hidden in this story.

**“So, they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish ...
... Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three (153); and although there were so many, the net was not broken.”** [John 21:6b & 11](#)

This number 153 has several mathematical properties, in fact it is very unusual in **Mathematics as all of the following are true:**

153 is the sum of the first 17 integers and is also the sum of the first five positive factorials, $1! + 2! + 3! + 4! + 5!$ The number 153 is associated with the geometric shape known as the **“Vesica Piscis”**. Which is the perfect intersection of three circles each overlapping the other in geometry (3 in 1).

Archimedes, in is **Measurement of a Circle**, referred to this ratio (153/265), as constituting the **“measure of the fish”**, this ratio being an imperfect representation of 1 divided by the square root of 3.

153 as a **Triangular Number**, is the sum of the first 17 integers, and is also the sum of the first five positive factorials: $1! + 2! + 3! + 4! + 5! = 153$. No other number occurs in these sequences before it. The number 153 is also a **Hexagonal Number**, and a truncated triangle number, meaning that 1, 15, and 153 are all triangle numbers. The distinct prime factors of 153 also makes it a **Ruth-Aaron Pair**

153 is also a **Narcissistic Number**: $1^3 + 5^3 + 3^3 = 153$ and it is also the smallest three-digit number which can be expressed as the sum of cubes of its digits. Only five other numbers fit this criteria. It is also a **Friedman Number**, since $153 = 3 \times 51$, and a **Harshad Number** in base 10, being divisible by the sum of its own digits. The **Biggs–Smith Graph** of 153 is a symmetric graph with 153 edges, all equivalent.

The Highest Name For God – ***"I AM THAT I AM"*** called the ***"Tetragrammaton"*** is used in the most in Two Books of the Bible: **1st – Genesis (153 x)** and **2nd – Gospel of John (33 x) – Repeating 21 Instances or 3 Perfect Sets Of 7, with 7 of the 21 Being Archetypes of God.** Remember Jesus keeps telling His Followers that ***He Is the Great I AM!***

Finally, there are 153 known species of fish from the time of Christ onward that may be caught in that area of the world. ***"Wouldn't be interesting if all the fish were different in the net?"***

"It is quite possible Jesus was telling His Disciples yet again that we are to reach everyone and to serve everyone and to call everyone with His Good News: That God Loves Them, That God Forgives Them, & That God Wants To Be In An Everlasting Relationship With Them!"