

The Nazarene Principles

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The Nazarene Principles

The Basic Teachings of Jesus the Nazarene

A Bible study primer

[111 pages]

INTRODUCTION

#1. Almost two thousand years ago, Jesus of Nazareth made the claim, ***'I am the Truth.'***¹ The Nazarene's dearest disciple wrote of his Master, *'The Truth came to be through Jesus Christ.'*² His greatest missionary preached, *'Truth is in Jesus.'*³ Today one third of the earth's population, nearly two billion persons, lay claim to a form of belief in this carpenter from the Middle East. However, few actually have read his teachings as recorded in what are called the Gospels⁴. Fewer still have made any serious study of what Jesus the Nazarene taught. This publication will outline and discuss *the seven principles* as the *'primary doctrine'*⁵ of the Christ' using the Lord's Prayer as a format and outline.

#2. Possibly you are reading this because someone cared enough about you to give it to you. Or, you are a person searching⁶ with an interest in the teachings of Jesus Christ the Nazarene. Not the Nazarene of the great cathedrals, though he can be. Not the Nazarene of the great corporate giants in the Christian world, though he can be. Not the Nazarene of the glossy Christian publishing houses with multi-billion dollar holdings, though he can be. Not the Nazarene of the evangelical satellite television and radio broadcast stations, though he can be. Rather, the humble carpenter of the dusty little town of Nazareth who left his footprints on the beaches of Galilee.

#3. Jesus the Nazarene was a mild-tempered teacher or rabbi who taught simple truths or principles. Those principles he confessed were not his own, but those of the One who sent him, his own heavenly Father. Regarding this the Nazarene taught: ***'The Son is unable to do anything by himself save what he sees the Father doing. My teaching is not mine but of the One who sent me. The one who does the will of God will know whether this teaching is from The God or it is from my own speech. The one who speaks from self seeks personal glory. From myself I do nothing but just***

¹ **TRUTH.** From John (Jn) chapter fourteen, verse six (John 14:6). Scriptural quotations in this manuscript are *italicized* and generally represent a literal rendering of the Greek text. When other translations are referenced they are represented by abbreviated symbols.

² **CHRIST.** See John 1:17.

³ **JESUS.** See Ephesians 4:21.

⁴ **GOSPELS.** Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

⁵ **PRIMARY DOCTRINE.** Or, *'the beginning of the Word of Christ.'* See Hebrews 6:1. Various renderings are: KJV: the principles of the doctrine of Christ; ASV: the first principles; WEY: elementary instruction; KNX: our first lessons.

⁶ **SEARCHING.** See Proverbs 2:4; Matthew 7:7; Acts 17:27.

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as my Father taught me, these teachings I speak. I did not speak from myself but my Father who sent me commanded me what I should say and teach.⁷ In harmony with this, we would point out now that the Nazarene shows his extreme familiarity with the Hebrew Bible or “Old Testament” (OT) by the many score quotations, allusions and paraphrases of Moses, the Psalms and the Prophets.

#4. This is the Nazarene teacher who appealed to the Poor and the Lost and the Repentant and the Seeker. He was a Jewish rabbi who called, **‘Come to me all who labor under burdensome loads and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and learn from me. Because I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is kind and my load is light.’**

⁸ While the Nazarene’s own religion had made 100,000 rules out of the 600 commandments in the Law of Moses, Jesus taught 60 principles or commandments, both in negative and positive forms. (John 14:15; John 15:14)

#5. How could an obscure carpenter’s son from the small village of Nazareth become the greatest person who ever lived? The most influential person in human history? The man upon whose birth date most calendars in the modern world are fixed? The one man other august men -- like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King -- patterned their own non-violent civil rights movements. And do this without speaking a single original word? The answer lies in understanding the fundamentals of *the seven principles* of the Nazarene’s teachings -- the *Nazarene Principles*. This is possible despite how such teachings became so twisted by a thousand religious sects and schisms. What controlling forces or hidden agendas created such distorted doctrines and movements involving billions of people? How should you be affected by these religious movements? To which one should you belong, if any? Or, does it matter?

#6. It is vital, if one is to become an adherent or disciple of the Nazarene and a member of the Nazarene Community of Christian Saints, to begin with several readings of the Mountain Teachings⁹ (or, the *Sermon on the Mount*) recorded in Matthew¹⁰ chapters five to seven. You must become involved yourself in an understanding of Nazarene principles. Jesus taught his disciples: **‘If you love me you will observe my commandments. You are my friends if you do what I command you.’**¹¹ In order to demonstrate this love and friendship for the Nazarene, one must first become familiar with these “commandments” or principles. These Nazarene principles can be learned and understood by all

⁷ **MY TEACHING.** See John 5:19; 7:16-18; 8:28; 12:49.

⁸ **BURDENSOME LOADS.** See Matthew 11:28-30. The Nazarene Rabbi may allude to religious burdens under his own legalistic society. (Compare Galatians 5:1)

⁹ **MOUNTAIN TEACHINGS.** See the online publication *Nazarene Mountain Teachings*.

¹⁰ **MATTHEW.** Some would add Luke chapters six and twelve in what others call *The Plain Teachings*.

¹¹ **COMMANDMENTS.** See John 14:15; 15:12.

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who will humble themselves like a child and truly search.

#7. The Nazarene was a public person who sought out those of child-like faith and humility. He then taught them in simple truth. In one such instance of public praise, the Nazarene spoke to the Lord of heaven and earth in this manner: *'I praise you, Father, because you hide things from the sophist and the intellectual and reveal them to little babies. Yes, Father, because this way pleased you. Everything has been given me by my Father and none fully know the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone fully know the Father except the Son, and those little babies to whom the Son is willing to reveal the Father.'*¹²

#8. Much of Nazarene principles becoming a child by riding yourself of an extravagant personal view and beginning to place others, even strangers, ahead of yourself. In the Christian Bible this is generally called by the English word "love." This love is at the root of the Nazarene's teachings. The apostle Paul, the great evangelist of the Nazarene's Gospel, links love with emptying oneself of Self in what could be described as a Nazarene anthem: *'Therefore, if any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any communion of spirit, if any sympathies and compassions, fill me with joy, that you be like-minded, having the same love and togetherness, minding one thing: do nothing out of contentiousness or empty self-glorification, but in humility consider others over yourself, not looking at Self, but rather consideration for others. Keep this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus: ... he emptied himself and took the form of a slave ... he made himself lowly and became obedient until death.'* (Philippians 2:1-8)

A BIBLE STUDY COURSE

#9. HOW TO STUDY. In the process of learning Nazarene principles you will also learn how to study the Bible and its teachings. So, this is a Bible study aid which may be used personally or to help others to know the Nazarene. Throughout sections of this publication there are questions which may be used in review or in teaching others. Each paragraph is number so you may reference particular portions. There are 388 footnotes to amplify various points and these can be resorted to for confirmation or clarification.

#10. TRANSLATIONS. In the course of the Nazarene principles there are many Biblical verses and texts. These are rendered from the Greek in a literal rendering or paraphrase of the Christian Scriptures. In the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible, either in the Hebrew or the Greek version called the *Septuagint* (LXX), specific translations will be used or compared and these are followed by abbreviations indicating the version.

¹² **BABIES.** See Matthew 11:25-27. There is no harm, emotional or physical, in the Nazarene principles which might adversely affect a trusting child.

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#11. Some inquire which is the best version to use. There is no best version. There are only different versions, all stating with a good degree of accuracy the same fundamentals. In the Old Testament we prefer the Jewish Publication Society's (JPS) *Tanakh* or Bagster's *Septuagint*.(LXX) Overall for notes and marginal cross references we encourage the *New Jerusalem Bible* (NJB). For accuracy: *Rotherham*, the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV), *An American Translation* (AT) by Smith and Goodspeed, or the *New English Bible* (NEB). For a moderately paraphrased modern English version, *Phillips Modern English* (PME). However, in the end any version will do as long as one checks certain words with a lexicon or concordance. All translation has a degree of interpretation.

#12. STUDY MATERIALS. It is helpful to have an interlinear¹³ translation keyed to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*. Most translations are not altogether consistent in rendering¹⁴ certain words from the original and so some standard concordances will not always lead one to a particular search word. For example, the word generally translated by the English word "soul" is *nephesh* in Hebrew and *psyche* in Greek. But, some translators may use a half dozen different words to render these. Using *Strong's* numerical code system the Hebrew word is 5315 and the Greek 5590. By using these numbers you can research the original meanings and the location of these in the Hebrew and Christian Bible. You will then discover with the first occurrence of 5315 that birds and fish are "living souls". (Genesis 1:20)

#13. You may find it helpful to have a few translations for comparisons and some parallel¹⁵ or multi-versions with four to eight columns are available. The important thing is to be able to compare the original, seeking as an accurate rendering as possible. All (all) translations have their bias based on their theological structures and interpretations. None of this is said to give you the idea that all of this is so burdensome. You can discover the important principles or truths by reading the traditional *King James Version* which has served that purpose for over four-hundred years.

#14. HOW TO INTERPET THE BIBLE? The safest and most accurate method is to let other inspired writers interpret the Bible for you. In the process of reading the Nazarene principles you will learn how the Nazarene and his inspired disciples quote and paraphrase many hundreds of verses with sources

¹³ **INTERLINEAR.** A version with the English under the Greek. A translation with the Strong's numerical code is *The Interlinear Bible*, J. P. Green, including both OT and NT. For NT only and without the numerical code: *The New Greek/English Interlinear New Testament* by United Bible Societies; *Diaglott* by Benjamin Wilson, WBTS; *Kingdom Interlinear*, by WBTS.

¹⁴ **CONSISTENT RENDERINGS.** The *New World Translation* by WBTS is very consistent in renderings and is a good tool for concordance and search work.

¹⁵ **PARALLEL.** For example, *The Comparative Study Bible* (Zondervan); *The New Testament from 26 Translations* (Zondervan).

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in the Jewish Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, the “Old Testament.” If one can locate these, then there is a good basis for understanding their inspired view on a particular matter. There are upwards of a thousand source words and phrases drawn from the Hebrew Scriptures including over 300 direct quotations and 1,000 paraphrases. For example, the Bible’s last book, Revelation, or the *Apocalypse*, makes over four dozen references to the prophet Daniel. In this way the Nazarene or other Bible writers give their interpretation.

#15. After this method it is best to rely on the context and the way a certain writer used particular words. Sometimes there are two or more possibilities to an understanding. Here a bias may be formed which would indicate the way a verse most likely (but not definitely) may be understood. It must be admitted that there are some matters which cannot be firmly known at this time.

#16. In all of this a great degree of respect should be shown to others who arrive at a different view. If one finds the need to give reasons for a belief, then keep in mind First Peter (1 Peter 3:15) chapter 3, verse 15, *‘Revere the Christ as Lord in your hearts¹⁶ ... being always ready to make your defense to any one who asks from you a reason for the hope which you cherish¹⁷ ... in a gentle and respectful way.’¹⁸* (Compare Colossians 4:5, 6)

#17. WHY THE BIBLE IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND? Some, if not most, find the Bible difficult to understand. They begin with a desire to read it and dutifully start with Genesis 1:1 but bog down in the “begats” of *Numbers*. For a Christian, Hebrews 1:1 is a good rule to begin with: *‘The God¹⁹, who spoke in different ways in ancient times to our fathers through the Prophets, in these Last Days²⁰ speaks to us through a Son.’* God used to speak by means of the Prophets but now he communicates by means of His Son, Jesus Christ the Nazarene. Where would be a good place to begin reading the Bible then? Why not those “red letters” in the family’s old King James Bible?

#18. There are several reasons for this difficulty in comprehending the Bible: 1) the Bible is a very big book²¹ with a long story written over two millennia covering a period of unknown eons. (Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:14) 2) Because it was written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek there some language idioms that may seem strange or foreign. 3) The syntax or language style of those writers has a different structure or form not easily grasped at first, such

¹⁶ **HEARTS.** This phrase is from TCNT.

¹⁷ **HOPE.** This phrase is from WEY.

¹⁸ **RESPECT.** This phrase is from LB.

¹⁹ **THE GOD.** In Greek there is only the definite article and it often precedes the word for God, *ton theon, tou theou, ho theos*) because in the Roman and Greek world there were other gods from which to differentiate The (Absolute) God. (Compare 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6)

²⁰ **LAST DAYS.** The “last days” on the Jewish nation which experienced the end of its Temple Age in 70 AD. (Hebrews 9:26)

²¹ **BIG BOOK.** 500,000 words, employing 8,674 different Hebrew words, and 5,624 Greek..

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as very long sentences²². 4) The Bible was written by Jews to Jews and entrusted to the care of Jews²³. A knowledge of this background is often helpful in comprehending what is said. 5) The mental conditioning of those who approach the Bible is often biased or even prejudiced to ideas inherited from family, religious background as well as from those subtle half-truths learned through the media. With these in mind let us begin an examination of the Nazarene principles.

THE LORD'S PRAYER AS AN OUTLINE

#19. To learn the Nazarene principles in the teachings of Jesus it is necessary to begin with at least some idea of what Jesus himself believed as a Jew of the First Century. One way to do this is to use what is called the Lord's Prayer as a format. This is a fundamental outline to the overall teachings of the Bible but particularly those basic principles of the Nazarene. There are seven of these in that model prayer. These are the seven Nazarene principles: Father, Name, Kingdom, Will, Bread, Forgiveness, Temptation.

- 1 Our Father in the heavens,**
 - 2 Let your Name be sanctified.**
 - 3 Let your Kingdom come.**
 - 4 Let your Will be done
in heaven and earth.**
 - 5 Give us our Bread for today.**
 - 6 Forgive us our debts
as we forgive our debtors.**
 - 7 Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**
- (Matthew 6:9-11; Luke 11:2-4)

²² **LONG SENTENCES.** Compare Romans 1:1-7.

²³ **JEWS.** See Romans 3:1, 2.

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THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

#20. HOW TO BECOME A CHILD OF GOD. In Matthew 6:9 the Nazarene's model prayer begins with first things first, or the primary teaching of the Bible: the Fatherhood of God. This includes the potential, or possibility, that you can enjoy a close and intimate relationship with God through a spiritual rebirth. For Jesus begins, *'Our Father in heaven.'*

#21. The designation "Father" was one of Jesus' most preferred terms for God. He uses it 45 times in *Matthew* and 109 times in *John*.²⁴ Jesus uses this intimate designation or name "Father" in his own prayers.²⁵

#22. WHO IS THE FATHER? When the Nazarene uses the expression "Father" he means God, or more specifically The God (*ho theos*) in the mode of a special relationship with His worshippers. It is one thing to speak of God in a general sense as the Supreme Being, the Creator, or the Almighty. It is quite another to infer a specific relationship with God the Father, indicating one believes oneself to be a Child of God.

#23. The word "father" occurs over 1,000 times in the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures. Of this total only about a dozen refer to God directly. Most of these verses are in the context which would apply to the foretold Messiah²⁶. It does occur rarely with reference to those other than the Christ²⁷. So, that in the whole body of the Hebrew Bible this relationship with humans is mentioned less than a dozen times. Abraham stands unique as a "Friend of God"²⁸ but nowhere is he called a "Son of God" nor does he ever address God as "Father".

#24. It is the Nazarene who introduces to his world the possibility of becoming a Child of God and entering a Father-Child²⁹ relationship with the Almighty. Though the relationship is foretold by inference, it is now with the Nazarene, that this becomes a true possibility when he introduces his model prayer.

²⁴ **FATHER.** Here is where a concordance is handy to check these occurrences. Note: on occasion there will be a slight difference in the total number for the occurrence of a given word depending on the source of the original language manuscript or the translation used.

²⁵ **PRAYERS.** See John 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24, 25 for the Nazarene's use of "Father" in a private prayer with his apostles rather than the *noma sagrada* YHWH.

²⁶ **MESSIAH.** See an example at Psalms 89:26.

²⁷ **CHRIST.** Compare Psalm 2:7; 103:13; Isaiah 63:16; 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4, 19; 31:9; Malachi 1:6; 2:10.

²⁸ **FRIEND OF GOD.** See Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23.

²⁹ **FATHER-CHILD.** See the *Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (DNTT), volume 1, page 619: "In the concept of the fatherhood of God we see one of the central ideas of primitive Christianity."

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#25. In his famous *Sermon on the Mount* (or, *Mountain Teachings*)³⁰ the Nazarene uses the Divine Name³¹ once in a quotation but uses “God” 6 times and “Father” 17 times. Is it fair to state that Jesus has a clear bias for his preferred designation of the Supreme Being -- “Father.”

#26. ARE ALL CHILDREN OF GOD? All persons are not children of God by virtue of birth. In Moses’ song at Deuteronomy 32.5 he sings in praise as a warning to Israel, *‘They are not Jehovah’s children.’*³² This hymn demonstrates, in the first use of the term “Father” to designate Jehovah, that divine parenthood does not come automatically.

#27. The beloved Apostle of the Nazarene, John, teaches us when he comments, *‘As many as received Jesus, by believing in his name, he gave authority to become children of God, not willed by flesh, but born of God.’*³³ Conversely, those pious religious leaders who claimed Abraham as their natural father asserted, *‘We are not bastards! We have one Father, God!’* But, Jesus replies to them, *‘If God were your Father you would love me for I come from God. You are of your father the Devil³⁴ and it is his passionate lusts you desire.’* They were thus identified as having a different fatherhood by their murderous passions and religious lies.

#28. HOW DOES ONE KNOW? The tone of the Nazarene above is similar to what the great Presbyter John wrote about sixty years later. In First John (1 Jn) the apostle identifies five basics for knowing one is truly born from above, or God-born by a spiritual rebirth.

#29. 1) RIGHTEOUSNESS. We must practice righteousness or be law-abiding, for, *‘Everyone God-born does righteousness.’*³⁵ Anyone claiming to be a Child

³⁰ **MOUNTAIN TEACHINGS.** See the commentaries *The Nazarene’s Mountain Teachings*.

³¹ **DIVINE NAME.** See elsewhere for more notes on this subject. Did Jesus use the Divine Name “Jehovah” or “Yahweh” (YHWH)? In Jesus’ day it was the custom to use “Lord” or “God” in place of the Divine Name (YHWH, or Yehwah; see vowel points at Genesis 2:4; Yahweh, see the NJB at Genesis 2:4; or Yehowah; see vowel points at Genesis 3:14) which was considered too sacred to pronounce. The utterance of YHWH was viewed as a violation of the Commandment, *‘You must not take in vain the Name of Jehovah your God.’* (Exodus 20:7) (See Josephus’ *War of the Jews*) It is interesting that the Jews make an issue with Jesus over supposed violations of the Sabbath but never accuse him of any abuse of the Commandment. Does this indicate the Nazarene never publicly uttered YHWH when quoting the Hebrew Bible, either in its Hebrew or Greek forms? It is thought by some that YHWH occurred in copies of the Jewish Greek *Septuagint* (LXX) in Jesus’ day. A study of the Gospels would show Jesus’ use of YHWH in quotations but virtually never in normal speech. Even in his prayer in a private upper room with his apostles at John chapter 17 the Nazarene does not use YHWH.

³² **JEHOVAH’S CHILDREN.** See DNTT, Vol 1, p 620: “Jesus did not teach the idea that God is the father of all men.”

³³ **BORN OF GOD.** Or, God-born. See John 1:12, 13.

³⁴ **DEVIL.** See John 8:42, 44.

³⁵ **RIGHTEOUSNESS.** See 1 John 2:29. “Righteousness” is the state of being “right” or not breaking “law”. It is different from “good” which goes beyond law to what is morally excellent.

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of God must give evidence of habitual obedience to the commandments of God as revealed through His Son ³⁶, the Nazarene. This one God-born demonstrates a character or disposition which always has a bent toward what is right, just, or correct from God's view. ³⁷

#30. 2) HABITUAL SIN. We must not become habitual sinners, for, *'Everyone God-born is not doing sin.'* ³⁸ Here the negative of the previous point is emphasized. Anyone claiming to be a Child of God and yet persisting in the habitual practice of sin belies such a profession. ³⁹

#31. 3) LOVE. We must be characterized by love (*agape*), for, *'Everyone God-born is loving.'* ⁴⁰ The Child of God is evidenced by a loving nature and a character which conforms to that description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: *'Love is tolerant and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful. Love is not arrogant and never ill-mannered. Love is never concerned with Self and never provoked. Love does not keep a log on hurt and never rejoices over the hurt that befalls others. Love rejoices over Truth. Love bears everything, believes in all, always hopes, and endures anything.'*

#32. Two of the better definitions of this kind of "love" (*agape*) are given in 1 Corinthians 10:24 and Philippians 2:4: *'No one should always be looking after his own welfare ⁴¹ but rather let each one seek the good of others. ⁴² Stop looking after your own interests but practice looking out for the interests of others.'* ⁴³ The scholar William Barclay defines this quality as 'always looking for the highest good of your neighbor.'

#33. 4) BELIEF, OR FAITH. We must believe Jesus the Nazarene is the Christ, or Messiah, for, *'Everyone God-born believes Jesus is the Christ.'* ⁴⁴ When asked what the "works of God" were, Jesus responded, ***'This is the work of God, that you believe in the One sent forth.'*** ⁴⁵ The apostle John wrote, *'The one believing in the Son has everlasting life.'* ⁴⁶ In making that statement John paralleled the idea of belief or faith with obedience to the Son.

The Righteous Man obeys the speed limit; the Good Man stops to help the motorist.

³⁶ **SON'S COMMANDMENTS.** See John 14:15; 15:12, 14.

³⁷ **GOD'S VIEW.** Note Romans 7:13-25. This "righteousness" is despite the tendency of inherited or in-born sin (breaking the law) which sometimes leads the flesh contrary to God's will.

³⁸ **SIN.** See 1 John 3:9. Note that when John speaks of "sin" he often has a particular type in mind. (Compare 1 John 5:16, 17)

³⁹ **PROFESSING.** See 1 John 1:8-10 and Matthew 7:17-23.

⁴⁰ **LOVING.** See 1 John 4:17. Compare 1 John 3:23.

⁴¹ **WELFARE.** This phrase is from the *Williams (WMS)* translation.

⁴² **SEEK GOOD.** This phrase is from *Norie (NOR)* translation.

⁴³ **OTHER'S INTERESTS.** This phrase is from the WMS.

⁴⁴ **CHRIST.** See 1 John 5:1.

⁴⁵ **THE WORK OF GOD.** See John 6:28.

⁴⁶ **BELIEVING IN THE SON.** See John 3:35.

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This subject of belief⁴⁷ or faith in Jesus as the Son of God is a major theme of the Nazarene's preaching as well as the subject in much of the apostolic letters. The one who claims to be God-born must give evidence of such a belief and this usually shows up in speech. Paul wrote, *'I believed, therefore, I spoke.'*⁴⁸ Persons who have a firm conviction will be found speaking about it.

#34. 5) VICTORIOUS! And, finally, we must be victorious over worldly influence because of our faith, for, *'Everyone God-born conquers the world.'*⁴⁹ The Nazarene made a similar claim, ***'I have conquered the world.'***⁵⁰ It is not enough for one to just begin with faith, for conviction and trust must be carried on to complete victory. The Nazarene exhorts, ***'The one who endures completely will be saved.'*** (Matthew 24:13)

#35. These brief basics help one appreciate what is involved in being "authorized" (John 1:12) to become a Child of God. John continues to stress this theme when he writes, *'Everyone begotten of God is not a habitual sinner because the divine sperm abides within and this child cannot continue in habitual sin. This is how to know the difference between the children of God and the children of the Devil: the habitual sinner and the unloving are not from God.'* (1 John 3:9, 10) This is something like inheriting a certain gene from a parent but here the source is God and so the spiritual DNA as it were keeps one from habitual sin which could bring about the Father's permanent displeasure.⁵¹

#36. HOW MANY CAN BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD? It ought to be clear "all" or "everyone" or "as many as" who follow the above and truly "receive" Christ, can be called "sons of God." There are no limitations to this as if there were a pre-selected number. It is open-ended and all real Christians hold this hope dear. *'Everyone,'* John wrote. (John 1:12, 13; 1 John 5:4. Compare Romans 8:14. These verses all use a form of the word *hosoi* which means "everyone."

⁴⁷ **FAITH.** Review the subject of faith" or "belief" in a concordance.

⁴⁸ **I SPOKE.** 2 Corinthians 4:13 quotes Psalm 116:10. Compare Romans 10:10.

⁴⁹ **CONQUER.** See 1 John 5:4.

⁵⁰ **NAZARENE VICTORY!** See John 16:33 and Revelation 3:21.

⁵¹ **FATHER'S DISPLEASURE.** Some may object to the idea that God could withdraw his good pleasure upon one of his children but chapter three of Genesis alone ought to indicate He can and has in the past. We Nazarene Saints do not agree with the doctrine of Predestination nor the popular idea that "once saved, always saved." We do not wish to entertain this subject in length here, other than to quote Will Durant, with whom we agree: "But we shall always find it hard to love the man (John Calvin) who darkened the human soul with the most absurd and blasphemous conception of God (found in the doctrine of predestination) in all the long and honored history of nonsense." (The Story of Civilization, Vol VI, *The Reformation*, page 490) And to cite Paul, *'But I beat my body black and blue, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.'* (1 Corinthians 9:27)

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#37. This endearing form of address, “Father,” is used by those disciples of the Nazarene who wrote their great epistles. Paul uses “Father” four dozen times, almost always with the connecting designation “God” in a formula such as “God the Father.” Peter uses “Father” four times in much the same way. The beloved Apostle John uses it most often, 16 times. Despite this, none of the Nazarene’s disciples ever address God as “my Father” as Jesus himself does. On the other hand the phrase “my God” occurs about 190 times in the Bible with Paul using it several times. (Romans 1:8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Ephesians 1:3; Philippians 4:19; Philemon 4) In harmony with the spirit of the Lord’s Prayer’s opening phrase, “Our Father,” this expression occurs about a dozen times only in the writings of Paul. (Romans 1:7; 4:12; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:16; Philemon 3) It seems clear the term “Father” is very Christian and finds its root in Jesus the Nazarene. Thereafter, “Father” becomes one of the two most popular designations⁵² for the Almighty.

#38. It is Jesus who uses the metaphor or parable of the difficulty of putting “new wine” into old wine skins. (Matthew 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37) If one views the old wine skins as the Jewish receptacle under the Mosaic Law with its Pharisaic distortions, and the New Wine as the teachings of the Nazarene, then here is entirely new “wine” in the form of a new relationship between God and those disciples of the Nazarene. They are not standing below Mount Sinai in the relationship Moses had with YHWH. They are not trembling in fear at the awesome spectacle of Sinai. They have approached an entirely different spiritual mountain as the writer of Hebrews⁵³ puts it, *‘For you have not come to a physical mountain like Sinai, which burned with fire, approaching darkness and blackness, begging not to hear any more words from (Yehowah); but, you have come to Mount Zion, the City of the Living God ... the Father of our spirits.’* (Hebrews 12:9, 18, 19, 22)

#39. What else is involved in this spiritual rebirth is taught by the Nazarene himself when he speaks to the Jewish Elder Nicodemus: ***‘Only if one is born of water and spirit may he enter into the Kingdom. It is a necessity that you be born from above.’***⁵⁴ (John 3:3, 5) Peter and James echo the same: *‘The Father regenerated us into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. You have been regenerated by incorruptible seed through the Word of a living God. As newly generated infants, eagerly crave the pure milk of the Word.’*⁵⁵ *The Father of the Lights wished our birth by the Word of Truth and we became, as it were, the first children of His new family.’*⁵⁶ The later statements by the Nazarene’s disciples emphasize the place God’s Word plays in this

⁵² **DESIGNATIONS.** The other is “God”; or, more precisely, “The God.”

⁵³ **WRITER OF HEBREWS.** This is questioned by many, but others accept Paul as the author. We will accept this and so may refer to Paul as the author later.

⁵⁴ **BORN FROM ABOVE.** The popular phrase “born again” is drawn from this idea.

⁵⁵ **REGENERATED.** “Regeneration” comes from Peter’s pen at 1 Peter 1:3, 23; 2:2.

⁵⁶ **NEW FAMILY.** This final phrase is based on James 1:17, 18 from the *Living Bible*.

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process of rebirth. It cannot occur without some appropriate knowledge of the Bible.

WHO DID THE NAZARENE BELIEVE GOD TO BE?

#40. When the Nazarene speaks of “Our Heavenly Father” who does he have in mind? Any Jew would have understood this expression “Father” to mean God as John 8:41 shows, *‘We have one Father, God.’* The apostle John understood this as he writes, *‘Jesus knew everything had come from the Father. Jesus knew he had come from God and was to return to The God.’* (John 13:3) Jesus himself made it clear that when he spoke of the “Father” he meant God: ***‘For (on the Son of Man) the Father, even The God⁵⁷, put His seal.’*** (John 6:27)

#41. On many occasions Jesus quoted the sacred Jewish texts. For example, note John 6:44, 45: ***‘No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws that one to me. . . In the prophet (Isaiah) it is written, “And they will all be taught of God.’*** If you turn to this quoted verse from Isaiah 54:13 it reads according to the Hebrew Bible, *‘And your children will be taught by Yahweh (Yehowah).’* (NJB) Here the sacred Tetragram, or the four letters YHWH (JHVH), appear in the original and some translations faithfully render it so. It seems clear when Jesus speaks of God he means the Father who is the same as “Yahweh” (or, Jehovah⁵⁸) in the Hebrew Scriptures.

#42. The Nazarene makes other quotes where the divine Name appears about half a dozen times. (Matthew 4:7, 10; 5:33; 22:37, 44; Mark 12:29; Luke 20:42) Let us look at a few of them. In Mark 12:29 Jesus quotes the well-known *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4, 5: *‘Hear, O Israel, Yahweh (YHWH) our God is one Yahweh (YHWH).’* Generally, this is repeated by the Jews: *‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one,’* as the anthem of monotheism. Whether the Nazarene would have uttered the Divine Name (YHWH) (he is not condemned for this by the Jews), or respected the Jewish sensitivity with regard to the Commandment, it demonstrates that Jesus viewed Jehovah of the Old Testament as “our God.”

#43. Again in his reunion with his home synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus boldly quotes from Isaiah 61:1, ***‘The spirit of Lord Yahweh is on me for Yahweh has anointed me.’*** (NJB; compare also Luke 4:16) Whether this little town’s scroll of Isaiah would have had a copy of the *Septuagint* with the Tetragram or a Hebrew edition, it is likely they both contained YHWH in these two locations. The Nazarene applies this text to himself from his seat by inference. Therefore,

⁵⁷ **THE GOD.** Those who wish to confirm the Greek here or elsewhere will find the familiar *ho theos* which is virtually always used of God the Father alone with only one or two questionable exceptions.

⁵⁸ **JEHOVAH.** Compare Psalm 2:1 and 110.1 in the ASV, NJB, NW or NKJV.

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it was Jehovah who anointed him and made him Messiah (Anointed; Christ) ⁵⁹

44. In the wilderness temptation, the Nazarene quotes Moses against the Devil, ***'It is the LORD (YHWH) your God you must worship.'*** (Matthew 4:10; Deuteronomy 5:9) Whether Jesus uttered the Divine Name to Satan the Devil is unknown. It is true the Jews had abandoned the use of the Divine Name and when they came to the sacred four letters YHWH they inserted LORD or GOD. ⁶⁰ That the Name of God is of great importance to the Nazarene is consistent with the Second Principle in the Lord's Prayer which we will examine, ***'Let your Name be sanctified.'*** (Matthew 6:9) In his long prayer with his disciples at the Last Passover, the Nazarene prays, ***'I have made your Name ⁶¹ manifest to the men you gave me.'*** (John 17:6) And, again, Jesus himself hears the heavenly Voice speak in response to the Nazarene's petition: ***'Father, glorify your Name.'*** And in response a Voice came from heaven, ***"I have glorified my Name and will glorify it again."*** (John 12:28) ⁶²

45. Though it cannot be firmly established that Jesus ever used the Name beyond a quotation, these verses above establish the Nazarene's view that his God and Father was the "Jehovah" (YHWH) of the Hebrew Scriptures.

46. The First Principle of the Nazarene's prayer, then, is the revolutionary possibility of becoming a Child of God, a member of God's own Family with all the rights and prospects that such an "heir by God" (Galatians 4:7) would be entitled. Such a hope and privilege ought to arouse the greatest response in heartfelt appreciation of our Heavenly Father.

Let us go on to the Second Principle.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: *The Sanctification of the Name*

#47. That the Father has a Name is revealed in the Lord's Prayer, ***'Let your Name be sanctified.'*** What is that Name? What Name did the Nazarene believe to be uniquely God's? How is to be "sanctified"? The answer lies in the Second of the Nazarene Principles.

#48. As a Jew, the Nazarene knew quite well what God's Name was. ⁶³ Even

⁵⁹ **CHRIST.** From the LXX at Daniel 9:25 *Khristou*. "Messiah" comes from the Hebrew edition of the same text: *Meshicha*.

⁶⁰ **LORD, GOD.** *Adonai* or *Elohim*.

⁶¹ **YOUR NAME.** See John 17:6 but note though Jesus uses the word "name" four times (6, 11, 12, 26) he never actually utters "Jehovah" (YHWH) in this prayer.

⁶² **JOHN.** The Apostle John in his Gospel and three letters cannot be pointed to as a Christian writer who used the Divine Name though some obscure Hebrew (or, Aramaic) translations use YHWH in 5 places in the Gospel (John 1:23; 6:45; 12:13, 38; but not in the context of John 12:28); and not at all in the three letters.

⁶³ **JESUS AND THE "NAME"**. The Nazarene professed a pre-existence with The God before

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as a child he must have been familiar with the story of Moses and the burning bush. This is an account he later quotes against the Sadducees.⁶⁴ This story in Exodus 3:13-15 records Moses' question about God's self designation:

'Suppose the Israelites ask me, "What is His Name? What shall I tell them?" So God said to Moses, "I AM THE ONE WHO IS (Ehyeh asher ehyeh). This is what you are to say to Israel, Yahweh (YHWH) has sent me to you.' This is my Name forever and this is my Memorial throughout all generations to come."

The God of Moses was The Absolute Being. God was not going to change His Name to another.

#49. No one would have to tell Jesus that in Hebrew the four letters which stand for the Name of God are YHWH. (Yod He Waw He) Or, in English with north European roots (where Y is converted to J and W is converted to V) JHVH (Jehovah).⁶⁵ There is no uniform agreement as to the original pronunciation⁶⁶ of this and the various opinions run to dozens or more: Yehwah, Yehowah (Jehovah), Yahweh, etc., etc. Almost everyone admits the true pronunciation is lost.

#50. How did this happen? Who is responsible for losing the true pronunciation of the Divine Name? According to the historian Josephus of the First Century, the Jews never pronounced YHWH but substituted LORD or GOD. The original Hebrew was a language which only used consonants and the vowel sounds were memorized just as they are today in Israel. This is something like "bldg" in

he came to the earth. He would have firsthand knowledge about the Name of God and its correct pronunciation. (John 8:58; 17:5) There is a tradition that Jesus used the Name in his healings, learning the pronunciation by sneaking into the Temple on Passover and heard the high priest utter it.

⁶⁴ **SADDUCEES.** See Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40.

⁶⁵ **JEHOVAH.** Jehovah is found in the KJV four times at Exodus 6:3, Psalm 83:18, Isaiah 12:2 and 26:4 and in some place names. The KJV changed YHWH in nearly 6,000 places to LORD or GOD in capitol letters. Since the KJV has dominated the Protestant Christian world, this lack of Jehovah explains the general unfamiliarity with it. Most Christians cannot answer the question Moses asked: "What is His Name?" (Exodus 3:13) The Catholic *Douay* version contains "Jehovah" once in a footnote on Exodus 6:3. The ASV and Rotherham were among 20th Century versions which restored YHWH. Since WW II several versions have used Jehovah or Yahweh throughout. (ASV, NJB, NWT, NKJV) If the original way to pronounce God's Name was *Yahweh* or *Yehowah* a question arises if this Hebrew way of saying the Name ought to be carried over into other languages? Or, should it be transliterated. For example, in Spanish the Hebrew *Yehowah* is translated *Jehova* but in some regions in Spain this would be more like *ehoba*. Does this not deviate from the more accurate sound of *Yehowah* and would it be necessary to learn to say in that way, rather than deviate? Additionally, the Spanish *Jehova* does not preserve the four letters YHWH. Multiplying this by 2,000 lanugages and one would begin to see the great difficulty. Was it for this reason the exact pronunciation became less and less important?

⁶⁶ **PRONUNCIATION.** Proper nouns or names in the Hebrew containing the Divine Name, such as *Yehoshua* (Joshua, Jesus), have the first two consonants with the vowels Yeho leaving open the possibility of Yehowah (Jehovah). TWOT, Vol 1, page 484: "If the word were spelled with four letters (YHWH) in Moses' day, we would expect it to have had more than two syllables." Thus Ye-ho-wah would be closer than Yah-weh.

"They follow the Lamb no matter where he goes." --- 15

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English. If a word is no longer spoken it is only a matter of time before the vowel sounds are lost. They can only be preserved if someone stresses the need and passes on the secret vowel sounds. About the year 1,000 AD the Jewish scribes began to add vowel points to indicate pronunciation. These differ a bit when it comes to Yehwah (Genesis 2:4), Yehowah (Genesis 3:14), Yahweh, or, even Yehowih. (Ezekiel 2:4) Yahweh is the generally preferred pronunciation as it is used by the *New Jerusalem Bible* throughout. Some insist on “Jehovah” in English but the above is enough to demonstrate there is no clear-cut agreement on this whole matter.

#51. Who is responsible for this supposed loss of the pronunciation of the Divine Name, if it has, indeed, been lost? The Jewish scribes never removed the Name as the King James translators did. The Jewish Masoretic scribes tried to preserve the pronunciation in 1,000 AD with the introduction of vowel points. But, let us suppose for a moment that the Nazarene, realizing the importance of this pronunciation and knowing it perfectly from actual experience with his Father, told his Apostles in private the absolute, correct pronunciation. In addition suppose the Nazarene stressed the need to perpetuate this pronunciation. Then who is responsible for loosing it? Would it not be those apostolic successors who followed in the generations after the death of the original disciples? In other words the Christians ⁶⁷ themselves lost it! Unless . . . all of this is not as vital as some would claim.

#52. The Nazarene’s example, without contest, would be premier in this matter of the use of the Divine Name, YHWH. Even if one were to accept the interpretation of about a score of Hebrew translations of the Gospels where YHWH is used in quotations, Hebraisms, and occasionally in everyday speech (Luke ch 1, 2), it is unlikely Jesus ever used YHWH in common daily speech. What about in his prayers, public and private. We do not find YHWH in either the public example of the Lord’s Prayer nor in that private Passover prayer of John chapter seventeen. All the great men of the Hebrew Scriptures used YHWH in their prayers. Men such as Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Daniel, Nehemiah, and Jonah. (Numbers 14; Deuteronomy 32, 33; Joshua 7; Judges 5; 2 Samuel 22; 1 Kings 18; 2 Chronicles 6:41; Nehemiah 9:5; Daniel 9:9; Jonah 1:3) The expression, “O, Jehovah,” occurs many times in prayers and hymns and yet the Nazarene never does this. If one were to imitate the Lord Jesus in this matter, then it would not be necessary to make “Jehovah” a part of every prayer.

#53. This does not mean the Divine Name is unimportant. This Tetragram (Four Letters) occurs over 6,000 times in the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures. In the Fourth Century BC when the Greek-speaking Jews under the

⁶⁷ **CHRISTIANS.** Some view the body of Christians as a “little flock” (Luke 12:32) or a “faithful and discreet slave.” (Matthew 24:45) If the pronunciation was lost, the responsibility falls to them.

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rule of Alexander the Great began to translate the Hebrew text in what was becoming the international language of common Greek, they came upon some difficulty. There is no way to transliterate the Hebrew YHWH into Greek ⁶⁸ as it lacks the correct letters to make the translation complete. So, the seventy scribes who produced what is now called the *Septuagint* (LXX), and from which Jesus and Paul quoted, left the four letters YHWH untranslated. The Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh* does something similar at Exodus 6.3: *'I did not make myself known to them by My name YHWH.'* ⁶⁹ Thus, when reading such LXX editions, the Divine Name YHWH would have stuck out clearly when reading.

#54. For example, or by way of illustration, if the LXX were the edition at the little synagogue in Nazareth when Jesus stood up to read Isaiah chapter 61, verse 1, he would have before him: *'Pneuma YHWH ep eme.'* Did he pronounce the YHWH or did he respect the Jewish custom and say *ha-'A-dhohn'* (the [true] LORD) instead? If he had uttered YHWH in that crowded synagogue of Jews, what would have been the reactions to what they considered a violation of the Commandment, *'Never abuse the Name?'* (Exodus 20:7) The initial reaction is recorded in Luke 4:22, *'There was a general stir of admiration; they were surprised that words of such grace should fall from his lips.'* (NEB) This does not seem the reaction of a people upset over a blasphemous use of YHWH. True, a bit later in reaction to further words (not using YHWH) they are ready to stone him, but this seems more for his criticism of them. (Luke 4:23-30)

#55. In addition to this, no where else in the Gospels do we ever find the Nazarene criticized, censored, cautioned or condemned for using YHWH either in quotations or everyday speech. Given the frequent and notorious complaints over violations of the Sabbath it seems unusual there were no similar condemnations for a more serious commandment. (Matthew 12:1-15) Unless, the Nazarene respected the Jewish conception of the Commandment and followed their custom. ⁷⁰ If one argues that this might be the case only in public, then we offer John chapters 13 to 17 as evidence that the Nazarene did not use the Divine Name even in a private, closed meetings with his Apostles in the upper-room.

⁶⁸ **GREEK.** TWOT, Vol 1, page 484: "The pronunciation *yahô* would be favored by the later Greek form *iao* found in the Qumran Greek fragments. . . Theodoret in the fourth century A.D. states the Samaritans pronounced it *iabe*. Clement of Alexandria (early 3d century A.D.) vocalized it as *iaoue*."

⁶⁹ **NOT.** Or, possibly a rhetorical question: *'also as respects my name Jehovah did I not make myself known to them?'* (NWT ftn) James Washington Watts (1977), *'by my name Yahweh I had not made myself thoroughly understandable to them.'*

⁷⁰ **CUSTOM.** In all his lengthy Sermon on the Mount to a mixed public, the Nazarene may have used YHWH in his allusion to Numbers 30:3 or Deuteronomy 23:23, *'You must keep your oaths to YHWH.'* Judging from the above and any lack of criticism (Matthew 7:28) he may not have used it at all but uttered something more like *ha-'A-dhohn'*.

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#56. The Divine Name first appears in Genesis 2:4 as Yehwah. Abraham knew the Name as did the other Patriarchs. It is during the life of Moses when God first revealed the meaning of his personal Name. Exodus 3:13-15 records this in the account about the Burning Bush when Moses is on Mount Sinai. In this account God explains what YHWH means. In Hebrew this is *Eh-yeh' Asher' Eh-yeh*. It is understood to mean: 'I AM THE ONE WHO IS.' (Or, I Am the One Who Exists; I AM THE BEING) Other versions render this: Rotherham: "I-Will-Become-
Whatsoever-I-Please; Moffatt and Leeser: I-Will-Be-That-I-Will-Be; KJV: I-Am-What-I-Am.

#57. The Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh* has a footnote on this point: "*The name YHWH (traditionally read Adonai "the LORD") is here associated with the root hayah "to be."* And, so, *The New Brown- Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon* states on page 218: "But most take it as ... *the one who is: i.e. the absolute and unchangeable one ... the existing, ever-living.*"

#58. However, when, over one thousand years later, the Greek-speaking Jews began to translated this from Hebrew they left the Tetragram (YHWH) in its original forms as YHWH in Hebrew. This can be seen in the LXX^p of the First Century BC fragment and The Aleppo Codex of the Tenth Century AD in Hebrew. These Jewish translators of Alexander the Great's period did translate the meaning of the Name. For the Hebrew ⁷¹ they used *ego eimi ho on* which is usually translated: "the One who is." Also, they rendered YHWH as *ho On* or "the One who is." This same designation is used by the apostle John in Revelation ⁷² 1:4, 8; 11:17; 16:5, when he uses the formula for God Almighty: "the One who is and the One who was and the One who is coming." So, in his own way John renders the meaning of the Divine Name (YHWH) in Greek even as the Septuagint (LXX) did at Exodus 3:14.

#59. The Nazarene never used this designation *ho On* as a term for God according to the Greek Gospels. He preferred the title, or name, "The God" and "Father." Overall there is a preference for "The God" (*ho theos*) with the exception of the Gospel of John where "Father" is the name of choice, 120 times to "God" 90 times. The Gospel of Luke is weighted in the other direction. The Gospels of Matthew and Mark favor "God" over "Father." But, all things considered, "Father" is Jesus' preferred designation for the Supreme Being, The Absolute God.

⁷¹ **HEBREW.** Strongs # 1961.

⁷² **REVELATION.** *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* Vol 1, page 214 comments on this observation: "Most likely the name should be translated something like 'I am he who is,' or 'I am he who exists' as reflected by the LXX's *ego eimi ho on*. The echo of this is found surely in the NT, Revelation 1:8."

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#60. There is another word used once by the Nazarene in Mark 14:36, a unique occurrence of a tender term for God the Father, *Abba*. It is an Aramaic loan word which was among the first learned by a child and translates roughly to the Latin *Papa*. It literally means “the Father” or, “my, Father.” *The Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol 1, pages 614-15 makes these observations: “*Abba* ... a word derived from baby-language. ... 2. No where in the entire wealth of devotional literature produced by ancient Judaism do we find *Abba* being used as a way of addressing God. The pious Jew knew too much of the great gap between God and man (Ecclesiastes 5:1) to be free to address God with the familiar word used in everyday family life. . . Jesus addressed God in his prayers as ‘My Father’. In doing so he made use of the warm, familiar term *Abba* used in the everyday life of the family. . . (Luke 11:2 ff.) . . . This means that when Jesus gave his disciples the Lord’s Prayer, he gave them authority to follow him in addressing God as *Abba*, and so gave them a share in his status as Son. . . Accordingly, Paul uses in the invocation *Abba*, dear Father, clear evidence of our adoption through Christ as sons.” (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6) Thus those who pray the Lord’s Prayer, and address God as Father, must, of necessity, be His children.

#61. NAME SANCTIFIED. That the Divine Name was to be held holy, sanctified or treated with special respect is shown by the use of the word-group “sanctify” over 130 times in the Bible. This holiness is first stressed in the Ten Commandments, ‘*You shall not misuse⁷³ the name of Yahweh.*’ It is this commandment which caused the Jews to refrain from uttering the *noma sagrada*.

#62. One may wonder why the Name of God needs to be “sanctified”? There are two reasons for this. First, Satan, the Arch Enemy of God, raised an issue in the Garden of Eden (later highlighted in the book of *Job*) which called into question God’s honest dealings with humans. According to Job 1:9-11 and Job 2:4, 5 Satan inferred that humans only worshipped God for what they could get out of it. This is still a contemporary charge against Christians: that heaven is their only motivation. This was, and still is, an accusation which reproached God and besmirched His name. The Bible is an account how God purposes to correct this deviation and thus ‘*sanctify His great Name.*’ (Isaiah 29:23; Ezekiel 36:23)

#63. Secondly, the very People of God, the Jews, had brought great reproach upon the Name of their God Yahweh, much the same as historical “Christians” have reproached the name of Christ during the last 19 centuries. About the Jews’ deviation, Paul writes when he quotes Isaiah, ‘*The Name of God is blasphemed by the Gentiles because of you People.*’ (Romans 2:24; Isaiah

⁷³ **MISUSE.** Or, abuse, treat as worthless, use in vain. If the NJB’s translation with “misuse” is close to the mark, then one can see why very religious Jews might have become wary of even the pronunciation.

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52:5) It was as true in Isaiah's day as it was in Paul's, 700 years later. There was a monumental record of reproach which needed to be punished and corrected. It is very similar to the unholiness heaped on God's Name and the name of Christ throughout the Dark Ages into the Twentieth Century. One cannot find an inquisition, a crusade, a slave trade, a false prophecy, or a war, which did not involve "Christians" or so-called worshippers of Jehovah. This very record is what turns most persons away from Christ and his God, Yahweh or Jehovah.

#64. The subject of the sanctification of God's Name was not original with the Nazarene. It is a reoccurring theme throughout the Bible. In the Book of *Ezekiel* alone it is mentioned over six dozen times. Ezekiel 36:23 is an example: *'I shall certainly sanctify my great Name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you (Israel) profaned in the midst of them (the Gentiles); and the nations will have to know that I am Yehowih.'*⁷⁴ With regard to the reason for judgment on Moses, Numbers 20:12 has Yehowah declaring: *'Because you did not show faith in me to sanctify me before the eyes of the sons of Israel.'* And, again Yehowah warns Israel when He says, *'Instruct Aaron and his sons to be scrupulous about the sacred donations that the Israelite people consecrate to Me, lest they profane My holy name.'* (Leviticus 22:2, JPS) From these verses it can be observed that lack of faith and questionable religious sacrifices are ways of failing to sanctify God's Name.

#65. SUMMARY. In review, then, Jesus the Nazarene taught about God, who as the Father, is the same as Yahweh of the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul and the other disciples who wrote after Jesus do the same thing. There are well over one hundred quotations in the Christian Bible where the Name of God appears in original Hebrew sources. Thus, God the Father has a Name and the Nazarene stresses the need for all of God's children to pray for its sanctification. Nothing in word or deed must be done to make this Name to appear worthless or in any way abused so that others would spit on God. What we do and how we act reflects on the Name of God. Particularly, a major way to sanctify the Name of the Father is by faith.

#66. DOES GOD EXIST? *"God exists,"*⁷⁵ is what is implied by the Greek of Exodus 3:14 and Revelation 1:4, *ho On* (the One who is). Jesus the Nazarene never indulges in any arguments about the existence of God. He simply states with complete conviction, ***'The One who sent me is real.'*** (John 7:28 NW) One imagines the wry smile and penetrating gaze of the Nazarene if he were asked, "Does God exist?" To the Christ the existence of God is a given. It would almost seem absurd that Jesus would even consider such a query. However, given our times a few words on this subject of God's existence seem

⁷⁴ **YEHOWIH.** Strongs # 3069.

⁷⁵ **GOD IS.** See Hebrews 11:6.

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in order.

#67. Perhaps the very fact we can ask the question is the strongest proof God exists. Because, if God did not exist, then we could not conceive of such a thing, for we would stand as the absolute on this planet -- the top of the food chain -- and we would not think of anything greater than ourselves. One philosopher put it this way: "God is that of which there is nothing greater."

#68. Some moderns deny the existence of God and yet insist there must be life elsewhere in the Universe. For this conviction they have no proof whatsoever and therefore hold this belief based on faith. Another consideration is the probability of the existence of God as a 50/50 possibility. Since the only absolute in life is death, there is a 50/50 possibility that God is involved with any prospects of life after death. These are outstanding odds. Some find it extremely interesting that some scientists and philosophers will argue passionately that there is no evidence for the existence of God and they as scientists must stick to the evidence; and at the same time, these same thinkers adamantly assert that they has to be life on other planets somewhere in the vast universe, though they have no evidence at all for this belief. Is this their Faith?

#69. Belief in God or gods and spirits was completely natural in recorded history. Indeed, many see evidence which points to monotheism (worship of one God) to have preceded polytheism (worship of many gods) as the Bible has it. Lincoln Barnett wrote for *Life* magazine (Dec 12, 1955) in *The Dawn of Religion*: "Early man could only imagine some all-powerful and supernatural volition behind such ordered phenomena as the daily rising and setting of the sun, the cycle of the seasons and the nightly rotation of the starry celestial sphere. He could only tremble in fear and wonder at the unpredictable paroxysms of the natural world-the sudden rifting of the earth and the blinking scintillation of lightning in the opaque sky. Here surely lay the origin of his belief in the supernatural. . . ."

#70. "But early man must have been aware of equally mysterious and alarming occurrences that took place not in the exterior world but within himself. What, for example, could he think of sleep? The difference between sleep and consciousness suggested that there existed within him something which transcended his body, something which could go away and, in dreaming, lead an active life of its own, traveling wondrously through space and time. And finally, death confronted man with the ultimate mystery. When any individual died the vital attributes of his body disappeared-warmth, movement, speech, breath, volition. Where did they go? Since the flesh itself disintegrated, the body could only be a dwelling place for the spirit that inhabited it in life."

#71. There seems no period when God did not exist in the minds of people

"They follow the Lamb no matter where he goes." --- 21

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living on this planet. One estimate for the number of those who believe in God in 1997 is 95%. There has never been an atheistic people or nation in recorded history. Only in the last one hundred years has atheism been forced upon whole nations as a political ideology. Interestingly, in recent years when subjugated peoples had their freedom restored, millions openly returned to a public belief in God. Why is it that by nature, when given their freedom, people will normally want to believe in God? It is only when political tyranny (or moral choices) forbid open belief in God that a fearful national majority accept atheism publicly while privately holding to a belief in God.

#72. It is interesting to ask an atheist or agnostic, "In the last three hundred years who have been recognized among the greatest scientists?" Surely, it is not unfair to list Newton and Einstein as preeminent. Both great thinkers publicly expressed belief in God. ⁷⁶ What would an atheist say to set these two

⁷⁶ **NEWTON, EINSTEIN.** Newton wrote one million words on theology and the Bible, as many as he penned on the sciences. Einstein said, "I do not believe God places dice with the cosmos"; and, "It is not beyond my comprehension to conceive a Supreme Intelligence perpetuating Himself throughout all eternity." "I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatever." (Newton) Other comments by scientists include: *New Scientist*: "The lay view persists-of scientists having 'disproved' religion. It is a view that commonly expects scientists to be nonbelievers; that Darwin put the last nails in God's coffin; and that a succession of scientific and technological innovations since have ruled out the possibility of any resurrection. It is a view that is wildly wrong."-May 26, 1977, p. 478. "Natural order was not invented by the human mind or set up by certain perceptive powers. . . . The existence of order presupposes the existence of organizing intelligence. Such intelligence can be none other than God's."-*Dieu existe? Oui* (Paris, 1979), Christian Chabanis, quoting Pierre-Paul Grassé, p. 94. *The Origin of Species* (Charles Darwin): ". . . view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one." Thomas Edison: "After years of watching the processes of nature, I cannot doubt the existence of a Supreme Intelligence." Pierre-Paul Grassé, a member of the French Academy of Science, states: "Natural order was not invented by the human mind or set up by certain perceptive powers. No, it is a reality that was comprehended perfectly by such physicists and mathematicians as Planck and Einstein. The existence of order presupposes the existence of organizing intelligence. Such intelligence can be none other than God's." Dr. Robert Jastrow, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, observed: "In the face of such evidence, the idea that there is a God who created the universe is as scientifically plausible as many other ideas." *Science News* observed: "Contemplation of these things disturbs cosmologists because it seems as if such particular and precise conditions could hardly have arisen at random. One way to deal with the question is to say the whole thing was contrived and lay it on Divine Providence." *New York Journal-American*. It stated: "For many years, scientists were generally believed to be atheists. Yet today, . . . when science is almost a way of life, this theory is no longer valid. This week, eight of the nation's outstanding men of science were asked by the N.Y. *Journal-American* to give their views on this question: 'Do scientists believe in God?' From their answers, one basic concept shows up clearly: Some Divine Power, beyond control of man, has shaped the universe. Most of these scientific men first stated their feelings on this subject years ago. None have since seen any reason to change their views." Wernher von Braun, rocket expert, and one of the eight referred to, replied: "Why do I believe in God? Simply stated, the main reason is this: Anything as well ordered and perfectly created as is our earth and universe must have a Maker, a master designer. Anything so orderly, so perfect, so precisely balanced, so majestic as this creation can only be the product of a Divine Idea. There must be a Maker; there can be no other way." Dr. William Swann, a noted authority

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august gentlemen straight?

#73. Those propositions which are inferred in the Scriptures for God's existence are simple and straightforward arguments: *'Raise your eyes heavenward and look. Who created all of this?'* (Isaiah 40:26) *'Ever since the creation of the world God's invisible nature, His eternal power and divine character, have been clearly perceived by what He has made.'* (Romans 1:20) *'For every house has a builder and the Builder of the universe is God.'* (Hebrews 3:4)

#74. These are arguments based on design. If one finds a piece of stone in the dirt and upon examination it is obvious this is chipped precisely out of flint to form an arrowhead, it is not too difficult to see design was involved and not mere chance.⁷⁷ Though one cannot see the maker of this arrowhead, is it too difficult to reason that it was attached to a shaft and this was propelled by a bow used by an archer who had purpose and will? Where there is design, there is purpose; and where there is purpose, there is intelligence; and where there is intelligence, there is a mind; and where there is a mind, there is a person.

#75. The word "person" with regard to God does not mean a human or anything of the sort. What God is, well, that is an unknown.⁷⁸ It is easier to say what God is not from a Scriptural view. He is not fleshly or human. The Nazarene put it simply: ***'God is a spirit (and) ... a spirit does not have flesh and bones.'*** (John 4:24; Luke 24:39)

DID THE NAZARENE BELIEVE HIMSELF TO BE GOD?

#76. It is appropriate to raise this question here because many have come to believe Jesus taught he was God in the flesh. While respecting their view and recognizing them as our Christian brethren, we would politely suggest another view: Jesus was a complete man, the Son of God. At no time did Jesus ever say, "I am God," though this phrase spoken by Yahweh is found in the Old Testament. (For details on this subject, including the Trinity, see the online publication ***De Trinitatis Erroribus***, a complete discussion of the Biblical view,

on cosmic radiation: "The man of science likes to separate fact from speculation. Now viewing the universe as a whole, I cannot escape the fact that it is of intelligent design. By this I mean that the universe shows on a magnificent scale the same kind of interrelationship of its working and efficiency of planning as an engineer strives to achieve in his smaller undertakings." Dr. Warren Weaver, one of America's foremost mathematicians, once stated in a popular monthly magazine: "Every new discovery of science is a further revelation of the order that God has built into His universe. God gains in dignity and power through manifestations of His reason and order."

⁷⁷ **CHANCE.** See the work on probabilities in the book *Human Destiny* by Lecomte du Nouy (1949).

⁷⁸ **UNKNOWN.** John 5:37, ***'You have never seen the Father's form.'*** (Or, "shape" KJV; "appearance" (LAM); "figure" (NWT))

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as well as commentaries by scholars and the early church fathers.)

#77. The Nazarene was well aware of what the Hebrew Scriptures said on the subject of this word, “God,” or “gods.” For example, he must have known Deuteronomy 10:17 said, ‘*Yehowah your God is God of gods and Lord of lords.*’ From this he would have known that there were other “gods” over whom Yehowah was The God, and other “lords” over whom Yehowah was The Lord. Jesus knew and quoted those texts which applied to him as the Messiah. For example, he would have known the Messiah would say to Yehowah: ‘*You are my Father, my God.*’ (Psalm 89:26) Also, that Messiah would call out at his death, ‘*My God, my God!*’ (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46) He himself quoted Psalm 110:1, ‘*Yehowah said to my lord,*’ and applied the “my lord” to himself by inference as the son of David. (Matthew 22:43; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42) Jesus could not be this “Father,” “Yehowah,” or “God.”

#78. Throughout the Gospels the Nazarene is seen praying to God: at his baptism, in public, at the Last Passover, in the garden of agony and at his execution. (Luke 3:21; John 12:27, 28; 17:1-26; Luke 22:40-46; Matthew 27:46. Compare Hebrews 5:7) Jesus used expressions which showed he considered himself lesser than God: as His servant, the Sent One. Jesus says, ‘***The Father is greater than I.***’ (John 14:28) The Nazarene exhibited limitations unknown to God: hunger, tiredness and lack of knowledge. (John 14:6 and Isaiah 40:28; Matthew 4:2; 21:18; 24:36; Mark 13:32) Also, he is shown being tempted, something that cannot happen to God. (Matthew 4:1 and James 1:13 KJV)

#79. Further, twice we have the Nazarene’s own answers to the questions of whether he was God or considered himself equal to God. Both, interestingly, in the Gospel of John. In John 5:18-47 there is a discussion between Christ and the Jews in which they desire to kill Jesus because, as John puts it, ‘*(Jesus) called God his own Father, making himself equal to God.*’ Jesus has full opportunity to clarify the matter. The answer Jesus gave makes it easy to understand he did not consider himself God or God’s equal: ‘***The Son can do nothing from himself.***’ May we suggest a paraphrase: “The Son is not the First Cause of anything.” It would be impossible to say, “God can do nothing of Himself,” otherwise the universe would have no beginning, for God would be incapable of being the First Cause. Jesus continues in verse 30, ‘***I am unable to do anything from myself.***’ Such words could never come from God. Jesus Christ is no Originator or Prime Mover.

#80. Again and again in this section, as well as the three chapters which follow in John, the Nazarene simply states: ‘***I know nothing save what God the Father has taught me.***’ (John 5:25, 42, 44; 6:27, 33, 46) Jesus made it clear that when he speaks of the Father he means God. In John 7:16, 17, he says: ‘***My teaching is not mine but belongs to the One who sent me. If anyone***

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wants to do His will, he will know whether this teaching of mine is from The God⁷⁹ or from myself. The Nazarene's answer to the Jews regarding any equality with God is, simply, "No."

#81. On another occasion, the secularized Jews accused Jesus, *'We stone you, though being a man, ⁸⁰ you make yourself God.'*⁸¹ (John 10:33) The Nazarene has another opportunity to make the truth clear: "Are you God?" He gives his answer in verses 34-36, ***'Is it not written*** (in Psalm 82:6), ***(Yehowah) said, "You are gods"?*** ***If He called those (Israelite judges) "gods", do you say to me, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, "You blaspheme," because I said, "I am the Son of God?"*** What better way could Jesus choose in answering their false charge of being God, or a god, by effectively saying, "No!"

#82. Some will ask about the Trinity but many scholars acknowledge: **the Bible does not mention or teach a Trinity.**⁸² **The idea of the Trinity developed in the centuries following the death of Jesus' apostles.** *The Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Volume 2, page 84 agrees with this statement: "The NT

⁷⁹ **THE GOD.** The Greek is *tou theou*, of the god.

⁸⁰ **A MAN.** The Greek is *anthropos* (anthropod, anthropoid, a man) and is the same word Paul uses of Christ. (Romans 5:14, 15, 19; 1 Timothy 2:5)

⁸¹ **GOD.** This may be rendered "a god" as the *theon* lacks the article.

⁸² **TRINITY.** Note the following statements regarding the Trinity.

The New Encyclopædia Britannica: "Neither the word Trinity, nor the explicit doctrine as such, appears in the New Testament, nor did Jesus and his followers intend to contradict the Shema in the Old Testament: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord' (Deut. 6:4). . . . The doctrine developed gradually over several centuries and through many controversies. . . . By the end of the 4th century . . . the doctrine of the Trinity took substantially the form it has maintained ever since."-(1976), *Micropædia*, Vol. X, p. 126.

The New Catholic Encyclopedia: "The formulation 'one God in three Persons' was not solidly established, certainly not fully assimilated into Christian life and its profession of faith, prior to the end of the 4th century. But it is precisely this formulation that has first claim to the title *the Trinitarian dogma*. Among the Apostolic Fathers, there had been nothing even remotely approaching such a mentality or perspective."-(1967), Vol. XIV, p. 299.

The Encyclopedia Americana: "Christianity derived from Judaism and Judaism was strictly Unitarian [believing that God is one person]. The road which led from Jerusalem to Nicea was scarcely a straight one. Fourth century Trinitarianism did not reflect accurately early Christian teaching regarding the nature of God; it was, on the contrary, a deviation from this teaching."-(1956), Vol. XXVII, p. 294L.

Nouveau Dictionnaire Universel, "The Platonic trinity, itself merely a rearrangement of older trinities dating back to earlier peoples, appears to be the rational philosophic trinity of attributes that gave birth to the three hypostases or divine persons taught by the Christian churches. . . . This Greek philosopher's [Plato, fourth century B.C.E.] conception of the divine trinity . . . can be found in all the ancient [pagan] religions."-(Paris, 1865-1870), edited by M. Lachâtre, Vol. 2, p. 1467.

John L. McKenzie, S.J., *Dictionary of the Bible:* "The trinity of persons within the unity of nature is defined in terms of 'person' and 'nature' which are G[ree]k philosophical terms; actually the terms do not appear in the Bible. The trinitarian definitions arose as the result of long controversies in which these terms and others such as 'essence' and 'substance' were erroneously applied to God by some theologians."-(New York, 1965), p. 899.

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does not contained the developed doctrine of the Trinity. The Bible lacks the express declaration that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of equal essence and therein an equal sense God himself. . . It also lacks such terms as *trinity*.” It is left to the reader to examine any secular or religious encyclopedia or commentary on this subject for the details. A rebuttal of the precise arguments and so called “proof texts” for a Trinitarian view of God similar to that held by the Egyptians and Greeks is left to another time. [See the online publication [De Trinitatis Erroribus](#) for a thorough discussion of the Trinity.]

WHO WAS JESUS THE NAZARENE?

#83. The Pre-existent Logos. Simply put, who did he say he was? The Gospels have him, in one form or another, teaching he was the Son of God (Matthew 16:20, 23; 26:63, 64; John 4:25, 26; 10:36) or the Messiah (Psalm 2:1; Luke 22:67) or the Son of Man. (Daniel 7:13; John 6:62; Ephesians 4:9, 10) It is left to the last apostolic writer, John, to explain in Greek terms the details of the Nazarene’s pre-existence. In his Last Passover prayer, Jesus spoke to his God: ***‘Father, I have glorified you on earth having finished the work you gave me to do. Now glorify me beside you with the glory I had before the world was.’*** (John 17:4, 5; compare John 6:62)

#84. This is nearly identical to John’s own commentary in the Prologue to his Gospel: *‘In the beginning the Logos was, and the Logos was with The God,⁸³ and the Logos was god.⁸⁴ This one⁸⁵ was in the beginning with The God. All things came to be through⁸⁶ this one and without this one not a single thing came to be. The world came to be through him.’* (John 1:1-3, 10) With the use of the Greek *logos* John addresses himself to that Platonic world of the Hellenists. A modern rendering of this designation, “the Logos,” might be “Spokesman” or “Mouthpiece.” It is similar in idea to the relationship between Moses and Aaron when before Pharaoh (Exodus 4:15; 7:1) where Moses became “god” and Aaron his “spokesman.” It is interesting to note in the

⁸³ **THE GOD.** In the Greek the definite article is present: *ton theon*, the god, or The God.

⁸⁴ **GOD.** Without the article, *theos*. DNTT, Vol 2, page 81: “The fact there is no definite article before *theos* here has been taken to imply that the Word may be understood as being some kind of divine being but not in the fullest sense of the term.” Philip B. Harner: “with an anarthrous predicate preceding the verb, are primarily qualitative in meaning. They indicate that the *logos* has the nature of *theos*. . . Perhaps the clause could be translated, ‘the Word had the same nature as God.’” (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1973, pp. 85, 87) John L. McKenzie, S.J., *Dictionary of the Bible*: “Jn 1:1 should rigorously be translated ‘the word was with the God [= the Father], and the word was a divine being.’”-(Brackets are his. Published with nihil obstat and imprimatur.) (New York, 1965), p. 317. Various renderings are: AT: “the Word was divine”; Mo, “the Logos was divine”; NTIV, “the word was a god.” Ludwig Thimme: “God of a sort the Word was.” Also, “a god”: Wilson, Newcombe, Schultz, Schneider, Becker.

⁸⁵ **THIS ONE.** Since the previous expression mentioned the Logos was “god” this could read: *‘This (god) was in the beginning with The God.’*

⁸⁶ **THROUGH.** The Greek *di* may mean “by the agency of.” Compare 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Hebrews 1:2.

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Jewish Greek LXX the same *pros ton theon* of John 1:1 is used. That is, someone facing toward another, a superior, to receive instructions.

#85. Clearly, in John 1:1 the Logos was with The God (*pros ton theon*, Exodus 4:16) and John states the universe came into existence through (Greek, *di, dia*, 1 Corinthians 8:6) so it is impossible to conclude the Logos was God Almighty or the Father. What was the status of the Logos before his human existence? “God,” or we might say “god” or “divine” as it is literally in the Greek lower case. This is “god” either representationally as in the case of Moses with Aaron (Exodus 4:15; 7:1); or, “god” qualitatively, as in one of the “gods” of whom Jehovah is “God.” (Deuteronomy 10:17)

#86. This linguistic confusion is brought about because modern English uses the old Anglo-Saxon word “god” which first means the Supreme Being. This is the proper result of over a 1,000 years of Christian monotheism in the English language. The word “god” in English literally comes from a root meaning “to call for help.”⁸⁷ But, in Hebrew and Greek the words from which “god” is derived have degrees of meaning. The Greek *theos* is from a root for run or move for the Greeks thought the gods were from the moving stars. In Hebrew Scripture (as Jesus already taught in John 10:34) the word-group *elohim* (god) is applied to men, angels⁸⁸ and idols. In its absolute and most heightened sense “God” means the Almighty Being, the prime Mover. And, Jesus Christ the Nazarene is His Son.

#87. Paul makes it clear in his quotation of Psalm 8:5 at Hebrews 2:8, 9 that the Son was “less than god (*elohim*)” in the Hebrew, and “less than angels” in the Greek text when he walked to beaches of Galilee.

#88. THE GOD OF JESUS. Nearly two dozen times an expression indicating the glorified Lord Jesus has his own God appears in the Christian Scriptures in forms like “the God of our Lord” or “my God.” (Ephesians 1:3, 17; Revelation 3:12) This is never reversed where Jehovah or the Father addresses Jesus as his God.

#89. THE FIRST CREATION. In Revelation, or *Apocalypse*, the Risen Christ describes himself, ***‘The beginning of the creation of The God.’*** (Revelation 3:14) This is similar to Paul’s own view: *‘The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, because in him were created all things heavenly and earthly, visible and invisible, everything was created through him*

⁸⁷ **HELP.** As when a drowning person calls for “Help!” to a lifeguard. The lifeguard is “god” in the old English sense. In J Ayto’s, *Dictionary of Word Origins*: “.. probably from an Indo-European *ghut-*. This may be related to Sanskrit *havate* & Old Church Slavonic *zovetu*, both meaning ‘call’; and if so the underlying etymological meaning of ‘god’ would be, ‘that which is invoked.’”

⁸⁸ **ANGELS.** See Psalm 82:1, 6; Deuteronomy 32:43 LXX. Compare Acts 23:4 with Exodus 22:28 LXX. Note the NJB footnote on Psalm 45:7.

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and for him.' (Colossians 1:15, 16) In Hebrews 1:1-4, Paul writes his own Prologue which John must have known when he penned his at John 1:1-3. However, unlike John, Paul addresses a Hebrew audience in describing this Agent of Creation: *'In many times and in many ways The God spoke to the fathers by the prophets. In these last days The God speaks to us by a Son, whom He appointed heir of everything, through whom He made the Ages. This Son is the reflection of the glory of The God and the exact imprint of the substance of The God. The Son upholds all things by his dynamic word. After the Son made a cleansing of our sins he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels.'*⁸⁹

#90. All of these verses which describe the pre-existence of Jesus Christ as the creative Agent, the Word, agree with the Nazarene's own prayer at John 17:5, ***'Father, glorify me beside You with the glory I had beside You before the world existed.'*** They all either echo or are drawn from the words of Proverbs 8:22, 23, 27, 30: *'Yehowah made me⁹⁰ the beginning of His ways for His works. He established me before the Ages in the beginning,⁹¹ before He made the earth. When He prepared the heaven, I was present with Him.⁹² I was by Yehowah, arranging all things.'*⁹³ It is most likely this Logos (as the personification of Wisdom -- Colossians 2.3) was the one to whom The God spoke in Genesis 1.26, *'Let us make man according to our image.'*

#91. When the glorified Jesus Christ appeared to Paul on the Damascus road he had full opportunity to declare himself God, but he does not, in the words: ***'I am Jesus the Nazarene and I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to The God.'*** (Acts 9:5; 26:15-18)

#92. THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN GOD. Finally, let us review a rendering of modern scholarship from one of the oldest preserved texts of John 1:18, *'No one has ever seen The God. The only-begotten god, who is in the bosom of the Father, is the one who explains Him.'*⁹⁴ In this manuscript this verse in Greek is *ho monogenes theos* or "the only begotten god."⁹⁵ This is a way of saying in a modern paraphrase, "the only one genetically related to the Father." So, in this verse, there are two "gods": a) the invisible God; and, b) the only-begotten god. This is no contradiction to monotheism within the framework of

⁸⁹ **BECOME BETTER.** To "become better than" infers from a lower state to a higher one. How could God ever "become better than angels"?

⁹⁰ **MADE ME.** Some translate the LXX *ektise* (and even the Hebrew) as "create." (JPS, NAB)

⁹¹ **IN THE BEGINNING.** As at John 1:1.

⁹² **BESIDE HIM.** Compare John 1:1 and 17:5.

⁹³ **ARRANGING ALL THINGS.** See LXX Bagster footnote. (Hebrews 1:3)

⁹⁴ **EXPLAINS HIM.** This may be the explanation to the Greek *logos* for The Only Begotten God acts as The Invisible God's *Exegete*. The Greek is *exegesato*.

⁹⁵ **ONLY-BEGOTTEN GOD.** Most versions stick to "only-begotten Son"; others paraphrase the Greek "God, only begotten" (MON) or "the divine One, the only Son." (MOF)

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the Hebrew and Greek understandings. Jesus the Nazarene and all other “true worshippers” worship only one true God. (John 4:22-24; 17:3; and compare 1 Corinthians 8:4, 5)

#93. SUMMARY. In the Second Nazarene Principle regarding the Name of God we have seen how the Nazarene prays for this Name to be sanctified. This “Name” is not only the self-designation of God, Yahweh or Jehovah, but also the character, reputation and attributes of the Father himself. Faith sanctifies the Name of God.

#94. We have also examined what the Bible says about the relationship between God the Father and His Son. The simple truth of the Scriptures: there is “one true God” (John 17:3) who has “a Son” (Hebrews 1:2) and this “only-begotten god” (John 1:1; 1:18) acted as the agent of creation (Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; John 1:3, 10); then came to earth to become a true “man” (Romans 5:14; Philippians 2:7, 8; John 1:14), Jesus Christ the Nazarene. While he walked the earth he was a perfect man who denied he was equal to God. (John 5:19-46; 10:30-33; 14:28) Upon his return to heaven, Jesus still had a God he served, the Father (Revelation 3:12) to whom he remains in subjection (1 Corinthians 11:3; 15:28) as his own Head.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE: *LET YOUR KINGDOM COME!*

#95. Jesus prayed the words of the Third Nazarene Principle, *‘Let your Kingdom come.’* (Matthew 6:10) The “kingdom” is one of the Nazarene’s major themes, if not the dominate subject of his work and teaching. Therefore, it absorbs the largest portion of our discussion because there are three related subjects: the Church of Christ, the Resurrections, and the Last Judgment.

#96. It is noteworthy that this phrase “let your kingdom come” follows “let your name be sanctified,” because the Kingdom has much to do with this holy outcome to clearing the Name of the Father from reproach. Not just the Tetragram YHWH itself, but the character and reputation behind the Name, the Father himself. The subject includes His loving will for mankind on this Earth as well as your ultimate place in His “eternal purpose.” (Ephesians 3:9-11)

#97. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE “KINGDOM.” Even before his miraculous birth, the coming of the Messiah was strongly linked with the subject of the Kingdom. Mary of Nazareth was told by the angel Gabriel, ⁹⁶ *‘You will conceive and bear a son and you will call his name “Jesus.”’*⁹⁷ *This one will be great and will be called “Son of the Most High.” And the Lord God will give him the throne of David his forefather. And he will rule as king over the house of Jacob forever and there will never be an end to his Kingdom.’* (Luke 1:31-

⁹⁶ **GABRIEL.** The same angel of the Book of Daniel.

⁹⁷ **JESUS.** Meaning “Yehowah is Salvation.”

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33) In the days of Mary of Nazareth many Jews were keenly aroused to an expectation of the Messiah⁹⁸ and the deliverance promised by his Kingdom. There was good prophetic basis for this as we shall see.

#98. MESSIAH'S APPEARANCE FORETOLD. The prophet Daniel had much to say on the subject of the Kingdom. The apocalyptic prophet uses the word "kingdom" more than any other writer in the Bible, 63 times, with *Matthew* a close second. (55 times) Daniel foretold a period of "seventy weeks" (or, 490 years) which was to begin, as it turned out, in the year 455 BC, with the announcement of the rebuilding of Jerusalem by King Cyrus of Persia. According to Daniel 9:25 there would be 69 weeks (or, 483 years⁹⁹) until Messiah would make his appearance. Adding one year for the lack of a zero between BC and AD and subtracting 455 from 483, the result is the year 29 AD. The only year in human history when the Messiah or Christ could arrive is 29 AD.

#99. It was exactly¹⁰⁰ in this year John the Baptist began proclaiming, '*The appointed time has been fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has drawn near.*' (Mark 1:15) So, in the year 29 the young carpenter from Nazareth presented himself at the Jordan river to be baptized by the wilderness zealot John.

⁹⁸ **EXPECTATION OF MESSIAH.** See Luke 2:25; 19:11.

⁹⁹ **YEARS.** Some translations read "seventy weeks of years" (*AT, Mo, RS*); the *Tanakh*, a new Bible translation published in 1985 by the Jewish Publication Society, also includes this rendering in a footnote.-See Da 9:24, ftn. Because of this reliable prophecy, first-century Jewish people "knew that the seventy weeks of years fixed by Daniel were drawing to a close; nobody was surprised to hear John the Baptist announce that the kingdom of God had drawn near."-*Manuel Biblique*, by Bacuez and Vigouroux. The Masoretic text, with its system of vowel points, was prepared in the latter half of the first millennium C.E. Evidently because of their rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Masoretes accented the Hebrew text at Daniel 9:25 with an '*ath-nach*', or "stop," after "seven weeks," thereby dividing it off from the "sixty-two weeks"; in this way the 62 weeks of the prophecy, namely, 434 years, appear to apply to the time of rebuilding ancient Jerusalem. The translation by Isaac Leeser reads: "Know therefore and comprehend, that from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed the prince will be seven weeks: [the stop is represented here by a colon] and *during* sixty and two weeks will it be again built with streets and ditches (around it), even in the pressure of the times." The translation of the Jewish Publication Society of America reads similarly: "shall be seven weeks; and *for* threescore and two weeks, it shall be built again." In these two versions the words "during" and "for," respectively, appear in the English translation, evidently to support the translators' interpretation. Professor E. B. Pusey, in a footnote on one of his lectures delivered at the University of Oxford, remarks on the Masoretic accenting: "The Jews put the main stop of the verse under [seven], meaning to separate the two numbers, 7 and 62. This they must have done dishonestly, ... (as Rashi [a prominent Jewish Rabbi of the 11th and 12th centuries C.E.] says in rejecting literal expositions which favored the Christians) 'on account of the heretics,' i.e. Christians. For the latter clause, so divided off, could only mean, 'and *during threescore and two weeks* street and wall shall be being restored and builded,' i.e. that Jerusalem should be 434 years in rebuilding, which would be senseless."-*Daniel the Prophet*, 1885, p. 190.

¹⁰⁰ **EXACT YEAR.** One firm date of history is the first year of the reign of Tiberias Caesar, 14 AD. When the Good Doctor Luke confirms the exact date of Messiah's appearance he cross references the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar with five other contemporary persons. (Luke 3:1-2)

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Immediately, thereafter he was anointed by God as evidenced in the heavenly Voice which declared, *'You are my beloved Son and I have approved you?'* (Luke 3:21, 22) According to one of the most fastidious and accurate historians of ancient times, it was *'in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Caesar.'* (Luke 3:1) This is known to be the year 29 AD.

#100. Within days of this baptismal event, the fisherman Andrew, told his brother Simon Peter, *'We have found the Messiah!'* Then, Nathaniel was the first to declare the Nazarene King with the words, *'Rabbi, you are the Son of God. You are King of Israel.'* (John 1:35-51) So, right from the beginning the Kingdom theme was linked to the Nazarene. This was to result in the final confrontation with Rome over the issue of sedition.

#101. Immediately, Jesus Christ the Nazarene began his preaching and teaching work on the Kingdom subject. Matthew records, *'From this time on Jesus commenced preaching, and saying: **"Repent, for the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near."*** (Matthew 3:17) Mark puts it, *'Jesus went into Galilee, preaching the good news of God and saying: **"The appointed time has been fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has drawn near."*** (Mark 1:15) Luke has the Nazarene saying, *'**Also, to other cities I must declare the good news of the Kingdom of God, because for this I was sent forth.***' (Luke 4:43)

#102. The Gospel of John records the Nazarene's first use of the word "kingdom" in his discussion with the Sanhedrin Court judge Nicodemus: *'**Unless anyone is born out of water and spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.***' (John 3:5) Here and elsewhere "entrance" into the Kingdom ¹⁰¹ is a real possibility opened up for the first time by the arrival of the Messiah in Jesus the Nazarene. Indeed, Jesus' uses the word group "enter" in this connection over two dozen times in the Gospels. This is more than a simple matter of going to heaven as we shall see.

#103. When the Nazarene forms his group of Twelve he sends them forth with instructions as to their preaching subject, *'**The Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.***' (Matthew 10:7) He does the same when he sends out his Seventy disciples, *'**The Kingdom of God has come near to you.***' (Luke 10:9) When some give excuses or want to put limitations to following Jesus, the answer is, *'**No one who looks at the things behind is suited for the Kingdom of God. Go and declare abroad the Kingdom of God.***' (Luke 9:60-62)

¹⁰¹ **KINGDOM.** Though Matthew 11:12 is a difficult text to translate and not all agree on its meaning, it may read (using the KJV, AAT and WMS), *'And from the days of John the Baptist until now men have been taking the Kingdom of Heaven by storm and are seizing it as a precious prize.'* This makes it clear that only from the year 29 AD onward has the Kingdom of Heaven become a goal. (Ephesians 3:5, 6)

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#104. In all of the Gospels the subject of the “kingdom” is used by the Nazarene over 100 times. It clearly is the dominate theme of his works and teachings. It was judged by some as ‘*a new teaching.*’ (Mark 1:27) But, what is this “kingdom”? Is it limited to the realm of heaven? Is it just the rule of God in the individual heart? Why does the Nazarene himself call it a “mystery”? (Mark 4:11)

#105. WHO IS THE KING? Remember, the Nazarene said, ‘*I speak nothing of my own. What I teach is not mine but comes from the Father who sent me.*’ (John 8:28) As a knowledgeable Jew, whose Scriptural wisdom impressed the elders as a twelve year old boy and served to irritate his enemies later, Jesus was well aware of the foundation which had already been laid in the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures. He called it a “mystery” because the Bible teaching of the Kingdom starts out like a puzzle. One piece of this puzzle is added until an enigmatic outline ¹⁰² (1 Corinthians 13:12) takes shape. Into this subject the Messianic King, all the prophets were in a constant search as Peter later writes: ‘*You have been created anew* ¹⁰³ *with a living hope of a heavenly resurrection to be revealed in the End-Time,* ¹⁰⁴ *at the revelation* ¹⁰⁵ *of Jesus Christ. About this heavenly salvation* ¹⁰⁶ *the prophets of old searched and prophesied, searching with a Messianic spirit for a clear understanding of the kind of time or season or conditions during which the Messiah would appear, and the glories* ¹⁰⁷ *after.*’ (1 Peter 1:3-11) This spirit of prophecy found its inspiration in the subject of Jesus the Messiah and his Kingdom, for ‘*the Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy.*’ (Revelation 19:10)

#106. Of course, where there is a kingdom there must be a king. Examine now the early pieces of the prophetic puzzle which help identify the Messianic King in primitive elements only to finally be understood later. (Ephesians 3:5; Romans 15:4; 16:25, 26) Note these pieces to the prophetic puzzle or mystery.

#107. (1) A PROMISED SEED. The first prophecy in the Scriptures at Genesis 3:15 foretold a “woman” whose “seed” (a son) ¹⁰⁸ would ultimately crush the death-causing “serpent.” The Woman’s Seed would suffer what would amount to a wound in the heel. These elements all come together over four thousand years later in the Revelation chapter 12. (Revelation 12:1-5, 17; Romans

¹⁰² **ENIGMATIC OUTLINE.** Paul uses the Greek word *ainigmati* at 1 Corinthians 13:12 which is variously rendered: NW: hazy outline; KJ: through a glass, darkly; NOR: blurred reflections; TCNT: dimly; MOF: baffling reflections.

¹⁰³ **CREATED ANEW.** A New Genesis, *ana-gennesas*. (John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18)

¹⁰⁴ **END-TIME.** Greek, *kairo eskhato*. (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)

¹⁰⁵ **REVELATION.** Greek, *apokalypsthenai*. See Luke 17:30.

¹⁰⁶ **SALVATION.** See Daniel 12:1, 2.

¹⁰⁷ **GLORIES.** This is a strong allusion to the “appear of Daniel 12:1 and the solar and stellar glory of Daniel 12:3.

¹⁰⁸ **SON.** Hebrew *zera*, a male offspring. Greek, *spermatos*.

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16:20) By crushing the Serpent's head it is implied that the original promise of endless life in a Paradise Earth will be realized.

#108. (2) THE SEED WOULD BE SEMITIC. The next veiled hint is in Genesis 9:26 where Noah's son Shem (meaning, *Name, Fame*), from whom all the Shemitic (Semitic) peoples descend according to the Table of Nations ¹⁰⁹ in Genesis chapter 10, is uniquely associated with his God, Yehowah.

#109. (3) THE SEED WOULD BE HEBREW. Genesis 10:21 isolates the foretold Seed among the sons of Eber (Heber), the root for the word "Hebrew" which means "from across the River."

#110. (4) THE SEED WOULD BE ABRAHAMIC. Genesis 17:6 foretells certain "kings": *'I will make you (Abraham) very fruitful and kings will come from you.'* Kings and kingdoms have already appeared in Genesis chapters 12 and 14 but this is the first prophecy actually mentioning Hebrew and Abrahamic kings. These turn out to include Israelite kings like David and Solomon as well as great Arabic sheiks. But, the true focus of this prophecy must wait until the real kings take their everlasting places.

#111. Genesis 22:18 promises, *'And by means of your Seed all nations of the earth will be blessed.'* ¹¹⁰ This is the famous Abrahamic blessing involved in God's covenant with this old man. Here we have the extension of the Seed of the Edenic promise to include all those non-Eberite peoples, that is those who are not Jews, the Gentiles who would receive a Divine Blessing because of the faith of the ancient Patriarch. "Nations" implies an international throng of many, many millions as a global result to the original Edenic promise.

#112. (5) THE ROYAL SEED WILL BE A JEW. The next piece of the puzzle is in Genesis 49:9, 10 in what is called Jacob's (Israel's) death-bed prophecy: *'You are a lion's cub,'¹¹¹ O Judah. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh¹¹² comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.'* ¹¹³ This is the first real identification of the

¹⁰⁹ **TABLE OF NATIONS.** The Table of 70 nations as descendants of Noah's three sons shows the distribution of earth's inhabitants in three major ethnic or racial groups: Shem, the Semites, settle in the Middle East and the Fertile Crescent; Japheth, meaning "Wide" is the father of all the Japhetic peoples who have spread broadly across all the earth, from China to Europe to the Americas; and, Ham, from whom the Hametics settled from the Mediterranean coast to deepest Africa.

¹¹⁰ **GENTILES BLESSED.** Paul is to quote this verse in Galatians 3:8, 29 and gives an inspired application of the phrase "the nations" to those Gentile Nazarene Saints who become part of the Christian Church. (Ephesians 2:11-14, 19-22; 3:3-6.)

¹¹¹ **LION OF JUDAH.** Compare Revelation 5:5.

¹¹² **SHILOH.** Meaning, *He to Whom It Belongs*. LXX adds: *'and he is the expectation of nations.'* Note Ez 21.27. Strongs # 935 as at Genesis 49:10. Vulgate: *'he who is to be sent.'* Compare JPS.

¹¹³ **OBEDIENCE OF THE PEOPLES.** This quote of Genesis 49:9, 10 is based on NIV and NAS

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foretold Seed as a ruler or king. Such a king out of Judah would be a Jew for that designation became the shortened form for “Judah” after the Babylonian captivity in the Fifth Century BC.

#113. (6) A PROPHET LIKE MOSES FROM AMONG THE ISRAELITES.

Deuteronomy 18:15 has Moses predicting, *‘A Prophet from among you Israelites, like me (Moses), is what Yehowah your God will raise and you people should listen to him. The Israelite who does not listen will be cursed.’* In the days of the Nazarene some wondered if Jesus was this foretold Prophet. (John 7:40; compare also Matthew 21:11, 40; Luke 6:15; 7:16; 24:19; John 1:21, 25; 4:19; 6:14; 9:17) Peter quoted this verse of Moses in Acts 3:22, 23 and applied it to Jesus the Nazarene.

#114. (7) A DESCENDANT OF DAVID. Psalm 89:3, 4, 27, 29 (LXX) reads: *‘I made a covenant with my Elect. I swore to David my servant: “I will establish your Seed for ever and build your Throne to all generations.” And I will establish David’s Seed forever and his Throne as the days of heaven.’* The name “David” actually becomes a title for Messiah. (Ezekiel 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; Hosea 3:5; Amos 9:11) The angel Gabriel alludes to Psalm 89 when he tells Mary, *‘Yehowah God will give (Jesus) the throne of David his father and (Jesus) will reign as King over the House of Jacob into the Ages.’* Paul makes a similar statement: *‘God’s Son came from the seed of David according to the flesh.’* (Romans 1:3; compare Revelation 5:5; 22:16)

#115. (8) BORN IN BETHLEHEM. Micah 5:2 foretold: *‘Out of you, O Bethlehem, shall come forth a ruler of Israel whose origin¹¹⁴ is from past eons.’* Jesus was born in this insignificant village and this text in Micah was understood by the Jewish priests at the beginning of the Common Era (1 AD) and applied it to the Messiah. (Matthew 2:1-6)

#116. (9) ONLY ONE YEAR TO APPEAR. As discussed earlier there is only one year in which the Messiah could appear, 29 AD. This the Nazarene did at the age of 30 when he was baptized in water and anointed with God’s spirit. (Daniel 9:24, 25; Luke 3:1-3, 21-23)

#117. (10) A SHORT MINISTRY. Daniel 9.26, 27 foretold: *‘At the half of the week (of seven years) Messiah will be cut off without anything.’* Counting from the anointing of the Nazarene to his execution was three and a half years. Judging from the Gospel of John, from the time of Jesus’ baptism until his death, covered the space of four Passover festivals. Jesus was executed for sedition by the Romans under pressure from the Jews just three and a half years after beginning his teaching ministry concerning the Kingdom. Over his

translations.

¹¹⁴ **ORIGIN.** The Hebrew word is translated “origin” by JPS, NJB, NIV. The Messiah could not be God who has no “origin.” Compare TWOT (Gesenius) Vol 1, page 893.

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head a sign was posted in three languages, '*Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.*' (John 19:19) The Jewish historian Josephus, who was a contemporary of the first Christians, wrote: "a certain Jesus (who was called the Christ), a wizard of a man, if indeed he may be called a man . . . whom his disciples call a son of God. . . Pilate had sentenced him . . . And even now the race of those who are called 'Messianists' (that is, *Christians*) after him, is not extinct."

#118. (11) A PROPHETIC DEATH. Some estimate over 300 prophecies regarding the Messiah, others 1,000. Here is a short list of those dealing with just the death of the Messiah at the end of the foretold three and a half years.

- a) Rejected by his own people the Jews. (Isaiah 53:2, 3)
- b) Surrounded by jeering crowds. (Psalm 22:6-8, 12, 16)
- c) Pierced through hands and feet. (Psalm 22:16 LXX; Isaiah 53:7; Zech 12.10)
- d) A slow, tortuous death. (Psalm 22:14, 15, 16)
- e) Would die on a "tree". (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:14)
- f) Lots cast for his garment. (Psalm 22:18)
- g) Cries out specific words. (Psalm 22:1)
- h) No bones broken. (Psalm 34:20)
- i) Buried among the rich. (Isaiah 53:9)

#119. There are other details regarding the execution of the King-Messiah such as some association with evildoers. (Mark 15:28; Luke 22:27; John 19:36) Surely these suffice to establish the Kingdom mystery revealed in Christ. One can see that all of these would be an impossible task to fake ¹¹⁵ when events such as birth and death are beyond one's control. The only other answer is an evil deception on the part of the Nazarene's disciples. However, this does not seem part of their character. Having identified the King through prophetic details we can now examine the subject of the Kingdom itself. Again, the Nazarene would have known those prophecies which revealed the secrets or mysteries about his coming Kingdom.

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

#120. MESSIAH'S GOVERNMENT. The Bible is very much a book about government. The word groups "king" and "kingdom" occur over 3,600 times. God's first promise regarding a kingdom is to His people Israel before Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law Covenant through Moses. Exodus 19:6 reads, '*If you (Israelites) listen to my voice and obey my covenant then you will become*

¹¹⁵ **FAKE.** Many have been the attempts to establish all this as a "fake" or part of a "Passover plot" while admitting by this that these events actually took place. Either all of the Nazarene's disciples were liars and deceits of the worse sort willing to suffer and die for their deception, or they told their eyewitness truth. There has never been any Jewish objection to these events. Josephus confirms some of them.

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*my special property among all the peoples of the earth. And you will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'*¹¹⁶ Thus the promise was put to Israel to become a real theocracy in which God truly ruled. A real government with kings chosen out of all earth's inhabitants. Israel, offspring of Abraham, would produce the foretold Messianic Seed in the form of a New Israel of God comprising a true government. Isaiah 9:6, 7 foretold, '*For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us. And authority has settled on his shoulders. He has been named "The Mighty God is planning Grace; The Eternal Father, a peaceable ruler."* In token of abundant authority and of peace without limit upon David's throne and kingdom that it may be firmly established in justice and in equity now and evermore.' (JPS)

#121. Peter quotes those expressions above and gives an application to the Christian Elect, '*You elect sojourners of the Diaspora are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a People for God's possession, you who were once not a people but are now People of God.*' (1 Peter 1:1; 2:9, 10) The Kingdom of God is highly associated with Israel and just as the Messiah was a Jew, the Kingdom is composed of many Jews. There are also innumerable Gentiles invited to be among The Elect. (Romans 2:28, 29; 9:6, 7; 11:1-36; Galatians 6:16; Revelation 7:9-17; Isaiah 49:9, 10)

#122. THE KINGDOM IN DANIEL. No book has been more influential on the Christian Bible than the book by the prophet Daniel. It is the Book of Daniel which gives rich definition to this subject of the Kingdom and this explains the Kingdom preached by the Nazarene. The Kingdom is a real government in Daniel, comparable to other historical "kingdoms." Daniel chapters two and seven particularly deal with this subject. Both chapters approach the Kingdom from two different perspectives: the march of world powers related to Bible history and the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God. Both come in the form of dreams or visions. They established the timing of the coming into power of the Kingdom and that moment in history when the Messiah is joined with associates, marking a milestone in the Kingdom's rule. Let us examine these two visions.

#123. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM. Chapter two¹¹⁷ relates the details regarding a dream of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It describes an immense image like a colossal man, composed of four primary parts: a golden head, silver arms and chest, bronze belly and thighs, and finally, legs of iron with feet mixed iron and clay. All of these segments, in lowering strata of inferior but harder elements, symbolized real kingdoms or imperial governments to rule earth beginning with Babylon 600 years before Christ. The parallel description and interpretation in chapter seven makes it clear, '*These*

¹¹⁶ **A HOLY NATION.** Peter alludes to this verse at 1 Peter 2:9, 10 as an application to the Christian Church.

¹¹⁷ **CHAPTER TWO.** Please take your time and read Daniel chapter 2.

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four beasts are four kingdoms that shall rise up on earth but the Saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom and possess it for ever and ever.' (Daniel 7:17, 18 LXX) These four kingdoms ¹¹⁸ in Daniel chapters two and seven ¹¹⁹ are identified by most scholars ¹²⁰ as: Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

#124. The finale comes in Daniel 2:44, *'And in the days of those (four) kings the God of heaven shall set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed and His Kingdom will not be left to another people, but it shall beat to pieces and grind to power all these (four) kingdoms and God's Kingdom will stand forever.'* (LXX) God's Kingdom by Messiah begins to reign during the contemporary life times of all four of these kingdoms, obviously during the last or fourth, the kingdom of iron. This was to prove to be Rome.

#125. Comparing the two chapters with other elements in the Book of Daniel, it seems clear these four kingdoms are: Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. It would be "in the days" of all four contemporary kingdoms that God's Kingdom would begin to rule. Messiah would take up power during the reign of the final fourth kingdom of iron, the Roman world power. But, who compose the Kingdom of God? When does the King begin to rule?

#126. WHEN THE KING BEGINS TO RULE. The answer is confirmed in the details of chapter seven of Daniel. Here the same subject is discussed but in Daniel's own vision of successive beasts: first, a lion (the same as the golden head of Babylon); second, a bear (the same as the chest and arms of silver, Persia); a leopard (the same as the belly and thighs of bronze, Greece); and, fourth, a beast of iron (the same as the legs of iron, Rome). This vision complements chapter two and adds elements and details left out in the general overview of chapter two. Much more information is given regarding the fourth kingdom and the Kingdom of God with its King. In Daniel's vision of the four beasts, the Kingdom of God is also an important element with the following main factors highlighted.

#127. A HUMAN WILL ASCEND TO HEAVEN. The Kingdom rulership is given to "a Son of man," or some one who has the appearance of a human being. This title, "Son of Man," is one Jesus the Nazarene applied to himself. He used it nearly 80 times in the Gospels. Daniel report's his nocturnal vision in these words: *'I beheld in the night vision, and lo, one coming with the clouds of heaven as the Son of Man, and he came ¹²¹ on to the Ancient of Days, ¹²² and was brought near to Him. And to the Son of Man was given dominion, and the honour, and the Kingdom; and all nations, tribes and languages shall serve*

¹¹⁸ **KINGDOMS.** For more details on the key elements of Daniel and Revelation see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

¹¹⁹ **CHAPTER 7.** Please take your time and read Daniel chapter 7.

¹²⁰ **SCHOLARS.** Compare for example *The Bible Commentary*, F. C. Cook editor (1896)

¹²¹ **CAME.** This Aramaic word (Strong's # 858) may also be rendered "arrived".

¹²² **ANCIENT OF DAYS.** A unique designation for the same Most High in Daniel 7:22, 27.

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him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom shall not be destroyed. Is it fair to state that this description ¹²³ pictures a human ¹²⁴ ascending to God's own Presence to receive a Kingdom?

#128. It is good to keep Daniel's perspective in mind. Where is he in this visionary setting? In verse 16 Daniel records, *'And I drew near to one of them that stood by.'* He has earlier reported them in verse 10, *'Thousands upon thousands served Him; myriads upon myriads attended Him.'* ¹²⁵ (JPS) If Daniel approaches one such, that is one of the millions of Celestial Beings attending before God, his position must be in heaven in the visions of his head. When the prophet sees some Human ¹²⁶ like a Son of man, "coming ¹²⁷ with the clouds" he must describe someone ascending from earth to heaven to attain the Throne-Room of God Almighty. Jesus himself mentions this ascension at John 6:63, ***'Therefore, what if you ever behold the Son of Man ascending to where he was formerly?'***

#129. There is only one time when this ascent in clouds occurred and it was recorded at Acts 1:9-11: *'And having said these things, Jesus was lifted up and a cloud took him from underneath before the eyes of the disciples. And as they were gazing into the heaven as Jesus was going his way, look! two (angelic) men dressed in white stood alongside the disciples, saying: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the heaven? This Jesus, the one being received ¹²⁸ up from you into the heavens, will thus come in the manner which you viewed him going his way into the heaven."* From Daniel's prophetic visionary perspective this would be an ascent to his own position before God's throne and that mass of Celestial Beings attending the Most High, or Ancient of Days. This event truly occurred in the year 33 ¹²⁹ AD shortly before the Jewish Feast of Pentecost. Thus, Daniel the prophet actually foretold the ascent of Christ to heaven. (Luke 24:51)

¹²³ **DESCRIPTION.** Compare Revelation chs 4, 5.

¹²⁴ **HUMAN-LIKE.** Daniel 7:13. The Latin Vulgate describes this as a *hominid*. The Greek uses *anthropou*.

¹²⁵ **MYRIADS ATTENDED HIM.** Compare Revelation 5:11.

¹²⁶ **HUMAN.** The Latin Vulgate uses *hominis* (hominid).

¹²⁷ **COMING.** The Aramaic word translated "coming" in Daniel 7:13 is *attah* (Strongs # 858) may also mean "arrive." It occurs again at Daniel 7:22. This is likely the word which the disciples used in Matthew 24:3 Hebrew original. For details on this see *Nazarene Apocalypse*. The LXX uses *erkhomenos*. The Latin Vulgate has it *cum*.

¹²⁸ **RECEIVED.** Peter understood this, for he tells the Jews a few days later, *'The LORD should send forth the Christ appointed beforehand for you. It is a necessity that heaven receive Christ until the times of restoration of all things spoken through the prophets'* (Acts 3:20, 21) The Nazarene promised Peter and the other apostles, *'I am coming back to take you home with me.'* (John 14:3) Compare 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17.

¹²⁹ **33 AD.** Shortly before his martyr's death, Stephen beholds a vision of the Son of Man (Daniel 7:13) standing at the right hand of God (Psalm 110:1) showing Daniel 7:13, 14 had its fulfillment earlier. (Acts 7:55, 56)

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#130. That Daniel 7:13, 14 is fulfilled in the year 33 AD with the ascension of Jesus Christ is proven by comparing the Second Psalm and two inspired applications of it. Peter quotes in prayer Psalm 2:1, 2 and applies it to the events in 33 AD: *'By the mouth of our forefather David your servant, the holy spirit said, "Why are the nations making noise and the peoples meditating upon emptiness? The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers were gathered as one against the LORD and His Christ." In truth Herod and Pontius Pilate with Gentiles and peoples of Israel, gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus.'* (Acts 4:25-27)

#131. Paul also quotes the Second Psalm, verse 7, as recorded in Acts 13:33, *'God has fulfilled this promise to the children of the Israelite forefathers by resurrecting Jesus as also it is written in the second Psalm: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."* So, Paul has the fulfillment of the Second Psalm upon the resurrection¹³⁰ and ascension of Jesus in the year 33 AD.

#132. Therefore, Psalm 2:5, 6 must have also been fulfilled with the ascension of Jesus Christ the Nazarene: *'Then (Yehowah)¹³¹ speaks to (these kings and Gentiles) in anger, terrifying them in His rage, But I have installed My king (the Messiah) on Zion, My holy mountain.'* (JPS) It is in the year 33 AD when Jesus is fully enthroned in his Messianic Kingdom in fulfillment of Daniel 7:13.

#133. How much authority and power does the Christ receive on this occasion? Paul states with great conviction the extent of Messiah's authority in Ephesians 1:20-23: *'When (the God of our Lord) raised the Christ and seated him at His right hand¹³² in the Celestial Realms, exalted above every government and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this Age but also in the New Age. God subjected¹³³ everything under Christ's feet and made him head¹³⁴ over everything to the Church, which is his Body.'* This degree of power was in complete agreement with what the Glorified Christ himself said: ***'All authority in heaven and upon earth has been given me.'*** (Matthew 28:18)

#134. It is now with his ascension that Christ takes up rulership at God's right hand in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1, *'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.'* Paul quotes this verse in the Psalms several times, including 1 Corinthians 15:25, *'For it is a necessity that Christ reign until God puts all enemies under his feet. The last enemy, Death, is to be made*

¹³⁰ **RESURRECTION.** Compare Romans 1:4; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5.

¹³¹ **YEHOWAH.** This is one location in the Hebrew Text where the Jewish Sopherim changed YHWH to *Adhonnai*.

¹³² **RIGHT HAND.** This phrase is from Psalm 110:1. The Nazarene himself quotes or paraphrase this verse several times. (Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69)

¹³³ **SUBJECTED.** This phrase is from Psalm 8:6.

¹³⁴ **HEAD.** Compare Colossians 2:0; Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 2:9.

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*completely ineffective*¹³⁵; and, in Hebrews 10:12, 13: *'But this (Priest), offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down at the right hand of The God, and then began waiting until his enemies became his footstool.'* Between these two verses Paul makes it clear that Christ does not wait to rule but 'reigns ... waiting,' otherwise he could not begin to rule until all his enemies were subjected first. Thus, Christ ascends to heaven, returning on clouds, in fulfillment of Daniel 7:13 and is established in power as Psalm 2:6 foretold. Then he must wait while reigning alone before all his enemies are finally made subject to him as Psalm 110:1 predicted.

135. It is the Nazarene himself who makes a series of compound paraphrases or conflates of the two prophetic texts Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13. When before the Jewish high priests, Jesus assures them that they will still be alive when they see the fulfillment¹³⁶ of these two texts: ***'I am telling you (priests) you will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and returning upon the clouds of heaven.'*** Jesus also does something similar in an idiomatic form when he tells his disciples they will live to see the fulfillment of Daniel 7:13. (Matthew 10:23; 16:28) This they did as recorded at Acts 1:9-11. All of this helps us appreciate when Daniel 7:13 is fulfilled. But there is another important feature of Daniel's prophecy: does Messiah continue to rule alone or does he come to have associates?

136. WHO RULES WITH CHRIST? Daniel continues to introduce a certain body of people called "the Saints of the Most High" in chapter seven. This body of Saints are a unique group who are alive on earth shortly before the Return of Christ and who endure a particularly violent time of Great Oppression at the hands of a new element of the Fourth Beast, Rome. Daniel is told this by the apocalyptic angel: *'I beheld, and that Horn made war¹³⁷ with the Saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days arrived, and He gave judgment (in favor of) the Saints of the Most High; and the time came on, and the Saints possessed the Kingdom.¹³⁸ And the Horn shall speak words against*

¹³⁵ **INEFFECTIVE.** See the NWT, *Kingdom Interlinear* (KIT). Various renderings are: NEB: abolished; WMS: stopped; ABUV: done away with.

¹³⁶ **FULFILLMENT.** The Nazarene's words to the judicial priests seems to say that they will live to see this fulfillment of Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13. Interestingly, note who is present when, shortly before Stephen is stoned, they hear the martyr's testimony. It is recorded in Acts 7:54-57: *'They (including the Jewish priests; Acts 4:6; 5:17, 22; 6:12) were infuriated when they heard this, and ground their teeth at him. But, Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand [Psalm 110:1]. "Look! I can see heaven thrown open," he said, "and the Son of Man [Daniel 7:13] standing at the right hand of God." All the members of the council shouted out and stopped their ears with their hands; then they made a concerted rush at him.'* (NJB) So, in a very real way these priests, before whom Christ had testified, saw the fulfillment of his words.

¹³⁷ **WAR WITH SAINTS.** The details on this subject of a Great Oppression (see Daniel 12:1, 7) lasting three and a half years shortly before the Return of Christ is left to a discussion of Revelation 11:2 and 13:5-7. See *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

¹³⁸ **SAINTS POSSESS (INHERIT) THE KINGDOM.** Compare Matthew 5:3, 10; 25:34; 1

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the Most High, and shall oppress¹³⁹ the Saints of the Most High and the Saints shall be given into his hand for three and one half years.¹⁴⁰ The Kingdom and the Power and the greatness of the kings that are under the whole heaven were given to the Saints of the Most High; and their Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom and all powers shall serve and obey them.¹⁴¹ (Daniel 7:21 22, 25, 27)

#137. Is it clear from this Christ does not always rule alone but is finally joined by associate kings called the “Saints of the Most High.” This term “saints” is one taken up by Paul at 1 Corinthians 6:2, ‘Have you not known that the Saints¹⁴² will judge the world?’ He echoes the promises made by the Nazarene, ‘**In the New Genesis¹⁴³, when the Son of Man sits down¹⁴⁴ (as judge) upon the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel** (Matthew 19:28). . . **Fear not, Little Flock** (of my apostles),¹⁴⁵ **because the Father thought well of you to give you the Kingdom** (Luke 12:32). . . **You who have remained throughout with me in my trails I am covenanting with you as my Father covenanted with me for a kingdom in order that you may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom and sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**’ (Luke 22:28-30)

#138. So, those disciples who chose to follow the Nazarene had opened up to them the opportunity to become associates with Christ in his heavenly reign. But, these were not the only ones. In Jesus’ Passover prayer he petitions his Father: ‘**I am making a request, not for these (eleven Apostles) only but also for those believing in me through the word¹⁴⁶ (of these apostles). . . I wish that where I am these also may be with me in order that they may behold my glory which you have given me because you loved me before the founding of the world.**’ (John 17:20, 24) Thus, many hundreds of thousands, if not millions¹⁴⁷ of other Christians, would one day behold the

Corinthians 15:50,

¹³⁹ **OPPRESS.** The Aramic word *bela* in Daniel 7:25 translated “oppress” by J. R. Kohlenberger III.

¹⁴⁰ **THREE AND A HALF YEARS.** In Hebrew and Greek this is “time, times, and half a time” and equals 3½ years, or 42 months, 1,260 days. (Compare Revelation 11:2; 12:6, 14; 13:5)

¹⁴¹ **THEM.** “Them” according to the Hebrew text.

¹⁴² **SAINTS.** Paul uses the word *hagioi* 40 times in his letters.

¹⁴³ **NEW GENESIS.** The Greek is *palin-genesia*. Various renderings are: KJ: regeneration; RSV: the new world; KNX: the new birth; RIEU: when the world is born anew; MON: in the New Creation; WMS: in the new world order of life; BER: in the new age. The Greek word may be drawn from Job’s own according to the LXX, *palin genomai*. (Job 14:14, 15)

¹⁴⁴ **SON OF MAN SITS DOWN.** This is not when the Son of Man ascends to the Throne at Daniel 7:13 but with the “return” of the King to judge his Household. (Luke 12:35-48; 19:10-27; Matthew 24:42-51; 25:1-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 4:5, 17; 1 John 2:28; 4:17; Revelation 11:18)

¹⁴⁵ **APOSTLES.** See the context from Luke 12:1.

¹⁴⁶ **THEIR WORD.** In other words, those future disciples. The Nazarene includes those future believers who learn of Jesus by means of the “words,” written or oral, of the apostles.

¹⁴⁷ **MILLIONS.** The Book of Acts alone accounts for many thousands. (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7; 8:12;

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heavenly glory of the Nazarene. This would occur at that moment Daniel 7:22 foretells, *'The time had come, and the Saints took possession of the Kingdom.'* When and how would this occur?

#139. RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT. In order to behold the heavenly glory of Jesus the Nazarene the Saints must undergo a "change."¹⁴⁸ This requires for the dead Saints what Jesus calls a "resurrection."¹⁴⁹ When and how does all of this take place?

#140. THE RETURN OF CHRIST. First, it is best to discuss the promise of the Nazarene at John 14:2, 3: *'In the House of my Father are many abodes. If this were not so I would have told you, because I am going to prepare a place for you and if I should go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and I shall gather you¹⁵⁰ to me, that where I am, you also may be.'* Near the end of Jesus' life on earth he begins to discuss at length his future Arrival or Return in what has been called the Second Coming.¹⁵¹

#141. Jesus gave several parables on this subject and they teach that first he must ascend to heaven *'to receive his Kingdom'* and then *'after a long time to Return'*¹⁵² and pass judgment on his own Household.¹⁵³ This individual judgment of each Christian is based on their words and actions in their life in the flesh according to Jesus, Paul, Peter, John and Jude. Here are their teachings on this subject of judgment: *'The one who speaks or blasphemes the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this Present Age or that New Age to come.'* (Matthew 12:32) *'I say to you, in the Day of Judgment men will have to answer for every unprofitable saying which they speak. For out of your own mouth you will be declared not guilty and out of your own mouth you will be condemned.'* (Matthew 12:36, 37) *'For when the Son of man arrives (for judgment) in the glory of his Father with all his angels then the Messiah will repay each person according to their own practices.'* (Matthew 16:27) *'This will be in the Day when The God is judging the hidden things of men.'* (Romans 2:16) *'For all shall stand in front of the Judgment Seat of The God.'* (Romans 14:10) *'Therefore, you should not judge before the appointed time, until the Lord arrives. He will bring to light those*

9:42; 11:21, 24, 29; 12:24; 13:48; 14:1, 21; 16:5)

¹⁴⁸ **CHANGE.** Compare 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 3:11, 20, 21.

¹⁴⁹ **RESURRECTION.** The Greek for this is *anastasis* and literally means standing + again. A form of the word occurs in the OT (LXX) at Job 14:12, *anaste*; Isaiah 26:19, *anastesontai*; Daniel 12:2, *anastese*. Compare Matthew 22:28, 30, 31; Mark 12:23; Luke 14:14; 20:27, 33, 35, 36; John 5:29; 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24, 25.

¹⁵⁰ **GATHER YOU.** The Greek is *paralempsomai* and variously rendered: KJ: receive you unto myself; ABUV: take you to be with me; BECK: take you home; KIT: receive you home to myself. This word is related to *paralempthesetai* at Luke 17:34, 35, "taken along."

¹⁵¹ **COMING.** Compare Matthew 24:27, 30, 42-44, 50; Mark 13:26, 35; Luke 21:26, 27. For details on the Greek words *parousia* and *erxhomenon* see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

¹⁵² **RETURN.** Compare Luke 19:12; Matthew 25:19.

¹⁵³ **HOUSEHOLD.** Matthew 24:42-25.46; Luke 12:35-48.

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hidden things of the darkness and he will make manifest the counsels of men's hearts.' (1 Corinthians 4:5) *'For it is a necessity that all of us Saints must appear in front of the Judgment Seat of Christ in order that each one of us may be awarded or repaid for those things performed while in the flesh, whether good or vile.'*¹⁵⁴ (2 Corinthians 5:10) *'Since human beings die only once, after which comes judgment.'* (Hebrews 9:27 NJB) *'They shall give account to Him, who is ready to judge the living and the dead.'*¹⁵⁵ (1 Peter 4:5 NAS) *'Because the appointed time begins the Judgment from the House of God and if we Saints are the first to be judged what will be the end of those disobedient to the Gospel?'* (1 Peter 4:17) *'So, when the Son of God appears we Saints can be outspoken (in the Day of Judgment) and not put to shame at his Arrival.'* (1 John 2:28; 4:17) *'Angels are being reserved for the great Day of Judgment but you Saints keep yourselves in the love of God while patiently awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ bringing you everlasting life.'* (Jude 6, 21, 24)

#142. WHERE ARE THE DEAD SAINTS? It would be most timely at this point to answer this question and related questions about the condition of the dead. Many have been raised to believe, or taught to believe, that each human being possesses a "soul" which escapes the body at death and goes to live in an after-life. They believed, therefore, that all good Christians were in heaven. Had the resurrection begun in Paul's own day? He is severely critical of two heretics in his time with the words, *'Their word will spread like gangrene . . . and they have deviated from the Truth saying the resurrection has already occurred and they are subverting the faith of some.'* (2 Timothy 2:17, 18 NWT)

#143. In the introductory portion of *Nazarene Principles*, we had suggested the use of a concordance to research certain words. Here is a good place to use one. Those words for "soul," the Hebrew *nephesh* (Strongs # 5315) and the Greek *psyche* (Strongs # 5590), can be researched at your leisure, along with other words, such as: death, grave, hell (Sheol, Hades), or resurrection. What will such a study reveal? Some commentaries make these observations:

#144. "There is no dichotomy of body and soul in the OT. The Israelite saw things concretely, in their totality, and thus they considered men as persons and not as composites. The term *ne'phesh*, though translated by our word soul, never means soul as distinct from the body or the individual person. . . . The term *psy·khe'* is the NT word corresponding with *ne'phesh*. It can mean the principle of life, life itself, or the living being." (*New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), Vol. XIII, pp. 449, 450.)

#145. "The Hebrew term for 'soul' (*nefesh*, that which breathes) was used by Moses . . . signifying an 'animated being' and applicable equally to nonhuman beings. . . . New Testament usage of *psyche* ('soul') was comparable to

¹⁵⁴ **GOOD OR VILE.** Compare John 5:29 with Daniel 12:2.

¹⁵⁵ **LIVING AND THE DEAD.** Compare 2 Peter 2:9; 3:7; 2 Timothy 4:1.

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nefesh." (*The New Encyclopædia Britannica* (1976), Macropædia, Vol. 15, p. 152.)

#146. "The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere expressly taught in Holy Scripture." (*The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1910), Vol. VI, p. 564.)

#147. *The Dictionary of New Testament Theology* makes the following observations: (Vol 1, page 433, 435) "In OT thought death means the final end of man's existence. . . The NT view of death is in direct continuity with the old Jewish view. . . (Vol 3, page 679) Plato provides us with the idea that the soul can be deprived of its body, that it does not come fully into its own until it has been separated from the body, and that it is immortal." Did the Bible teach this? [For details on this subject see the online publication, [Where Are the Dead? According to the Bible](#)]

#148. In the Jewish Greek *Septuagint* the word normally translated "soul", *psyche*, occurs 900 times. A comparison of these occurrences will reveal over 100 which demonstrate the "soul" to be mortal ¹⁵⁶ and destructible. Not once is "soul" connected with immortality. The word "immortality" ¹⁵⁷ is used only by Paul and is an attribute of the glorified Christ and the resurrected Saints. (1 Corinthians 15:53, 54; 1 Timothy 6:16) This "immortality" may be attained only upon the resurrection at the Return of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:23, 50-53)

#149. In the entire Bible the condition of the dead is one of sleep and unconsciousness. A comparison of a concordance on the words "death" and "sleep" will establish the truth of Psalm 146:3, 5 ¹⁵⁸; Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 ¹⁵⁹; 9:5, 10 ¹⁶⁰; Daniel 12:2 ¹⁶¹; John 11:11-14, 25, 26 ¹⁶². At this time it would be good to also compare the words often translated "hell" or "grave." In Hebrew this is *Sheol* and in Greek *Hades*. This study will show Jesus only used the word *Hades*, three times (once in a parable) and Paul never, despite what he says in Acts 20:20. Peter uses it in Acts 2:27, 31 to show Christ went there when he died and then returned to life. The word occurs in Revelation 20:13, 14 where it shows all the dead come out of *Hades* and then are judged after which *Hades* and Death are thrown into "Second Death." (Compare 1 Corinthians 15:24-27)

#150. WHEN IS THE RESURRECTION? Paul has said above that the

¹⁵⁶ **THE SOUL IS MORTAL.** Compare Ezekiel 18:4, 20.

¹⁵⁷ **IMMORTALITY.** The Greek is *athanasian* and is literally un + death, or non-dying.

¹⁵⁸ **PSALM 146:3, 4.** What happens to the thoughts when a person dies?

¹⁵⁹ **ECCLESIASTES 3:19-21.** Where do both man and animals go at death?

¹⁶⁰ **ECCLESIASTES 9:5, 10.** How much do the dead know?

¹⁶¹ **DANIEL 12:2.** The condition of the dead is likened to what?

¹⁶² **JOHN 11:11-14, 25, 26.** What is the only hope for the dead?

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resurrection had not occurred in his day. That meant all persons, including the Christian dead, rested in an unconscious sleep. (1 Corinthians 7:39; 15:6, 18, 20, 51) With regard to the time and sequence of this rising from unconscious sleep in a resurrection, Paul taught: *'Since death is by a man, the resurrection of the dead is by a man. For as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive.'* (1 Corinthians 15:21, 22) *'According to which The God has established a Day in which He will judge righteously all the earth by a Man He appointed and this is something all men can trust because The God resurrected this Man out of the dead.'* (Acts 17:31) *'But, each individual in his own order or rank: a) Christ, a firstfruits of those who sleep in death; b) thereafter, those of the Christ at his Arrival¹⁶³; c) and, finally, The End . . . when the last enemy Death is rendered ineffective.'*¹⁶⁴ (1 Corinthians 15:23-26) It seems fair to conclude that there are two major groupings among this "all": Christians and everyone else. Christians would be raised at the Return of Christ. When would the "rest of the dead" be raised? Paul indicates this will be at what he calls "the end." But, can we get to know more precisely when this general or last resurrection occurs?

#151. The only other Biblical text which covers a similar sequence is Revelation 20:4-7, 12, 13. These verses answer our question very directly in an abbreviated paraphrase: *'I saw those victorious (Christian Saints),¹⁶⁵ they lived¹⁶⁶ and they reigned¹⁶⁷ with the Messiah a Thousand Years. . . This is the First Resurrection¹⁶⁸. . . The rest of the dead¹⁶⁹ lived not¹⁷⁰ until The End¹⁷¹ of the*

¹⁶³ **AT HIS ARRIVAL.** The Greek is *en te parousia autou* and is literally, "in his Presence." (1 John 2:28; 1 Thessalonians 2:19) That is, at his Return as King. Dead Christians must wait in unconscious sleep until the Return of Christ. An ancient Christian grave marker read: "Sleep, a temporary rest is granted you." Since this sleep is in a state of total unconsciousness there is no sensation of a lapse of time and upon the resurrection it would feel instantaneous.

¹⁶⁴ **RENDERED INEFFECTIVE.** See KIT Various renderings are: NWT: brought to nothing; KJ: destroyed; NEB: abolished; WMS: stopped; ABUV: done away with. Note "death" is not destroyed or brought to nothing until what Paul calls "The End."

¹⁶⁵ **CHRISTIAN SAINTS.** This is inferred by the description in verse 4. Note two things: a) the martyrs who cry out in Revelation 6:9-11 end their "rest" and see justice executed; and, b) those Saints alive at the time of the Great Oppression who endure the Wild Beast's three and a half years of persecution.

¹⁶⁶ **THEY LIVED.** Or, "came to life." The Greek is *ezesan* and according to verse 6 it equals "they were resurrected." (Compare *ezesan* at Romans 14:9; Revelation 2:8)

¹⁶⁷ **THEY REIGNED.** Compare Daniel 7:22, 27; 1 Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 5:9, 10. Part of the duty of a king is to "judge" which this phrase shows the Saints doing during the Thousand Years.

¹⁶⁸ **FIRST RESURRECTION.** If there is a "first" (as 1 Corinthians 15:23, 24 infers) there must be a second or last.

¹⁶⁹ **THE REST OF THE DEAD.** Compare the "all" at 1 Corinthians 15:22.

¹⁷⁰ **LIVED NOT.** This is the same Greek word of verse 4, *ezesan*, but in the negative. If *ezesan* of verse 4 means a resurrection (see verse 6) then would not this phrase "not lived" or "did not come to life" mean they are not resurrected until the end of the Thousand Years? (Compare *ezesan* = resurrection at Romans 14:9 and Revelation 2:8)

¹⁷¹ **THE END.** Or, "until the Thousand Years should end." The Greek is *telesthe* and is very much related to Paul's phrase *to telos* at 1 Corinthians 15:24.

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*Thousand Years. When the Thousand Years end*¹⁷² . . . *the dead stood before a great white Throne*¹⁷³ (of the Messiah) and small books¹⁷⁴ were opened and the dead were judged out of the things written in these small books and each one of the dead were judged¹⁷⁵ by their own works.' Is it fair to suggest that this agrees with Paul (1 Corinthians 15:23, 24) and that there will be two resurrections and two judgments: a) the first upon the Christian Church, the Household of Faith at the Return of Christ; and, b) the rest of mankind, all of Adam's children, are raised at the end of the Thousand Years, and there receive their judgment, either to everlasting life on earth, or extinction. But, who are alive on earth during the Thousand Years?

#152. If none are resurrected during the Thousand Years, who are alive to be "judged" by the glorified Saints, for verse 4 states, *'I saw thrones and they that sat down upon them. Judgment was given to them.'*¹⁷⁶ This may also be rendered: KNX: those to whom judgment was committed; GDSP: who were empowered to act as judges. So, who do the Saints judge? Paul had argued with the Corinthians, *'Do you not know the Saints will judge the world?'* (1 Corinthians 6:2) The answer lies in Revelation 20:3, *' . . . that Satan the Devil may no longer cause the nations to err until the Thousand Years end.'* Imagine? A "world" (1 Corinthians 6:2) without the influence of the Devil? What kind of "world" would this be?

#153. It must be admitted there are only a very few texts upon which to determine these matters in any detail. However, let us present some picture which will illustrate Messiah's Millennial Reign. Read as we may in the entire Book of Revelation, or the *Apocalypse*, and no where do we find that the "world" comes to an end¹⁷⁷ with Armageddon. Read those chapters which specifically deal with this period in prophetic events: 6:12-17; 7:1, 2; 9:15; 11:18; 14:19, 20; 16:14, 16; 17:11; 18:1-24; 19:11-21. In all of this one or two points stand out. Revelation 9:15 makes a clear statement: *'And the Four Angels were released, those prepared for the hour, day, month and year, to kill*

¹⁷² **END.** The Greek is *telesthe* again (see vs 5) and is related to Paul's *to telos*. (1 Corinthians 15:24) Note the Nazarene's use of the phrase "the last day" with reference to the resurrection and judgment. (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48; compare Daniel 12:13)

¹⁷³ **A GREAT WHITE THRONE.** This is not the Throne elsewhere in the *Apocalypse*. Note what the Nazarene teaches in John 5:22. Note Messiah as judge in Isaiah 11:3, 4.

¹⁷⁴ **SMALL BOOKS.** Likely the record or log of accounts regarding the "all" of 1 Corinthians 15:22. Note how the Nazarene puts this at Matthew 12:36, 37 and John 12:48. Compare Hebrews 9:26, 27.

¹⁷⁵ **JUDGED.** Consider this word-group "judge" in a concordance.

¹⁷⁶ **JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN TO THEM.** This phrase in Greek, *kai krima edothe autois*, is very similar to Daniel 7:22, *kai to krima edoken hagiois*. On this basis some would apply this phrase to that judgment in favor of the Saints. (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29)

¹⁷⁷ **END.** No where in the Nazarene's answer to his disciples' question in Matthew 24, Mark 13, or Luke 21, does he ever use the word "end" in relation to the world of mankind. For details on these chapters see *Nazarene Apocalypse* and the article *Did Jesus Predict the End of the World?*

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one-third of mankind. Judging from this does it seem fair to conclude that the Four Angels of Revelation 7:1-3 will “kill” one-third of mankind, leaving two-thirds? Another point to note is that in all of these verses above, other than 9.15, the only thing described as destroyed by the King are abstractions: Babylon the Great, the Wild Beast, the False Prophet.¹⁷⁸ In Revelation 19:20 only two are hurled into the Lake of Fire, the Second Death. (Revelation 20:6, 10, 14) “The rest were killed” says verse 21 of chapter nineteen without indicating these entered Second Death. All things considered, a majority of earth’s inhabitants, made up of hundreds of “nations,” will survive to live into the beginning of Messiah’s Thousand Year reign no longer to be misled by the Devil. (Revelation 20:3)

#154. There is another prophet who also indicates “the nations” will survive Armageddon. Zechariah 14:5, 8, 11, 16, 17 in part reads: *‘And the Lord my God shall come and all the Saints with Him.*¹⁷⁹ *... And in that day living water shall come forth out of Jerusalem.*¹⁸⁰ *... And there shall be no more any curse (on Jerusalem).*¹⁸¹ *... And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall be left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem*¹⁸² *shall even come up every year to worship the King.*¹⁸³ *... And it shall come to pass that whosoever of all the families of the earth*¹⁸⁴ *shall not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty,*¹⁸⁵ *even these shall be added to the others.’*¹⁸⁶ (LXX)

#155. Does the prophet Zechariah not agree with the apostle John by indicating there will be “survivors” (NIV; NJB) of Armageddon from among those “nations” who actually “came against Jerusalem”. (Compare the “nations” at Revelation 11:2) There are enough phrases here in Zechariah which are alluded to in Revelation chapters 21 and 22 to prove that nothing is being lifted out of the prophetic context. (see footnotes) Thus, there are two prophets which indicate many, if not a majority, will survive Armageddon.

#156. There is one other text which gives some indication as to what will happen during the Thousand Year reign of the Messiah. Isaiah chapter 65 is generally understood to apply during the Thousand Years. Thus, we note verses 17, 19, 20: *‘For look, I am going to create new heavens and a new*

¹⁷⁸ **FALSE PROPHET.** For details on these matters in Revelation see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

¹⁷⁹ **SAINTS.** This phrase is nearly identical in Greek to 1 Thessalonians 3:13.

¹⁸⁰ **LIVING WATER.** This phrase is the same as that of Revelation 22:1 indicating the prophetic context of the Thousand Years.

¹⁸¹ **CURSE ON JERUSALEM.** This phrase is identical to that of Revelation 22:3 and evidently refers to that oppressing war against the New Jerusalem mentioned in Revelation 11:2.

¹⁸² **AGAINST JERUSALEM.** This phraseology is nearly identical to Revelation 11:2.

¹⁸³ **WORSHIP THE KING.** Compare Isaiah 66:22-24.

¹⁸⁴ **ALL THE FAMILIES.** This phrase is straight out of Genesis 12:3; 28:14. On the word “families” read Genesis chapter 10.

¹⁸⁵ **THE LORD ALMIGHTY.** Or, “the King, Yehowah of armies.”

¹⁸⁶ **THE OTHERS.** Likely the same as the “one-third” of Revelation 9:15.

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earth, and the past will not be remembered. ... No more will the sound of weeping be heard there, nor the sound of a shriek; never again will there be an infant there who lives only a few days, nor an old man who does not run his full course; for the youngest will die at a hundred, and at a hundred the sinner will be accursed.' (Isaiah 65:17-20) Is this language clear enough to establish that there will be 'death' during the Thousand Years; and, there will be "sinners" who have 'evil called down upon them.' This last phrase helps us to understand what Revelation 20:6 said about those Saints raised in the First Resurrection: '*over these the Second Death has no authority.*' If that is the case, then Second Death does have authority over others during the Thousand Years. What kind of world would this be?

#157. Imagine a world without the Devil? Without the Wild Beast? Without Babylon the Great? Without the False Prophet? Visions of what Eden would have been like had Adam not failed in his faith fire our imaginations. Mankind under the rule of Jesus the Nazarene, without Satanic influence, without religious deception, without political tyranny ought to make for conditions which would funnel mankind's creativity to the healing of the environment in a miraculous way! It would be a world considerably more healthy than anything under the rule of "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4) in pre-Armageddon centuries. Despite the coming and going of successive generations throughout the Thousand Years the rule of Messiah will truly be peaceful and healthy. (Isaiah chs 11, 32, 35, 65)

#158. The Devil was given six millenniums to prove his accusation against God in Genesis chapter 3 and Job chapters 1 and 2. Satan had thousands of years and the world today represents his best efforts. The God of Heaven has allocated a single millennium to demonstrate His grace by means of Christ to all mankind. Ephesians 2:7 explains the reason God has invited the Saints to enjoy a heavenly reward, '*That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace.*' (KJV) Under Messianic rule and judgment it is a time to educate the earth in the "knowledge of Yehowah": '*For earth will be filled with the knowledge of Yehowah as the waters cover the seas. . . For when the earth experiences Thy judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. ... Those who are dead will stand up again; those in the memorial tombs will be resurrected --- joyfully rising like fresh dew from the earth with healing for themselves.*' (Isaiah 11:9; 26:9, 19; NAS; LXX) It is beyond the imagination what all this will mean for mankind during the Thousand Years.

#159. SUMMARY: THE KINGDOM. All those who have ever lived and died ¹⁸⁷ on this planet, save One, are in unconscious sleep ¹⁸⁸ awaiting the resurrection

¹⁸⁷ **DIED.** See 1 Corinthians 15:20, 21; John 5:28, 29.

¹⁸⁸ **UNCONSCIOUS SLEEP.** See Psalm 146:3, 4; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; Daniel 12:2; John

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¹⁸⁹ and the judgment. ¹⁹⁰ Christ was the first ¹⁹¹ to be raised. All claiming to be Christian believers or Saints will be raised upon the Return ¹⁹² of Christ. This has not yet occurred and, therefore, none of mankind has been raised. None have gone to heaven or continue living elsewhere. However, they do **“live to God”** ¹⁹³ because He “remembers” ¹⁹⁴ them and they sense no passage of time as in a very deep sleep. The dead will awake in God’s time and it will seem instantaneous to them from the moment they died. Upon the Arrival ¹⁹⁵ of Christ in his foretold Presence, the Christian dead will be raised into the *parousia*-Judgment upon the Household of God. ¹⁹⁶ The “called and chosen and faithful” ¹⁹⁷ will join Christ as kings, priests and judges ¹⁹⁸ during the Thousand Years. ¹⁹⁹ Following the Thousand Years all the dead among mankind in general, numbering into billions from all periods of historical time, will be resurrected for the Last Judgment. ²⁰⁰ They will all be judged according to their words and works²⁰¹ during their previous life on earth. The righteous will enter eternal life on earth. The wicked will be turned into the Second Death ²⁰² from which there is no recovery.

#160. A SPIRITUAL MYSTERY! There is an exception to the above discussion on the resurrection. There is another facet to this subject of the heirs of the Kingdom and how, indeed, “the Kingdom comes.” This is in reference to those Friends of the Nazarene, or Christian believers, alive on earth at the very moment when Christ returns or arrives in his promised *Parousia*. This special group of faithful and awake Saints receive particular attention in the teachings of the Nazarene. This unique body of disciples is a special focus in the Third Nazarene Principle. Once the Nazarene asked a frightening question: **“When the Son of Man arrives will he find The Faith on earth?”** (Luke 18:8)

#161. Happily we can answer a resounding “Yes!” to this rhetorical question and do so with great confidence. Paul assures us based on two sources: a) a mystery revelation; and, b) the teachings of the Nazarene. First, the “mystery”.

11:11-14; 1 Corinthians 15:20.

¹⁸⁹ **RESURRECTION.** See Acts 17:31; 24:15.

¹⁹⁰ **JUDGMENT.** See Hebrews 9:27.

¹⁹¹ **CHRIST FIRST.** See 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5; 2:8.

¹⁹² **RETURN.** See 1 Corinthians 15:23, 50-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. Compare the judgment of the Saints in the parable of the Sheep and Goats. (Matthew 25:31-46)

¹⁹³ **LIVE TO GOD.** Or, “alive from God’s standpoint.” See Luke 20:38.

¹⁹⁴ **REMEMBER.** See Job 14:13, 14.

¹⁹⁵ **ARRIVAL.** See John 14:3; Matthew 24:30, 31, 42-51; 25:1-30.

¹⁹⁶ **HOUSEHOLD JUDGED.** See 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 4:5, 17.

¹⁹⁷ **FAITHFUL.** See Revelation 17:14.

¹⁹⁸ **KINGS, PRIESTS, JUDGES.** See 1 Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 5:9, 10; 20:5, 7, 12-14.

¹⁹⁹ **THOUSAND YEARS.** For details see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

²⁰⁰ **LAST JUDGMENT.** See Hebrews 6:2; 9:27; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 20:5, 7, 12-14.

²⁰¹ **JUDGED BY WORDS AND WORKS.** Matthew 12:32, 36, 37; 16:27, 28; John 3:19-21; 12:47, 48; Romans 2:5, 6, 15, 16; Revelation 20:12-14.

²⁰² **SECOND DEATH.** See Revelation 20:14, 15.

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We find this primarily in three texts: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, 2 Thessalonians 2:1, and 1 Corinthians 15:23, 51, 52. Presented as a conflate²⁰³ here in a compound paraphrase, these would read in part: *'Now concerning the Arrival (or, Presence) of Christ and our Gathering²⁰⁴ to him: (2 Thessalonians 2:1) ... In complete command, the Lord Jesus, will come down from heaven²⁰⁵ with an Archangel's voice²⁰⁶ and with the Trumpet of God²⁰⁷ and those dead in Christ²⁰⁸ will be resurrected first. Thereafter, we the living,²⁰⁹ who remain to the Arrival of the Lord,²¹⁰ will be snatched²¹¹ in clouds at the same time²¹² and together with the (dead Saints) will meet the Lord in the air. . . Look! I tell you this mystery: We (Saints) will not all die!²¹³ But, we (living Saints) will be changed²¹⁴*

²⁰³ **CONFLATE.** This means a compound paraphrase, drawing two or more verses or phrases together into one unified thought. The Nazarene does this at John 5:28, 29 (= Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2) and John 11:25, 26. (Daniel 12:1, 2) These verses from the Thessalonian and Corinthian letters are fused together to give a clear picture of the overall event.

²⁰⁴ **GATHERING.** Compare Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 21:28.

²⁰⁵ **COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN.** Jesus Christ must leave heaven (Acts 3:20, 21) and descend to the earth's atmosphere. (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7)

²⁰⁶ **ARCHANGEL'S VOICE.** The Messiah is identified as Michael the Archangel. (Daniel 12:1; Jude 9) The LXX calls the Messiah, *'Angel of Great Counsel.'* (Isaiah 9:6)

²⁰⁷ **THE TRUMPET OF GOD.** Likely this is the "signal" or "sign" (LXX) of Isaiah 11:12. Compare Revelation 11:18.

²⁰⁸ **THOSE DEAD IN CHRIST.** Compare 1 Corinthians 15:23.

²⁰⁹ **WE THE LIVING.** Compare Matthew 24:44, 45; 25:1-30; Luke 12:35-48.

²¹⁰ **ARRIVAL OF THE LORD.** Or, literally, *'into the Presence of.'*

²¹¹ **SNATCHED.** Many render this "caught away" or "caught up." The Greek is *harpagesometha* and means to "snatch quickly." (Note Jude 23) A form of the word occurs at Revelation 12:5 and 2 Corinthians 12:2. It is inferred in the case of the Nazarene at Acts 1:9-11. If the Greek were translated by a Latin biased word it would be "rapture" for the Latin *rapere* (from which comes "rape, rapacious, rapture") is nearly identical to *harpagesometha*. The Fourth Century Latin Vulgate uses *rapiemur*. From this comes the teaching of the Rapture. Note the apocalyptic rapture at Revelation 11:12.

Compare the *Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (DNNT), Vol 3, page 602-3: "In 1 Thessalonians 4:17 Paul deals with the final rapture into the fellowship of the redeemed at the last day. It was not the sufferings of the church that caused Paul to make the statement, but the concern of some of its members about the fate of Christians who had already died. This concern is removed by the certainty of resurrection. Those Christians who were still alive would not die but would be taken up directly into the fellowship of those who had already been raised, 'as they leave the gates of the world to meet in the air the Christ acclaimed as Lord.'"

²¹² **AT THE SAME TIME.** The Greek here is *hama syn* and generally most translators omit the word *hama*. This is unfortunate for the two words together emphasize the simultaneous nature of the event. "All" are "changed" or raptured instantly, all together, at the same time, not over some extended period. The brevity of the time period is demonstrated by the Nazarene's own words and warnings at Matthew 24:39-42 ("day"); Mark 13:35 (from afternoon to dawn, a twelve hour period); Luke 17:31-36 (during "day," when two might be working; or, "night" during sleep). When the Lord returns it will be day or night depending on the side of the globe where some are working and some are still sleeping.

²¹³ **NOT DIE.** Or, literally, "not sleep." Judging from Paul's use of "sleep" in this chapter (1 Corinthians 15) alone (6, 18, 20), sleep equates with death. Thus some render this "shall not die." (MOF, GDSP)

²¹⁴ **CHANGED.** TCNT: transformed. Compare Paul's use of *meta-skhematisei* at Philippians 3:21 with regard to the resurrection. In other words a change of the "schematic." Some would apply the "change" to all the Saints, living and dead, however, it seems to us to be an editorial

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*in the thinnest slice of time,*²¹⁵ *in the blink of an eye, at the Last Trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead (Saints) will be raised and we living (Saints) will all be changed.* Do these verses show that one group of Friends of the Nazarene, those alive when Christ commands in the voice²¹⁶ of the Archangel (Michael) and sounds the Trump of God, are “snatched” or “caught away” just after the dead Saints are resurrected? Did Jesus the Nazarene teach the same?

#162. In 1 Thessalonians 4:15 Paul wrote, *‘We say this by the word of the Lord.’* What may this mean? If the “Lord” be here the Nazarene -- Paul’s use of “Lord” in the surrounding context would argue so (verses 1, 15, 16, 17) -- then there is something in Jesus’ teaching which made Paul say this. The *New Jerusalem Bible* renders this phrase, *‘We can tell you this from the Lord’s own teaching.’* If this be correct, from where would Paul draw these conclusions in the sayings of the Nazarene? Where did Jesus teach about a group of dead believers who would be resurrected and a group of living believers who would never die?

#163. The answer is at John 11:25, 26, ***‘If the one believing in me should die, he will live again; and everyone living and believing in me will never die.’*** Are there be two groups here? A believing group which dies and comes to life, or is resurrected; and, a living group of believers who will never die? Could this be the source for Paul’s words?

#164. From what source does the Nazarene draw his own teaching? Jesus’ comforting words to Martha are too much like Daniel 12:1, 2 to be coincidental: *‘Michael will appear²¹⁷ at a time of trouble²¹⁸ and then your People²¹⁹ will be rescued²²⁰ and many²²¹ of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake,*

“we” applying to the subject at hand: those who do not die.

²¹⁵ **THINNEST SLICE OF TIME.** Often rendered “moment” this is the Greek *atomos* from which the English “atom” is drawn. It originally was used of the thinnest slice of bread and later became the shortest possible moment of time. Paul’s metaphor is the speed of an eye blinking which is now known to be 1/250 or 1/500th of a second. The “change” is from the mortal, physical (soul-like) existence on earth to that of the immortal spirit-like in heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:42-50)

²¹⁶ **VOICE.** Note the “voice” in John 5:28 with the Nazarene’s call to Lazarus. (John 11:43) Likely the call at Revelation 18:4, “Come out, my People!”

²¹⁷ **MICHAEL WILL APPEAR.** The JPS renders this correctly as “appear.” On this appearance, note Matthew 24:30; Revelation 12:7, 10.

²¹⁸ **TIME OF TROUBLE.** In another place, the Nazarene alludes to this verse in Daniel and is shown using the word *thlipsis*, the same word used in the LXX at Daniel 12:1. This is the source of the *megale thlipsis*, or great tribulation. (Great Oppression) (Matthew 24:21, 22; Revelation 7:14) In the Nazarene’s teachings in Matthew chapter 24 the gathering of the Saints occurs after the Great Oppression. (Matthew 24:20, 21, 29, 31)

²¹⁹ **YOUR PEOPLE.** The Nazarene calls them “the Elect” at Matthew 24:21, 22. The *Apocalypse* identifies these as a “large crowd.” (Revelation 7:9, 14)

²²⁰ **RESCUED.** Some render this “escape” or “delivered.” The “come out” of Revelation 7:14 is this same rescue.

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*some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence.*²²² This connection places the resurrection and the rapture of the Friends of the Nazarene precisely in the prophetic context of the Great Oppression.

#165. THE GREAT OPPRESSION. It is not possible to discuss the subject of the Kingdom and the Third Nazarene Principle without incorporating the subject of a foretold period of Great Oppression. This subject occurs in John's vision in the *Apocalypse* or *Revelation* where he sees a Large Crowd²²³ standing in the sight of God's Throne, dressed in white robes, and serving God in His Celestial Temple. The heavenly presbyter in the vision asks a question, '*Who are these?*' He then proceeds to answer his own inquiry, '*These come out of the Great Oppression.*' (Revelation 7:9-17)

#166. The exact phrase *tes thlipseos tes megales* used by the presbyter is virtually identical to that used by the Nazarene at Matthew 24:21, *thlipsis megale*. Can there be any question the Nazarene (and the heavenly presbyter) draws this from the *Septuagint* at Daniel 12:1, where *thlipseos* is used in language nearly identical to that of Jesus? Thus "these" in white robes in Revelation 7:14, 15 are the same as the Elect who are "saved" in the words of Jesus at Matthew 24:22; and, therefore, the same as "your people written in the Book" who are "rescued" at Daniel 12:1.

#167. A few verses after Daniel 12:1, 2 the prophet inquires as to the length of time until this "oppression" (*thlipsis*) ends, and as in John's own case, a celestial being answers the question: '*For (three and a half years). And when the breaking of the power of the Holy People comes to an end, then shall all these things be fulfilled.*' (Daniel 12:7) This would seem to fix the period of the Great Oppression at three and a half years.

#168. This period of time is first mentioned earlier in Daniel 7:21-27: '*I beheld, and that Horn made war with the Saints, and prevailed against them (and he shall oppress the Saints of the Most High for three and a half years) until the*

²²¹ **MANY.** Note "many," not the "all" of 1 Corinthians 15:22, for the context deals with Israel and the Saints. "All" will finally rise from their slumber in death at the end of the Thousand Years.

²²² **SOME.** This final phrase is alluded to by the Nazarene in John 5:29 proving that the resurrection is the subject in Daniel 12:2. There is an echo of Daniel 12:2 in 2 Corinthians 5:10. The beloved John almost borrows the word *aiskhynein* at 1 John 2:28 where he uses *aiskhyinthomen* in the context of Judgment Day. (1 John 4:17)

²²³ **LARGE CROWD.** For details on this subject see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*. The Large Crowd is symbolized by the number 144,000. This view is similar to that expressed by the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Colin Brown editor), Vol 2, page 695: ". . . 12 x 12,000 = 144,000 who are sealed . . . from the tribes of Israel; cf. also 14:3. Thus the number 144,000 does not denote a numerical limitation of those who are sealed; it symbolizes the final perfection of the people of God (cf. also 7:9). In this respect when John sees them, as opposed to hearing the number of the sealed, they are 'a great multitude which no man can number . . . (cf. Rev. 7:9 with 7:4).'"

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Ancient of Days arrived. He gave judgment to the Saints of the Most High and the time came and the Saints took possession of the Kingdom. (Based on LXX) These verses are the source for the words at Revelation 13:5-7, *'And authority for forty-two months was given to the Wild Beast and it was given to make war with the Saints and to conquer them.'* This confirms the length of the "time, times, ²²⁴ and half a time" to be three and a half years. It is the same length of time given in Daniel 12:7.

#169. In Revelation 11:2, 7, 12 the Rapture is foretold to occur at the end of this period of Great Oppression: *'It was granted to the nations and they will trample on the Holy City (the New Jerusalem) for forty-two months. ... The Wild Beast will make war with (the Saints) and will conquer them and kill them. ... And spirit of life from God entered (the Saints) and they stood upon their feet ²²⁵ and they heard a great voice ²²⁶ out of heaven saying to them: "Come up here!" ²²⁷ And (the Saints) ascended into heaven in the cloud ²²⁸ and their enemies watched ²²⁹ them.'* Would this not confirm the Rapture occurs after the Great Oppression just as suspected from the Nazarene? (Matthew 24:29, 31)

#170. The Nazarene's own use of the term "great oppression" is in relation to the destruction of Jerusalem and her Temple. It is noteworthy that this period of great distress and affliction occurred between the years 66 to 70 AD, which is a period of three and a half years. In discussing this "distress," Luke 21:20-24 ²³⁰ paraphrases Matthew's and Mark's account about the Great Oppression with these words: ***'When you see Jerusalem being encircled by encamped armies then you know that her desolation has drawn near. These are days of vengeance that all the things written (in Daniel) are to be fulfilled. For there will be great necessity upon the earth and wrath on this people. They will fall by the sword and be led captive into all the nations and Jerusalem will be trampled by the nations until the appointed times of the nations should be fulfilled.'*** It is no coincidence that this great Roman oppression occurred during the three and a half years between 66 and 70 AD. ²³¹ It was during this time that Paul and Peter both sealed their confession of Christ by martyrdom.

²²⁴ **TIMES.** The JPS renders this phrase, "a year, two years, and a half year," that is, three and a half years. Compare Revelation 11:2; 12:6, 14; 13:5-7; Luke 4:25; James 5:17.

²²⁵ **FEET.** Compare Ezekiel 37:1-14.

²²⁶ **A GREAT VOICE.** Compare 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and John 5:28.

²²⁷ **COME ON UP HERE!** Is this the call of 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Revelation 18:4?

²²⁸ **ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN.** It is too similar to 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 to be considered anything but the Rapture. (Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 12:5)

²²⁹ **WATCHED.** Or, "beheld." Evidently the Rapture is visible to those left behind.

²³⁰ **LUKE 21:20-24.** For details on the Nazarene's prophecy see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

²³¹ **70 AD.** It is extremely noteworthy than the whole period of the Jewish wars with Rome, commemorated by coins for five years, ran from the Fall of 66 to the capture of Masada in the spring of 73 AD. This is so close to 2,300 days so as not to be coincidental. (Compare Daniel 8:13, 14 and Josephus' *Wars of the Jews*.)

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#171. It seems clear that Revelation 11:2 is a very strong allusion or paraphrase of Luke 21:24 thus showing that this “appointed times of the nations” is three and a half years in length. When the *Apocalypse* was written Jerusalem lay desolate in fulfillment of the Nazarene’s prophecy for almost three decades. Revelation 11:2 has another city in mind, the Holy City of New Jerusalem mentioned elsewhere in the Bible’s last book. Further, the prophecy in Daniel 12:1, 2 has the resurrection occurring after the Great Oppression. There are two historical periods of Great Oppression against the People of God. One upon the Jewish Elect²³² in the First Century and one to come upon the Christian Elect of New Israel²³³ before the Arrival of the King in his *Parousia*.

#172. SUMMARY. Shortly before the Return of Christ, that is the Arrival of the King in his Second Coming, there will be a Great Oppression lasting three and a half years. Immediately after this Great Oppression, because God brings an end to it by rescuing the Elect, Jesus Christ returns to resurrect the sleeping Saints and to snatch quickly out of harm’s way those living Saints. Following these events, Christ and the victorious Saints, and all the Chosen Angels, come to render judgment upon the earth, culminating in the war of Armageddon. But, this raises some questions related to the coming Kingdom of God taught by the Nazarene in the Third Principle. How does Christ return? Can the time of Christ’s Return be known? Are we in the so-called “last days”?

#173. THE OBJECT AND MANNER OF THE LORD’S COMING. The Nazarene taught he had come from God. He made it clear he was returning to God to receive his Kingdom power.²³⁴ He also taught he would return in glory to gather home his Saints. This is the primary object or purpose of his Return.²³⁵

#174. The Nazarene taught this sudden and unexpected Return would be visible. Jesus said, ***‘As lightning flashes from under the heaven and shines to another part of heaven, so the Son of Man will be on the Day in which the Son of Man is revealed. The Sign of the Son of man will then appear in heaven and all the tribes of the earth will see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven.’*** This will be exactly as the angel predicted at Acts 1:9-11, *‘This Jesus you saw received up from you into heaven (lifted up as*

²³² **JEWISH ELECT.** The Jewish nation was considered God’s Elect or Chosen Ones. (Psalm 105:6, 43; 106:5; Isaiah 65:15, 22) In the days of Christ this included Jesus’ own disciples, like Paul and Peter. Rome saw little difference between the Jews and the Christians. The Christians were just another Jewish sect and they all came under the wrath of Rome during Nero’s bloody oppression.

²³³ **ISRAEL.** See Galatians 6:16; Romans 2:28, 29; 9:6, 7; Revelation 7:4.

²³⁴ **KINGDOM POWER.** See John 6:64; 14:1-3; 17:11, 13; Luke 19:12.

²³⁵ **GATHER SAINTS.** John 14:2, 3; 17:24; Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 17:30, 34-37; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 3:10; 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:1.

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you were watching, a cloud carrying him up before your very eyes) will thus come in the manner you viewed him going his way into heaven.’ It would be difficult not to see in all of this a visible return.

#175. Despite this, however, some hold to an invisible return of Christ. What else would the Nazarene have to say to make it plain his Arrival or *Parousia* was visible, something that could be viewed by a healthy human eye? That it is visible is shown by the reaction of “all the tribes of the earth.” This phrase would include the entire planet where all of these “tribes” live. The angel of the ascension in Acts 1:9-11 makes it clear the disciples “saw” the ascension and assured the marveling Galileans this “same Jesus” will return in this same manner: visibly. ²³⁶ However, the way the inhabitants of earth see the returning Lord may be different from the way “we the living” see him.

#176. Paul says boldly, *‘Have I not seen the Lord?’* However, in the three accounts of his experience on the road to Damascus, it was a blinding light he saw. He heard a voice speaking Hebrew. (Acts 9:3-7; 22:6-11; 26:12-16) To Paul this was as good as ‘seeing’ the Lord; and the Glorified Lord states that he was ‘made visible’ to Paul. While the Saints will actually see the Christ “as he really is,” (1 John 3:2) in his spirit form (1 Corinthians 15:44, 48, 50; 1 Peter 3:18), those alive on earth at that time, as part of “all the tribes of the earth, will observe literally some visual display which will be as “a Sign” anyone can comprehend. (Matthew 24:30) All will know who it is and what is happening. (Revelation 6:15-17) It will have a profound affect on earth’s inhabitants.

#177. It is not impossible to think that God is capable of projecting some holographic image upon earth’s atmosphere, like the northern lights, so the entire globe will see the same thing at the same time: the Arrival of Jesus Christ the Nazarene. The three Gospels Matthew, Mark, and Luke record this prophetic event which follows the three and a half years of Great Oppression: ***‘But immediately after the oppression of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon ²³⁷ will not give it light. The stars will fall from the***

²³⁶ **VISIBLY.** There is a word often associated with the Return of Christ, *epiphania* or *phanerothe* and is usually translated manifest, appear or revealed. It is a word which is rooted in “lamp,” something which lights up subjects so all can see it. (Note Matthew 5:15) That the Arrival of Christ is visible is seen from Hebrews 9:28, *‘The second time Christ will be made visible to those earnestly waiting for their salvation.’* 1 John 2:28 and 3:2 reads: *‘When the Son is made to appear we Saints will not be put to shame in his Presence. . . Beloved, now we are Children of God and whenever the Son appears we shall see him as he really is.’* The word “see” in this last verse is *opsometha* (meaning “to gaze with eyes wide open in amazement” (Strong’s # 3700) and related to the word used in Matthew 24:30, *opsontai*, when earth’s tribes behold the appearing Christ. This word *opsontai* (Strong’s # 3700) is used later in Matthew when the disciples “see” the Risen Christ. (Matthew 28:7, 10; compare Acts 10:40) In Matthew 24:30 if the Nazarene had meant to “perceive” something mentally, the Greek *vooumen* like that of Ephesians 3:20 could have been used, “mentally see.”

²³⁷ **SUN AND MOON.** The sun, moon and stars demonstrates a global affair occurring in the space of a day.

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*heaven, for the celestial dynamics will be shaken.*²³⁸ *The Sign*²³⁹ *of the Son of Man*²⁴⁰ *will then appear in the sky.*²⁴¹ *All the tribes of the earth will give way to great lamentation.*²⁴² *... And on the earth anguish of nations in perplexity like the noise of the sea in its agitation, men fainting from fear*²⁴³ *and expectation of the things coming*²⁴⁴ *upon the inhabited earth. And they will see*²⁴⁵ *the Son of Man coming in glorious power*²⁴⁶ *on the clouds of the sky.'* Is it fair to summarize this as: great oppression, celestial darkness, atmospheric sign, international lamentation, global anguish, and the visible Return of Christ?

#178. Following this Great Oppression, celestial display, and the Sign of the Son of Man's appearance, the Nazarene went on to describe the apocalyptic events: *'And the Son of Man will send off his angels with a great trumpet*²⁴⁷ *and they will gather*²⁴⁸ *together the Elect from the four winds,*²⁴⁹ *from one extreme of the heavens to their other extreme.'* (Matthew 24:31) The one thing clearly stated, regarding the object or purpose of the Lord's Return, is to "gather" his disciples, the Friends of the Nazarene. This action is the primary part of "gathering Celestial things." (Ephesians 1:10) Later, during the Thousand Years and after this Messianic Reign, "the Terrestrial things will be gathered."

#179. This thought of "gathering the Elect" is not new or original with the Nazarene. The prophetic idea was over seven centuries old when Jesus walked the beaches of Galilee. This apocalyptic vision the Lord drew from Isaiah, the Jewish prophet of the Seventh Century BC. Parts of this portent read: *'The light of the constellation Orion will no longer twinkle. For the stars of heaven and all the cosmos of the celestialum shall not give their light. It shall be dark at sunrise and the moon shall not give her light. ... The heavens will shake and the earth will be tremorous. . . (Messiah) will appear.*²⁵⁰ *... He will raise a Sign*²⁵¹ *for the nations and he shall gather the lost ones of Israel from*

²³⁸ **SHAKEN.** See Isaiah 13:13; Revelation 6:12-14.

²³⁹ **SIGN.** Compare *semeion* at Isaiah 11:12. (LXX) No where is this "sign" described, however, some believe it will be that vision of the golden cubic city, the New Jerusalem, approaching earth like an extra-terrestrial visitor. (Revelation 3:12; 21:2, 10)

²⁴⁰ **SON OF MAN.** See Daniel 7:13.

²⁴¹ **SKY.** Or, "heaven." The context determines which "heaven" is involved. Compare Genesis 1:8; Revelation 14:6.

²⁴² **LAMENTATION.** See Revelation 6:15-17.

²⁴³ **FEAR.** See Revelation 6:15-17.

²⁴⁴ **THINGS COMING.** Compare Revelation 6:15-17; 16:1-11.

²⁴⁵ **SEE.** Greek is *opstonai* as at Matthew 28:7, 10.

²⁴⁶ **COMING IN POWER.** Compare Matthew 25:31-46.

²⁴⁷ **TRUMPET.** Compare 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16 with Revelation 11:15.

²⁴⁸ **GATHER.** Compare 2 Thessalonians 2:1 and Revelation 14:14-16 with Matthew 13:39-43.

²⁴⁹ **FOUR WINDS.** Compare Revelation 7:1-4.

²⁵⁰ **APPEAR.** Compare Daniel 12:1 JPS.

²⁵¹ **SIGN.** The Greek is *semeion*. Compare Matthew 24:3, 30.

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the four corners of the earth.' (Isaiah 13:10, 13; 11:6, 12. Compare LXX) The similarities cannot be ignored. Such a celestial event will rock earth to its knees in great fear and lamentation. Much is made in these days approaching the year 2,000 regarding extra-terrestrials. But . . . what if this first "contact" was from a source entirely unexpected?

#180. CAN THE "APPOINTED TIME" BE KNOWN? From the first disciples of the Nazarene, Christians have been keenly interested in the timing of Christ's Return. Today there is excitable interest in this subject as the year 2,000 approaches. Many are the "prophets" who predict the nearness of this event, just as they did as the year 1,000 AD approached, leading to the Crusades. Others have preached the imminent return of Christ and the "end of the world" for over 150 years.

#181. Did Jesus give a "sign" marking the "last days" of our generation? Or, our children's generation? Is there any Biblical time-chronology upon which one could base a date for the Return of Christ with all its attendant universal and terrestrial phenomenon? We check the teachings of the Nazarene with great excitement and expectation.

#182. In view of the glorious Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, four of the Nazarene's apostles asked him this question: *'What will the sign of your Coming and the End of the World?'* (Matthew 24:3 KJV) This reading of the *Authorized Version* has led to much misunderstanding. What were the disciples asking about and what was the Nazarene's answer? A reading of Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, and Luke chapter 21 helps clear up generations of misconception about so-called "last days." Jesus never uses such a term in all the Gospels and whenever the phrase "last days"²⁵² does occur it is always with reference to the end of the Jewish Temple Age which had its fulfillment with the destruction of Jerusalem and her Temple in 70 AD.

#183. As a study assignment, read the context in all three Gospels and the introductory words leading up to the question of the Nazarene's disciples. Were they not asking about the "end" of Jerusalem and her Temple? These disciples may have assumed such a devastating prediction by the Nazarene about the "end" of the Temple meant the Return of Christ and "the conclusion of the Age."²⁵³ The use of the Greek word translated "the end" is *synteleias*. This same word is used at Hebrews 9:26 to refer to the conclusion of the Jewish Temple Age. *Synteleias* is likely borrowed from the Jewish Greek *Septuagint*

²⁵² **LAST DAYS.** See the occurrences of "last days" at Acts 2:17; 2 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 1:1; James 5:3; 2 Peter 3:3. Note Jude 18's allusion to 2 Peter 3:3 for an application. For details on this subject see the work *Nazarene Apocalypse*. The phrase "last days" also occurs in the KJV at Isaiah 2:2; Daniel 8:19; Micah 4:1 and likely also refers to the period before the destruction of Jerusalem.

²⁵³ **AGE.** The word translated "world" by the KJV is *aionos* and is understood to be more like "Age" or the English *eon* (æon). (See Hebrews 9:27; 1 Corinthians 10:11)

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(LXX) at Daniel 9:27 to refer to the foretold desolation of the Temple as Jesus also predicted. “The end of the world” meant the end of their Jewish world centered around their Temple with the destruction of Jerusalem, not the end of the world or all life on the earth. [For more details see the online publication [Nazarene Apocalypse](#) or read the web site article, [Did Jesus Predict the End of the World?](#)]

#184. THE NAZARENE ANSWER. Consider the three Gospels again for Jesus’ answer. His very first words are a warning, evidently in response to an attitude of the disciples, taking into consideration their concern over the timing of matters. He cautions them: **‘Look out that you do not make a mistake, for many will come in my name, saying, “THE APPOINTED TIME HAS APPROACHED.”’**²⁵⁴ **You should not follow them!’** Right from the start the Nazarene warns them. Any future disciples are not to be misled by men claiming Christ’s authority, as if he were speaking only through them as a channel: false prophets and pseudo-anointed (Matthew 24:11, 24) who have worked out some time-chronology or prophetic method for foretelling the generation who will see the Return of Christ. “Do not follow them!” is the Nazarene’s clear warning.

#185. There are two reasons for this: a) Jesus himself does not know “the day and hour” of his Return, Arrival, or *Parousia*. He admits, **‘But about that day and hour no one knows, not the angels of heaven or the Son, but only the Father.’** (Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32) And, b) no disciple of Christ, no servant of Jehovah, no matter how Scripturally knowledgeable, can claim to have calculated such a date: **‘Because you do not know on what kind of day your Lord is coming²⁵⁶; whether in late afternoon, midnight, cock-crowing, or dawn. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know when the appointed time²⁵⁷ is when the Lord of the House is coming.’** (Matthew 24:42; Mark 13:33, 35) This ignorance is in harmony with the Nazarene’s later warning to his apostles following their question, **‘It does not belong to you to know times or appointed time²⁵⁸ which the Father put in his own authority.’** (Acts 1:6, 7) Any such claims must be false prophecies and

²⁵⁴ **TIME HAS APPROACHED!** Others render this: WEY: the time is close at hand; NEB: the Day is upon us; BY: the time is at hand!

²⁵⁵ **DAY.** Note this is no generational period lasting 80 years or more. Judging from those watches of the Jewish day, 6 PM, midnight, 5 AM, or 6 AM, a twelve hour period is suggested. Compare Matthew 24:40, 41 and Luke 17:34, 35 where both day and night are included because it will be one or the other depending on which side of the planet.

²⁵⁶ **COMING.** The Greek is *erkhetai*, *elthon* (Matthew 24:46), or *erkhomenon* (Mark 13:26, 35, 36).

²⁵⁷ **APPOINTED TIME.** Or, “time.” (Compare KJV, RIEU) The Nazarene did not expect the “end” or the *parousia* immediately. He tells his own disciples they will long for the *parousia* but will not see it. The *parousia* would not occur until some unknown time in the future. Compare Luke 17:20-22; 19:11, 12.

²⁵⁸ **TIMES OR APPOINTED TIME.** See KIT. This statement about the Father’s authority occurs about the same time as Matthew 28:18, 19 where the Nazarene states his own authority.

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represent that “presumptuous” character identified by Moses. (Deuteronomy 18:20-22) The warning is precise and direct: Friends of the Nazarene should not be misled by such false prophecies. **‘DO NOT FOLLOW THEM!’** the Nazarene directs. (Or, “do not join them.” NJB)

#186. FALSE PREICTIONS. It is unfortunate that many Christian teachers have been so “presumptuous” to assume Christ must return while they are alive, as if they were the all-important reason for his Coming. Sadly, there have been a multitude of attempts to make calculations regarding the *Parousia* of Christ and the so-called “end of the world.” This has been done in two ways: a) time chronologies; and, b) a compilation of “signs” into one “composite sign” marking the so-called “last days.” Let us consider these.

#187. TIME-CHRONOLOGIES. There are several types but one of the most well-known is at least more than two centuries old.²⁵⁹ One has been the effort to apply Daniel chapter 4 to a prophetic “Seven Gentile Times” and tie these in with Luke 21:24. As already demonstrated in previous pages these “times” in Luke 21:24 are three and a half years based on Daniel 12:7 and Revelation 11:2. Nothing proves this more than the actual fulfillment between the years 66 to 70 AD. A careful reading of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream as given by Daniel will turn up the word “interpretation”²⁶⁰ 8 times. The explanation to this King of Babylon’s dream is given by Daniel, the angel of the vision, and the actual fulfillment²⁶¹ recorded in the chapter. Is it fair to state that the “interpretation” is right there in front of anyone who wishes to read Daniel chapter 4?

#188. Additionally, Daniel chapter 4 is never quoted, paraphrased or alluded to in later inspired writers, unlike chapters 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12. The Revelation or *Apocalypse* makes over four dozen allusions to the book of Daniel, but never chapter 4. Daniel chapter 4 is like chapters 3, 5, and 6: lessons without any specific prophetic significance.

#189. SIGNS OF THE LAST DAYS? Many Bibles carry a topic heading atop the pages in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. Some of these read: “Sign of last days,” or, “Sign of Christ’s presence.” However, search as we may we are unable to find such a phrase as “last days” in these chapters. As mentioned above, the expression “last days” is never used by the Nazarene and is absent from the one book where we might expect it, Revelation. The term “last days” only occurs at Acts 2:17, 2 Timothy 3:1, Hebrews 1:1, James 5:3, and 2 Peter 3:3. These all are most likely talking about the “last days” upon Jerusalem. For example, Acts 2:17 and Hebrews 1:1 clearly are; 2 Timothy 3:1 has a contextual application to Timothy; James 5:3 may well be speaking of the end

²⁵⁹ **TWO CENTURIES OLD.** Compare *Matthew Henry’s Commentaries* on Daniel chapter 4 where.

²⁶⁰ **INTERPRETATION.** See Daniel 4:6, 7, 9, 18, 24.

²⁶¹ **FULFILLMENT.** Compare Daniel 4:28, 33.

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of the Jewish Temple Age; and, 2 Peter 3:3, the most obscure, until we discover it is actually quoted by Jude in verse 18 and applied to those contemporary times.

#190. Is Jesus giving a list of events in the three Gospels which would identify some generation before his Arrival, or *Parousia*? Many read this into it. But, noting the opening warning in the answer to the disciples' question, it may just as well be a lesson that they are not to be misled by local or world happenings into which something like a sign could be read. Those who insist the Nazarene's mention of wars, famines, pestilence, earthquakes and international preaching go to great lengths to list the horrors of the Twentieth Century. Since these can be nebulous, because such things have happened throughout the last nearly two thousand years, the same "prophets" go to great lengths to establish the identity of the final generation. In the last 150 years numerous dates have been put forward with great conviction, and the accompanying large donations: 1844, 1874, 1888, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, 1974, 1975, 1985, and 2,000.

#191. JESUS GIVES TWO SIGNS. This does not mean the Nazarene did not foretell a specific Sign or signs: one to appear before the destruction of Jerusalem and the second to occur before the Return of Messiah. Regarding this first "sign," and with the context of the Temple and the approaching desolation of Jerusalem in mind, note Matthew 24:15 as a preeminent sign indicating the approach of the holy city's "end". The *Lamsa* translation from the Aramaic (related to the language the Nazarene spoke) actually has the word "sign" here in verse 15. So, that is the first real "sign" Jesus mentions in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem and her Temple.

#192. This warning Jesus actually borrows from Daniel 8:9-11, 13 and 11:15. Jesus had already used words similar to Daniel in Luke 19:43, 44: ***'Because the days will arrive upon you when your enemies throw up a palisade. They will encircle you and they will distress you from every side. They will dash you and your children to the ground and they will not let a stone upon a stone within you.'*** Our faith is stimulated to great heights by the knowledge both Daniel and Jesus Christ foretold the "end" of Jerusalem's Temple.

#193. So, Jesus' answer from Matthew 24:4-22 deals first precisely with the city of Jerusalem and his prediction of her Temple's destruction. But, using this Great Oppression on Jerusalem as a prophetic pivot or overlay, the Nazarene telescopes²⁶² through time (remember he does not know the "day and hour") to the next important event in relation to the disciples' question: the *Parousia*, or Return of the King. First, he warns about private or isolated appearances in Matthew 24:3-28, explaining that the Arrival of the Son of Man will be as

²⁶² **TELESCOPES.** Something like Paul at 1 Corinthians 15:23, 24.

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discernible as lightning shining from east to west. Something no one can miss. Anyone who claims Jesus appears in the bed-chamber, or out in the desert, is no different than those who claim, “The Time Is At Hand!” or, “The Christ is here!” Whether that be visible or invisible.

#194. THE SIGN OF THE KING’S ARRIVAL. Now, for the first time, the Nazarene foretells the second or final Sign in Matthew 24:29-31. This Sign follows after the Great Oppression of three and a half years. First, the heavens and the atmosphere are prepared: solar, lunar, and stellar darkness give an awe-inspiring back-drop to the apocalyptic vision about to occur. “The Sign of the Son of Man” appears in heaven. What shape this sign will take is unknown but no one on earth will miss its point, for “they will see the Son of Man returning on clouds.” While nations tremble in fear and wail in lamentation, the Son of Man sends out his angels to gather the Elect, both the dead Saints by resurrection, and the living Saints by rapture. This later event will evidently be visible to their “enemies.” (Revelation 11:12)

#195. The only way the last “generation” of Friends of the Nazarene will know they are living in the “last days” is when they see this Great Oppression followed by the celestial phenomenon and the appearance of the Son of Man in the atmospheric heavens. It is to this moment the Gospel of Luke is referring when Jesus says, ***‘But when these things (celestial darkness and the visible Arrival of the Son of man) start to occur, rise and look up because your deliverance is drawing near. ... So, whenever you see these things occurring (celestial darkness and the visible Return of Christ) know the Kingdom of God is near.’*** (Luke 21:28, 31) Then, and only then, could any Christian proclaim, *‘The end has come!’* (Revelation 16.17 PME) Then, and only then, could the final “generation” before the Return of Christ be identified.

#196. Those Friends of the Nazarene of the Elect, that is, “we the living,” as Paul describes them, who have come out of the Great Oppression, are given specific counsel by Jesus, to: a) keep awake in expectation of Christ’s Return, for it will come at an hour ones does not expect; and, b) avoid those things which dull the senses. The Nazarene taught, ***‘But pay attention to yourselves so you never become burdened in your hearts by overeating, drunkenness, and anxieties of life and that Day arise with a surprising quickness like a snare. For that Day (of the King’s Arrival) will come upon all living on the entire globe. Keep awake and pray in every season so that you might be strong enough to escape all the things destined to occur and to hold your place before the Son of man.’*** (Luke 21:34-36)

#197. The Nazarene taught, then, that he would return to heaven and thereupon receive the Kingdom throne.²⁶³ He reigns alone²⁶⁴ until that future

²⁶³ **RECEIVE THE KINGDOM.** See Luke 19:12.

²⁶⁴ **RULES ALONE.** See 1 Corinthians 15:23, 25.

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time when he returns to gather his disciples²⁶⁵ by resurrection and rapture.²⁶⁶ This marks a milestone when he is now associated with his fellow members in the Kingdom. In this way the 'Kingdom comes.'²⁶⁷ At this future unknown date, during the Last Trumpet, it may be said, *'The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and his Messiah and he will reign into the Ages of the Ages. "We give thanks to you, Lord God, the Almighty, because you have taken your great power and begun to reign."'*²⁶⁸ (Revelation 11:15) Is this all there is to the Third Principle and the subject of the Kingdom? What else did the Nazarene teach on this subject? What about his many parables which say "the kingdom of the heavens is like"?

#198. THE KINGDOM OF THE SON. There is another feature or aspect to this subject of the Kingdom. When speaking over 100 times about the Kingdom, the Nazarene nearly always presents the Kingdom as something contemporary and operating as an opportunity during the life of Christ. There are really two kingdoms in the Nazarene's teachings: the Kingdom of the Son and the Kingdom of the Father. Note this in Matthew 13:41, 43: ***'The Son of Man will send forth his angels and collect out from his Kingdom all stumblingblocks and the lawless. Then the righteous²⁶⁹ will shine as the sun²⁷⁰ in the Kingdom of their Father.'*** Note that in the Kingdom of the Father are only the "righteous," while in the Kingdom of the Son there are those "stumblingblocks" and the "lawless." Clearly, there is a difference between the two kingdoms.

#199. Paul refers to the Kingdom of the Son when he writes, *'God delivered us out of the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son.'* (Colossians 1:13) Christ had begun to rule, established on his throne²⁷¹ in fulfillment of Psalm 2:6²⁷² upon his resurrection and ascension to heaven. His power is complete and includes his Church²⁷³ or Congregation. Really, this Kingdom is the realm or domain of Messiah's kingly rule and his territory contains all those who agree to submit to his royal sovereignty. It has been called the 'Realm of Profession' and all those in it are those who claim to be Christians and disciples of the Nazarene. In order to truly qualify they must

²⁶⁵ **GATHER HIS DISCIPLES.** See Matthew 24:31; 2 Thessalonians 2:1.

²⁶⁶ **RESURRECTION AND RAPTURE.** See 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17.

²⁶⁷ **KINGDOM COMES.** See Daniel 7:22, 27.

²⁶⁸ **BEGUN TO REIGN.** God has always been "King of Eternity" (1 Timothy 1:17; Revelation 15:3) but there are those special moments when his rulership is praised, his power manifest, marking a new phrase in his rule. (Psalm 93:1; 97:1; 99:1) Note this is repeated at Revelation 19:6 after the destruction of Babylon the Great.

²⁶⁹ **RIGHTEOUS.** See Matthew 25:37.

²⁷⁰ **SHINE AS THE SUN.** See Daniel 12:3, the source for this phrase.

²⁷¹ **HIS THRONE.** Note Revelation 3:21.

²⁷² **PSALM 2.6.** Note Peter quotes Psalm 2:1, 2 at Acts 4:24-27 and Paul quotes Psalm 2:7 at Acts 13:33 and apply the Second Psalm to the year 33 AD.

²⁷³ **CHURCH.** The Greek is *ecclesia*. Compare Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 2:10.

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confess, “Jesus Christ is Lord.” (Romans 10:9, 10) This confession is normally followed by baptism in total immersion in the name of Jesus Christ.

#200. When Jesus walked the earth the opportunity was first opened ²⁷⁴ to gain this membership into the Kingdom of the Son by the course of discipleship. ²⁷⁵ Also, the King was present and walking among the Jews. Thus the Nazarene could say, ***‘The Kingdom has drawn near. ... The Kingdom is in your midst.’*** ²⁷⁶ ***... You are not far from the Kingdom of God. ... From John the Baptist the Kingdom of God is declared as good news and everyone has been crowding into it.’*** (Mark 1:15; Luke 17:21; Mark 13:34; Luke 16:16 GDSP)

#201. It is several parables of the Nazarene which reveal certain truths or mysteries about this “kingdom.” An understanding of these will help you to know just where you are today in relation to the Kingdom of the Son. It is in these chapters that many elements or features of the Kingdom are found. In these the Kingdom is that ‘Realm of Profession,’ or that opportunity of membership within the Nazarene community of Christian Saints, or the Church of Christ. Note some of these truths as part of the Third Principle.

#202. THE KINGDOM’S VALUE. Compare Matthew 13:44-46 and note the Nazarene’s parable illustrating the value of entering the Kingdom. What are you willing to give up or surrender to enter the Realm of Kingdom Profession? What are you willing to “sell” in order to obtain this privilege?

#203. KINGDOM EVANGELISM. Matthew 13:47-50 compares the Kingdom to a “dragnet” which was lowered into earth’s “waters” with the coming of Messiah and has been fishing these seas by evangelism for almost two millennia. Not all the “fish” ²⁷⁷ caught are suitable and some are offensive stumbling-blocks who practice lawlessness despite any professions ²⁷⁸ to the contrary. The Son will gather out or separate these and put the “good” into vessels. Likely this will be done at the *parousia*-Judgment ²⁷⁹ on the Household of God when the Messiah returns. All Christians will be raised and then judged. Those “unsuitable” will be cast out and in this way the Son ‘gathers out of his Kingdom’ the lawless. A study of the Seven Apocalyptic Letters in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 will reveal some different types of Christians who have been collected in the Gospel Dragnet. How do you feel you will be represented at the *parousia*-Judgment? (1 John 2:28; 4:17)

²⁷⁴ **FIRST OPENED.** Compare Ephesians 3:5, 6; 2 Timothy 1:10.

²⁷⁵ **DISCIPLESHIP.** Matthew 16:24-26.

²⁷⁶ **IN YOUR MIDST.** There is a tradition to translate Luke 17:21 as “the Kingdom is within you” to make it just the rule of Christ in the heart rather than a real government. However, note who Jesus said this to.

²⁷⁷ **FISH.** Compare Matthew 4:19.

²⁷⁸ **PROFESSIONS.** Compare Matthew 7:22; 25:44.

²⁷⁹ **PAROUSIA-JUDGMENT.** Compare Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Peter 4:5, 17.

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#204. A KINGDOM IN FERMENT. The Nazarene foretold a most interesting matter in his parable of the leaven at Matthew 13:33. (Luke 13:21) Leaven generally has a bad connotation ²⁸⁰ and the Nazarene warns about the teaching “leaven” of the Pharisees (the conservatives), the Sadducees (the liberals), and the Herodians (the political). For 19 centuries now “leaven” has been permitted in the “whole” of the Realm of Christian Profession. It has become completely fermented. It is no longer pure, despite heated protestations by militant sects. Nor can any claims to be the restored form of “true Christianity” be accurate.

#205. The record in the Book of Acts demonstrates many of the early fermenting problems in the Church. By the time of the writing of the epistles to the Corinthians Paul can assert, *‘The Christ is divided,’* and, *‘Schisms must exist among you to reveal the approved.’* (1 Corinthians 1:13; 11:19) By the end of the First Century, John can warn, *‘It is the Last Hour and many antichrists have appeared.’* (1 John 2:18, 26) By the end of the Second Century there were more than a hundred “sects,” and today there are thousands, with more than a few insisting they are the only channel to God. No matter where one goes in the Christian world, there is ferment.

#206. EXTRAORDINARY KINGDOM GROWTH. The Nazarene foretells phenomenal growth of the Kingdom, or Christian Church. The Nazarene’s work began very small, tiny as a mustard grain. But, the Realm of Christian profession is like a great tree and birds come home to roost. Whereas, in the very beginning the Kingdom was persecuted, it grew and grew until it became the official religion of the Roman empire. What would have been Pilate’s, or the Jew’s, reaction if Jesus had told them that within three hundred years the emperor would be Christian and that soon thereafter a “form” of Christianity became the official state religion? Or, that one day nearly two billion people, one-third of earth’s inhabitants, would profess some belief in Jesus Christ the Nazarene? Today, the so-called Christian world is the most powerful on earth having triumphed over Communism.

#207. A REALM FILLED WITH WEEDS. The Nazarene’s parable at Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 is perhaps the most enlightening, and at the same time, alarming. The illustration foretells the outcome to the foundation Christ laid in building his own “congregation.” ²⁸¹ In this parable, the Nazarene foretells how he begins to sow his wheat seed but while his original apostles are asleep in death, the Devil sows imitation “tares” or “darnel” ²⁸² which have the same

²⁸⁰ **LEAVEN.** Compare Matthew 16:6, 11, 12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 5:9.

²⁸¹ **CONGREGATION.** Compare Matthew 16:18.

²⁸² **DARNEL.** The “tares” is from the Greek *zizania*. They have all the appearance of “wheat” but when grown the wheat turns golden with bowed heads and the *zizania* turn black with erect stalks.

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appearance as wheat in their early stages. The Christian field, the Kingdom, becomes saturated with the corrupt weed, like the leaven of the earlier parable. These are identified as the “sons of the wicked one.” The wheat are the “sons of the Kingdom.” At The End (or, *synteleia*,²⁸³ meaning consummation or ending together) there will be a harvest²⁸⁴ in which the counterfeit are collected and finally burned.²⁸⁵ The wheat-like “sons of the Kingdom” are gathered by the angels²⁸⁶ into the Father’s Kingdom “barn” at the *Synteleia*, there to shine like the sun. (Daniel 12:3)

#208. The Biblical and historical evidence paints a vivid picture of this slow corruption and fermentation covering three centuries with gangrenous affects throughout the ages. (2 Timothy 2:16-3:9) By means of these several parables the Nazarene predicts what will happen to his initial efforts in his first manifestation. Jesus is foretelling the final condition just before the angelic harvest at the Return or *Parousia* of Christ. A field sown with weeds and fermented by corruption, with scattered individual wheat here or there, almost unidentifiable from the *zizania*. They grow “together,” not separated from the weeds until by angelic miracle under the direction of the returning King. Happily, this seal remains, ‘*The Lord knows those who belong to him.*’ (2 Timothy 2:19)

#209. This apostate corruption was also foretold by several of the Nazarene’s disciples, no doubt following the lead of the parables. Paul evidently draws from these parables, for he also warns, ‘*After my departure big wolves will enter among you, not sparing the flock. And out of you will rise men speaking twisted things, drawing off the disciples who follow them. ... The (prophetic) spirit says in later seasons some will apostasize from the faith, minding errant spirits and the teachings of demons. ... These men will take their stand against the truth, men corrupted of mind and disapproved regarding the faith. ... For there will be a season when they will not hold onto healthy teaching but according to their own desires they will pile up their own teachers to have their ears tickled.*’ (Acts 20:29, 30; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:8; 4:3)

#210. Peter agrees with this for he predicts, ‘*But there occurred false prophets among the people (Israel) and so also there will be false teachers among you, bringing in destructive heresies.*’ (2 Peter 2:1) The disciple Jude is to write, ‘*I had to write and encourage you to strain every nerve in agony for the faith*

²⁸³ **SYNTELEIA.** The Greek word means “with” + “end.” It means completion, consummation, conclusion. It is a more heightened form of *telos* but means roughly the same thing. The word occurs in relation to the end of the Jewish Temple Age at Matthew 24:3 and Hebrews 9:26. The word occurs in a different prophetic context at Daniel 9:27 and 12:13. (LXX) Compare *telos* at 1 Corinthians 15:24.

²⁸⁴ **HARVEST.** Compare Revelation 14:14, 15.

²⁸⁵ **BURNED.** Compare Matthew 25:46.

²⁸⁶ **GATHERED BY ANGELS.** Compare Matthew 24:30, 31. Note the “weeds” are burned before the angelic gathering of the “wheat” into the Father’s barns.

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once and for all given to the Saints. For some men have sneaked in, Irreverential men long ago condemned to judgment.' (Jude 3, 4) Jude goes on to devote most of his letter to identifying these types.

#211. And, finally, near the end of the First Century, the last apostle, beloved John, writes: *'Little boys, it is the Last Hour and as you have heard antichrist are coming, already many antichrists exist. They left us because they were just not our kind. ... Beloved, do not believe every "inspired" saying. But, test them to see if they are really from The God, for many false prophets²⁸⁷ have gone forth into the world.'* (1 John 2:18, 19; 4:1)

#212. WHERE ARE WE NOW? Nearly two thousand years have passed with the new millennium and the year 2,000 pressing down on us. Centuries of missionary work have spread the Nazarene Gospel into every nation on earth. Satellites high above the earth beam evangelical messages to a world. Zealous preachers stand on street corners, go from door to door, and preach from television pulpits. Others, hundreds of thousands, quietly go about their lives while carrying Christ with them into their daily lives.

#213. Christ has not returned and any claims that 'he is here!' are false, the product of pseudo-prophets. Christ's Kingdom has spread abroad as Christendom (the Kingdom of Christ) and all churches and sects (orthodox or unorthodox), denominational and non-denomination, are all part of this field of the Lord infested with weeds and corrupted by the ferment of doctrinal and procedural "leaven." Among all of these are to be found those "sons of the Kingdom," the class of true wheat, whom only the Lord knows. Perhaps some are associated with established religions and sects. Others are alone or in small groups of just "two or three," and these may draw courage from the Nazarene's words, ***'Where two or three are met in my name, I am in their midst.'*** (Matthew 18:20) Happily, upon the Return of Christ all of these will be gathered and join their resurrected brethren to ascend toward their Lord in glory.

#214. "DO NOT FOLLOW THEM!" The Nazarene had warned of those who proclaim, "The Time Is At Hand!" There is a certain danger in this multitude of sects. Unfortunately, hidden agendas are part and parcel with most, if not all religious movements. These agendas are motivated by greed, power, or that arrogant belief that they are the only "channel" to God. When Yahweh gave His Law to Moses there were about 600 commandments. Two and a half millenniums later this had become 100,000. In the Nazarene's teachings as recorded by Matthew there are about 60 injunctions or principles, most presented in the positive.

²⁸⁷ **FALSE PROPHETS.** Recall the Nazarene's warning at Matthew 24:11 and Luke 21:8. These may be identified by their "prophecies" which often pinpoint dates for the Return of Christ.

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#215. There is this tendency on the part of religious hierarchies to control the flock by imposing more and more “burdens.”²⁸⁸ The religion of the Nazarene breathes of freedom,²⁸⁹ refreshment, truth, and spirituality. The Nazarene lives an austere and simple, if not ascetic, life. Where religion wishes to control, one may look at those at the top of the hierarchy and note how they live. Does the bottom of the pyramid support the top pinnacle so that they live in a style better than the flock in general? It is true Jesus taught, ***‘The worker is worthy of his wages,’***²⁹⁰ however, the Nazarene set the role model for modern church leaders in his own lifestyle. Paul followed in these footsteps.²⁹¹ Remember the Nazarene’s own teaching, ***‘Watch out for false prophets coming to you appearing as sheep while inside is a ravenous wolf. From their fruitage you will recognize them.’*** (Matthew 7:15, 16)

#216. SUMMARY. Therefore, keep in expectation of your King as you wait in faith. Imitate your Lord by loving one another.²⁹² In this love be free of that judgmental²⁹³ and critical disposition Jesus despised.²⁹⁴ Treat all those professing Christ as your brother or sister and strive not to be guilty of that goat-like sin of omission. Greet strangers, clothe the cold, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, care for the sick, and visit those Saints in prison. Only by these kind actions will you prove yourselves “sheep” worthy of inheriting the heavenly Kingdom of the Father.²⁹⁵

#217. There is no way to pinpoint the timing of the Lord’s Return, or the coming of the Kingdom. No matter when we expect it to be that will not be the time. (Matthew 24:50) There are elements in Daniel and Revelation which would indicate that world events move closer to the moment foretold. Other than this we may view ourselves still in the so-called “Dark Ages.” The wheat still grow together with the *zizania*. The wheat can only continue steadfast, keeping their hearts fixed on an expectation of the Lord’s Return. Their faith will compel them to speak (2 Corinthians 4.13) about the “magnificence of God.” (Acts 2:11 PME) The Friends of the Nazarene will be characterized by this conviction as well as their “love for one another.” (1 John 3:23)

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE: GOD’S WILL ON EARTH

²⁸⁸ **BURDENS.** Compare Acts 15:19, 28; Revelation 2:24. Note “burden” at 2 Corinthians 11:9; 12.13, 14, 16; 1 Thessalonians 2:6, 9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8.

²⁸⁹ **FREEDOM.** Compare John 4:23, 24; 8:32; Matthew 11:29, 30; Galatians 5:1.

²⁹⁰ **WAGES.** Compare Matthew 8:20; 1 Corinthians 9:6, 7, 9-11, 13, 14; Galatians 6:6.

²⁹¹ **FOOTSTEPS.** Compare 1 Corinthians 4:11; 11:1.

²⁹² **LOVE ONE ANOTHER.** Compare 1 John 3:23.

²⁹³ **JUDGMENTAL.** Compare Matthew 7:1-5; Romans 14:1-23.

²⁹⁴ **JESUS DESPISED.** Compare Matthew 25:31-46.

²⁹⁵ **INHERITING THE KINGDOM.** See 1 Corinthians 15:50.

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#218. The Nazarene continued in his model prayer, '**Let your Will be done, as in heaven, also on earth.**' (Matthew 6:10) We have seen how the coming of the Kingdom accomplishes God's will for heaven. Now Jesus prays regarding the Divine Will for the earth, the Fourth Nazarene Principle.

#219. GOD'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE. The Book of Genesis records the great care that went into the progressive preparation of the earth for man and woman as the summit of earthly creation. The account in the first chapter is startlingly similar to the general sequence as understood by most scientists. Whoever wrote this record knew what they were talking about. There are those astrophysicists who state the Big Bang creation of the universe anticipated that type of human and animal species which would populate the earth and sea. A few remarks from well-known scientists and observers represent this support for the record in Genesis.

#220. Rocket scientist Dr. Werner von Braun: "The natural laws of the universe are so precise that we have no difficulty building a spaceship to fly to the moon and can time the flight with the precision of a fraction of a second. These laws must have been set by somebody."

#221. Molecular biologist Michael Denton: "The complexity of the simplest known type of cell is so great that it is impossible to accept that such an object could have been thrown together suddenly by some kind of freakish, vastly improbable, event. ... But it is not just the complexity of living systems which is so profoundly challenging, there is also the incredible ingenuity that is so often manifest in their design. . It is at a molecular level where . . . the genius of biological design and the perfection of the goals achieved are most pronounced. ... Everywhere we look, to whatever depth we look, we find an elegance and ingenuity of an absolutely transcending quality, which so mitigates against the idea of chance. Is it really credible that random processes could have constructed a reality, the smallest element of which a functional protein or gene is complex beyond our own creative capacities, a reality which is the very antithesis of chance, which excels in every sense anything produced by the intelligence of man? . . .Between a living cell and the most highly ordered non-biological system, such as a crystal or a snowflake, there is a chasm as vast and absolute as it is possible to conceive."

#222. Professor of physics, Chet Raymo: "I am dazzled. ... Every molecule seems miraculously contrived for its task."

#223. In *God and the Astronomers*, Robert Jastrow, astronomer: "The details differ, but the essential elements in the astronomical and biblical accounts of Genesis are the same: the chain of events leading to man commenced suddenly and sharply at a definite moment in time, in a flash of light and energy. ... Now we see how the astronomical evidence leads to a biblical view

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of the origin of the world. ... For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

#224. *In the Centre of Immensities*, British astronomer Sir Bernard Lovell: "The probability of . . . a *chance* occurrence leading to the formation of one of the smallest protein molecules is unimaginably small. Within the boundary conditions of time and space which we are considering it is effectively zero."

#225. The Nazarene himself believed in the Genesis account and quotes from it. (Matthew 19:5) God's purpose for the human species and for earth is stated in the record: *'And God made man according to the image of God, male and female He made them. And God blessed them, saying, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it."*' (Genesis 1:27, 28) This subduing of the earth was likely to take the form of proper cultivation, no doubt with a respect for the environment of which Adam and Eve were part and parcel. It was to begin in a paradise garden already planted by God in a geographically located spot near present day Turkey. (Genesis 2:10-14) The record states it this way: *'And Yehwah God planted a garden paradise eastward in Eden and placed there the man whom he had formed. And Yehwah God took the man whom he had formed and placed him in the Paradise of Delight to cultivate and keep it.'* (Genesis 2:8,15) Clearly, it was God's purpose or will for man to live in a Paradise garden of pleasure and with Eve's partnership to spread this garden over the entire globe until earth was peopled with one family living in eternal harmony.

#226. That God intended unending life on earth is illustrated in his warning regarding the Tree of Life in the center of the garden landscape: *'If Adam take of the Tree of Life and eat and so he shall live for ever.'* (Genesis 3:23) Living forever on earth would have been Adam's natural instinctive hope, having been created to continue living forever if he would only remain obedient and loyal to his Creator. Indeed, Adam was hard-wired with internal soft-ware that would function forever. This hope was passed down through the Patriarchs (Job 14:13-15) to the Nation of Israel. (Isaiah 26:19)

#227. God's will for the earth has not changed for mankind in general. King David sang about this prospect for the earth: *'The meek and the righteous shall inherit the earth and dwell upon it forever. ... Yehowah established the earth on her sure foundation, it shall not be moved for ever.'* (Psalm 37:11, 29;104:5) David's son, King Solomon wrote: *'A generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth stands for ever;'* (Ecclesiastes 1:4) and, *'(Messiah) will have subjects from sea to sea.'* (Psalm 72:8)

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#228. It has always been mankind's inner wish to never die but continue alive forever. God planted this hope in the heart and mind of the human species. This inner desire is reflected in a paraphrase of Psalm 49:11, 7, 9: *'Their inward thought is that their dynasties shall continue for ever but none of them can even redeem a dear brother, nor give to God a ransom for his nearest kin, that he should still live forever and not see death and decay in the grave.'* Yes, people want to live and they will do almost anything to continue living even if that life is filled with pain and not as satisfying as they would wish. And, when they have free time to themselves they tend to return to some garden environment in the mountains, tropical beaches or desert oasis. More and more modern humanity is realizing its true roots in Eden and is today concerned about what it has done to the environment. Paradise breathes in the soul of man. Everlasting life bubbles out of the human concept of itself as a creature meant to live forever.

#229. So, God's original purpose was for the perfect human couple, Adam and Eve, to live forever as human souls on earth in a global paradise surrounded by billions of offspring. This is obviously not the situation today, so something went wrong. What was it? In a word: rebellion. However, this apostasy started, not on earth, but in the celestial realm.

#230. To teach his first human creation Adam a lesson, something their Creator and Father might rightly do, God laid only a single command with a sanction upon the Man, *'Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat of it you shall surely die.'* (Genesis 2:17) It follows that Adam was intended to live forever in obedience. Adam was smart enough to know what the word "die"²⁹⁶ meant, the opposite of life. It meant a returning to the dust of Eden's ground. He no doubt could observe this happening with animals²⁹⁷ from time to time. An invisible enemy, a spirit²⁹⁸ rebel made himself a Resister²⁹⁹ or Opposer, a Satan. At the same time he became a liar or slanderer, a Devil, by successfully leading a rebellion. His first willing victims were Adam and Eve. We will discuss this enemy of God in the Seventh Nazarene Principle.

#231. Using a lowly serpent, perhaps much as a ventriloquist or by actual

²⁹⁶ **DIE.** This is a primitive root *mût* regarding which TWOT, Vol 1, page 497 states: "Since God's purpose for our first parents was never-ending life, the introduction of death was an undesirable but necessary result of disobedience."

²⁹⁷ **ANIMALS.** Compare 2 Peter 2:12.

²⁹⁸ **SPIRIT.** Compare Ezekiel 28:12-19.

²⁹⁹ **RESISTER.** Compare Job 1:6; Zechariah 3:1. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (GK), §126 *d* and *e*, states: "The article is, generally speaking, employed to determine a substantive wherever it is required by Greek and English; thus: . . . (*d*) When terms applying to whole classes are restricted (simply by usage) to particular individuals . . . or things, e.g. *adversary*, *the adversary*, *Satan* ..."

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possession of the reptile,³⁰⁰ this Rebel lied about God as to the outcome of disobeying God. He posed a deceptive question to the woman: *'Is it true³⁰¹ God said to you, "You shall not eat of every tree?"'* and then continues to contradict God directly, *'You shall not surely die for God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will become opened and you will be as gods³⁰² knowing good and evil.'* (Genesis 3:1-4) It was the "Original Serpent" who fostered the lie³⁰³ that they would not die but remain alive on earth forever despite their disobedience. The Slanderer accused God of withholding important knowledge as if He had something to hide. A great controversy³⁰⁴ required a universal solution. The rest is history.

#232. Still childless and with an entire human race waiting in their loins, God passed sentence on the first couple and their potential "world" of children. Yehowah rendered the judgment: *'In the sweat of your face (Adam) shall you eat your bread until you return to the earth out of which you were taken, for earth you are and to earth you shall return.'* (Genesis 3:20) Something similar is stated by King Solomon, *'For the fate of humanity and the fate of beasts is the same, as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts. All go to one place. All are of the dust and all will turn to dust again. Who is certain that the spirit of humanity goes up to heaven or that the spirit of the beasts goes down to earth?'* (Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 RSV, BAS)

#233. This same book describes the condition of the dead, *'For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything. ... Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.'* (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10 KJV) As pointed out earlier, the dead are unconscious in sleep. (John 11:11-14) The Psalmist puts it another way, *'His breath shall go forth and he shall return to his earth. In that day all his thoughts shall perish.'* (Psalm 146:3, 4)

#234. A judgment was passed upon all of Adam's offspring. It was the curse of a death-causing disease. The DNA gone amuck and though the hard-wiring of the brain continued to long for continuous life on earth, the fleshly mechanism was doomed to grow old and die. Moses said it this way, *'The Rock, his work is*

³⁰⁰ **REPTILE.** Compare Genesis 3:1 with Revelation 12:9. Note the words "spirit of divination" at Ac 16.16; literally, "with a spirit of python." Gr., *ekhousan pneuma pythona*. God himself showed the possibility of this at Numbers 22:28. (Compare Isaiah 14:13.)

³⁰¹ **IS IT TRUE?** The question deceptively infers the Serpent has other information contradictory to what Eve has learned.

³⁰² **GODS.** The Hebrew is plural *elohiym* (Strongs # 430) and lacks the definite article. Some would render it "God" as the plural of majesty.

³⁰³ **LIE.** Compare John 8:44 and Revelation 12:9. Note Hebrews 2:14 and 2 Corinthians 4:4.

³⁰⁴ **CONTROVERSY.** Compare Job chapters 1 and 2.

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perfect. They have corrupted themselves. Their spot is not the spot of His children.’ (Deuteronomy 32:4, 5) And Job moans, ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of something unclean?’ (Job 14:4) David weeps, ‘In sin did my mother conceive me.’ (Psalm 51:1) Solomon speaks in wisdom, ‘God made the race of men upright but many a cunning wile they have contrived.’ (Ecclesiastes 7:29 MOF) And Paul writes, ‘Through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and through sin, death. So death passed to all men as all sin. ... By the one offense of Adam many died. ... Death reigned through Adam. ... It is appointed for men to die once and after this death, judgment.’ (Romans 5:12, 15, 17; Hebrews 9:27)

#235. Were the offspring of Adam, an estimated 20 billion persons, left without hope? Not according to Paul, for he writes, *‘For the earnest expectation of the (human) creation is eagerly expecting the revelation of the Sons of God. For the (human) creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by Him who subjected it, on the basis of a hope, that also the (human) creation would be liberated from slavery to death and corruption in the grave, into the glorious liberty of the Children of God.’* (Romans 8:19-21) This hope was first inferred in the Edenic prophecy of Genesis 3:15 which we have discussed earlier as part of the Bible’s prophetic puzzle.

#236. Note in this portion of Romans that there are two ³⁰⁵ classifications among the human creation: a) expectant human creation with the hope of liberation from death and decay which translates into living forever on earth as Children of God; and, b) the Sons of God to be revealed who await an adoption in heaven and from where they will rule as kings. (Romans 8:23; Revelation 20:4, 6) These rulers and their subjects are described in Daniel: *‘And the Kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom (realm) under the whole heaven shall be given to the People of the Saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom. All dominions shall serve and obey them.’* (Daniel 7:27) The Psalm of Solomon reads in agreement: *‘The King (Messiah) will come down like rain upon mown fields, as showers that water the earth. In (Messiah’s) days shall the righteous flourish and abundance of peace as long as the moon endures. (Messiah) will have subjects from sea to sea and from the River (Euphrates) to the ends of the earth.’* (Psalm 72:6-8)

#237. WHAT HOPE FOR DEAD MANKIND? Billions of people lie dead in the grave or in some watery deep or have long since disappeared in corruption and decay. When someone dies they are buried or cremated or otherwise given some religious ceremony or memorium. Then they are laid to rest. According to the Bible they enter what the Hebrews called *Sheol* and the Greeks, *Hades*. The Greek *Hades* literally means “unseen” and using all those verses where the word occurs, it is a place of the unseen where the dead are granted a

³⁰⁵ **TWO.** Compare something similar at 1 Corinthians 15:22-24 and Revelation 20:4-6. (1 John 2:2)

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temporary rest in sleep. Both words refer to the grave where the dead await a resurrection and Judgment Day. (Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:12-14)

#238. This resurrection is first promised in the Book of Job, *'For a mortal born of a woman is short-lived and full of trouble. He falls like a flower that has bloomed. He departs like a shadow and cannot continue. For there is hope for a tree. Even if it should be cut down it will blossom again. But a man that has died is utterly gone and when a mortal has fallen he is no more. Man that has lain down in death shall certainly not rise again³⁰⁶ till heaven be dissolved. They shall not awake from their sleep.'* (Job 14:11,13 LXX) Up to this point it appears very bleak for mankind, but Job, with hope, continues: *'O, that you would keep me in Hades, hidden until your wrath ceases. Set me a time and remember me! For if a man should die, shall he live again? I will wait until I exist again.'*³⁰⁷ (Job 14:14, 15 LXX) These verses are taken from the Jewish Greek *Septuagint* of the Third Century BC and the recorded speech is thought to have occurred around the year 1600 BC. It is the first reference to a resurrection.

239. Note *Hades* is a concealed place to which Job prays to be hidden from God's anger. Not a place of torment for damned, otherwise he would not ask God to protect him there. It is a place of unconscious sleep, stored safely in God's infinite memory, awaiting that time when Job would "exist again" or receive his "change." Sixteen centuries before the Nazarene, Job uses the words *palin genomai* to be borrowed by Jesus' translator when he promises his disciples: *'In the new world³⁰⁸ (the re-creation) (the Saints) will sit on thrones to judge.'* (Matthew 19:28) Here the Nazarene's words are translated into Greek with *palingenesia* as if Job were paraphrased. [For more details see the online publication [Where Are the Dead?](#)]

240. Even Jesus himself went to *Hades* for a temporary rest. David foretells it this way, *'I foresaw the Lord always before my face. My flesh shall rest securely in hope because you will not leave my soul in Hades nor will you allow your Holy One to see decay in the grave.'* (Psalm 16:8-10) Peter quotes this verse when he tells the Jews, *'It is permissible to speak plainly concerning David, that he both died and was buried and his tomb is among us down to this day. David, seeing before hand, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Messiah, that his soul was not left in Hades nor did his flesh see decay in the grave.'* (Acts 2:29-31) Thus, our Lord went to *Hades* (or, "hell" KJV) and waited

³⁰⁶ **RISE AGAIN.** This is virtually the root for the word "resurrection," *anaste*. The Hebrew *quwm* (Strong's # 6965) is a primitive root meaning "rise". Related Greek words occur in the LXX at Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:13.

³⁰⁷ **UNTIL I EXIST AGAIN.** The Greek is *palin genomai*. The Hebrew text may read: "I will wait until my change (*chaliyphah* Strong's # 2487) comes. You shall call and I will answer you. You shall long for the work of Your hands." Compare KJV: change; NJB: relief; ASV: release.

³⁰⁸ **NEW WORLD.** Various renderings are: KJV: regeneration; KNX: new birth; RIEU: world is born anew; MON: New Creation; WMS: new order; BER: new age.

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in sleep until the third day.

241. That all of the dead in *Hades* will be raised and then judged and thereafter live once again on an earth transformed into an Edenic Paradise, both Paul and John show, when they say, *'God has set a Day in which He is going to judge righteously and in justice the inhabited earth (to come), by a Man He has appointed, having furnished proof of this to all persons by resurrecting this Man from the dead. ... And the sea gave up the dead and death and Hades gave up their dead. And the dead, the great and the small, were judged individually according to their works.'* (Acts 17:31; Hebrews 2:5; Revelation 20:13)

Regarding the extent of this resurrection Paul testifies, *'I believe in The God that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.'* (Acts 24:15) The subject of resurrection and judgment has been discussed earlier where it was shown that the Last Resurrection will occur after the Thousand Years of Messiah's reign over the earth.

#242. Mankind as a whole, including the faithful ancients among the People of God, still await that Day of Resurrection and Judgment. Their resurrection cannot occur until the Saints are raised first. Regarding this Paul writes to the Hebrews in his day, *'In faith and still believing, all of these patriarchs died without receiving the promises, but they did see them far into the distance, for God had foreseen something better for us (Saints) in order that the ancients might not be perfected apart from us.'* (Hebrews 11:13, 39, 40) These ancients held that hope foretold by Isaiah, from whom the Nazarene quotes: *'The dead will be resurrected and those in the tombs will be raised, rising early in the earth, numerous as dewdrops. ... For the hour comes in which all those in the tombs will hear the Son's voice and come out, those who have done good to a resurrection of life, those who did vile things to a resurrection of condemnation.'* (Isaiah 26:19 LXX; John 5:28, 29)

#243. THE BASIS OF RESURRECTION HOPE. When Adam sinned he brought judgment upon his unborn children, the entire human race. God's impartiality called for a balancing of the scales of justice by one opposite act of redemption and justification. This He provided in the form of his only-begotten Son, the first of all His creation. (Exodus 21:23; Leviticus 24:18; Isaiah 53:10-12; Romans 5:12-17)

#244. A great controversy was raised by the Arch Deceiver who had turned himself into such a Manslayer, Opposer and Liar. (John 8:44) The issue is dramatized in the Book of Job, actually the Bible's second book. Satan challenged God that His human creation only served Him for selfish motive and for what they could get out of it. If men such as Job were subjected to a bitter life they would all curse God to His face. (Job chapters 1 and 2) It became an issue of God's right to rule and human integrity to God. If God had no subjects, then He had no right to rule. (Proverbs 14:28 NEB, RSV) Additionally, this

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charge maligned the highest life-form among all God's creatures, the Logos, the Son himself, for even his motives would be called into question.

#245. Fittingly, it was this One who came to earth and became the Nazarene, a perfect Last or Second Adam, in every way a complete hominid or anthropoid. (Daniel 7.13, LXX, VUL; Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:47) The Son prepared to offer himself as a sacrificial ransom for the human race: ***'The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his soul a ransom for many.'*** (Matthew 20:28) In this process he demonstrated a man like Adam could have kept his faith in God. At the same time the Nazarene set the pattern of perfect loyalty to God and selflessness in his relations with other humans.

#246. The Nazarene knew this was in fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies: *'(The Messiah) is to be a man of suffering and acquainted with the bearing of sickness. He bears our sins and is pained for us. He was wounded on account of our sins and was bruised because of our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. By his bruises we were healed. Yehowah gave him up for our sins. He bore our sins and was delivered up because of their iniquities. ... (Messiah says), "Sacrifice and burnt offerings you did not want, but a body You prepared for me. Behold, I come to do your will, O my God, and your law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation. I have declared your salvation.'* (Isaiah 53:3-12; compare Acts 8:26-35; Psalm 40:6-10 and the quote of it at Hebrews 10:5-10)

#247. This selfless act of obedience is called the Ransom³⁰⁹ and is the means of redemption and justification. It canceled the debt and burden of sin and along with it the guilt. This declaration of "Not Guilty" is based on the faith and obedience of those who believe. (John 3:16, 19-21, 36) The result is describe by Hebrews 10:22: *'Approach (God) with a genuine heart and in the complete conviction of faith with our hearts sprinkled from a wicked conscience and our bodies bathed with clean Water.'* This new standing before God results in a cleansed conscience which comes from the knowledge that God through Christ has canceled sin's condemnation. (Romans 8:1-3; Hebrews 9:9, 14; 1 Peter 3:21)

#248. This new standing before God as one of His children, with this "cleansed conscience," may be compared to having one's life completely recorded on a tape, with every word, thought and deed transcribed for others to read. The thought of others knowing this will weaken the knees of most. However, if God were to erase all the bad, evil or wicked from this record of our humanity, leaving only those good and charming sides to our character, then we would be quite willing to let others hear our life account. That feeling you would have knowing that such a "tape" had now been doctored in your favor is the same

³⁰⁹ **RANSOM.** Compare Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; Romans 3:24; 8:23; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesias 1:7, 14; 4:30; Colossians 1:1; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 1:18)

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sense of forgiveness one will enjoy once pronounced “Forgiven” and “Not Guilty.” What is required, however?

#249. The same is required of each believer that was asked of the Nazarene: selfless love and humble obedience. (Philippians 2:1-9) The apostle John puts this simply, in two prime requirements: *‘And this is the commandment: we should believe on the name of God’s Son, Jesus Christ; and, be loving one another just as the Son gave us the command.’*³¹⁰ *Those who keep this commandment abide in God and God dwells in them.’* (1 John 3:23, 24) How this belief and love are exercised will be shown in the consideration of the Sixth Nazarene Principle.

#250. HAS GOD’S WILL CHANGED? Not at all, for God said to Isaiah, *‘Yehowah made the heaven, this God that created the earth, and made it and marked it out. He made it not in vain but formed it to be inhabited. ... So shall my words be, whatever shall proceed out of my mouth. It shall by no means turn back until all the things I willed shall have been accomplished. ... The wolf shall feed with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. The young calf and bull and lion shall feed together and their young shall be together. The lion will eat straw like the ox. An infant shall put his hand on the holes of asps and on the nest of young asps. They shall not hurt nor shall they be able to destroy any one on my holy mountain. For the whole world is filled with the knowledge of Jehovah. Behold, a righteous King shall reign and princes shall govern with justice. The works of righteousness shall be peace and the righteous shall be confident for ever. The desert will blossom as the rose. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf shall hear. Then shall the lame man leap as the stag and the tongue of the speechless shall speak plainly.’* (Isaiah 45:18; 55:11; see chapters 11, 25, 32, 35)

#251. Though the original fulfillment of these verses have strong and direct application to the restoration of Israel and the establishment of a New Israel of God (Galatians 6:15, 16), it is in language which is apropos to the condition in a restored Eden. Without going into great detail, all of this will occur after the dead are released from *Hades*, Death and the watery grave of the Sea, following the Thousand Years. (Revelation 20:5, 13, 14) But, over whom does the Messiah and his Saints reign during the Thousand Years?

#252. GOD’S WILL DURING THE THOUSAND YEARS. That there will be “nations” on earth during the Thousand Years is shown in a paraphrase of John’s apocalyptic vision, *‘Satan can no longer mislead those nations in the four corners of the earth ... for the nations will walk by the light of New Jerusalem.’* (Revelation 20:3; 21:24) Since these “nations” are not the resurrected dead they must be made up of survivors of Armageddon. They are part of those tribes of earth which had originally lamented at the Appearance of

³¹⁰ **COMMAND.** Compare John 13:39; 15:12.

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the Son before Armageddon. (Revelation 20:5; 21:24 KJV; Matthew 24:30; Zechariah 14:16)

#253. In Revelation 7:1-3 four angels are commanded to restrain the destructive force of the four winds so that no harm befalls the earth with its green vegetation. But, when these four angels are released, what will be the final result? The *Apocalypse* predicts, *'Release the restraints on the Four Angels bound upon the river Euphrates. ... And the Four Angels were released, those angels prepared for the hour and day and month and year in order that they may kill one-third of mankind.'* (Revelation 9:14, 15) According to this, one-third of humanity will perish with the destruction of Babylon the Great and in the war of Armageddon to follow. Two-thirds of mankind will survive.³¹¹

#254. Though Messiah and his associate Saints are the only government to rule earth during the Thousand Years, those survivors will still be affected by death as generations come and go. (Ecclesiastes 1:4) Isaiah foretold this: *'And it will come to pass from month to month and from week to week, all flesh shall come to worship before me in Jerusalem, says Yehowah. And they shall go forth and see the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me. ... There shall be no child who dies an untimely death nor an old man who shall not complete his time. He who dies at a hundred years shall be reckoned a youth. The sinner who dies at a hundred years shall also be accursed. They shall build houses and dwell in them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.'* (Isaiah 66:23; 65:20, 21)

#255. Thus successive generations will come and go during this period of judgment. By the end of the Thousand Years when Satan is released from his prison, these nations will have spread abroad in the earth. One can only speculate on what mankind can produce under the godly influence of Messiah's rule. It would be rightly expected that the condition of the earth will be much like a global Eden. And though some difficulties and hardships may occur, it will be light-years of improvement over that world dominated by the god Satan. (2 Corinthians 4:4) The final goal of this new world is stated by Paul at 1 Corinthians 15:28, *'That God may become everything to everyone.'* (MOF) A world God-centered!

#256. However, upon Satan's release there will be those persons who are misled. They will make an attack against the New Jerusalem but divine fire will destroy them. Satan will be destroyed forever by the Second Death. Then, all those who have lived on earth will be raised to the Last Judgment. The righteous will enter Life in eternal paradise with "the day of eternity" (2 Peter 3:18 WEY) before them, with endless possibilities. The wicked will be

³¹¹ **SURVIVE.** Compare Zechariah 14:14-16 and their source in Revelation 22:1, 3, 5. (Note Revelation 21:24 in KJV)

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destroyed by the Second Death.³¹² Thus, this portion of the Lord's Prayer and the Fourth Nazarene Principle taught by the Jesus will be fulfilled.

#257. SUMMARY. A consideration of these four Nazarene principles or truths ought to help in understanding what God's purpose is:

- 1) You can be a member of God's Family with all the rights this entitles you, including unending life in the Celestial Realm.
- 2) The Name of the Father will be sanctified and cleared of all the reproach brought on it by the Great Oppressor, Satan, and his offspring of vipers. (Matthew 23:33)
- 3) The Kingdom will have been prepared and come into its glory to reign a Thousand Years.
- 4) The earth will flourish in peace under the rule of Messiah in fulfillment of God's original purpose.

#258. Does not such a prayer thrill your heart? Does it not make you glad you understand these four Principles in the Nazarene's teachings? Are you not happy the heavenly Father has thought of you and done so much in preparing the future with you in mind? Are you not joyous that a single Human Being loved you so much he was willing to sacrifice his life in your behalf so you could come back into right relations with God? Such heartfelt feelings of emotion ought to move any lover of God to discover His will and learn to walk in the footsteps of the Nazarene. How to do this is explained in the last three of the *Nazarene Principles* of the Nazarene.

THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE: *Bread for this Day*

#259. The Nazarene prayed, '*Give us our bread for this day.*' (Matthew 6:11) And with this simple phrase he introduces to his world a revolutionary attitude toward life and material things. It is the Fifth Nazarene Principle and it is completely at odds with human nature³¹³ in its sinful condition. It flies in the face of modern commercial competition, a characteristic reflected in the Nazarene's disciple James: *"Today or tomorrow we will go into this city and we will spend one year there and we will trade and will make a profit." Come now, you do not know of the morrow. For what is your life? A mist which appears for a brief moment and then vanishes.*' (James 4:13, 14) Indeed, the Fifth Principle cuts to the bone in the human struggle between spirituality and materialism. Like water and oil, the two do not mix well. In the human need for security with

³¹² **SECOND DEATH.** Compare Revelation 20:7-15. For details on chapters 20 to 22 in the Book of Revelation see the online publication *Nazarene Apocalypse*.

³¹³ **HUMAN NATURE.** Compare Luke 12:13-21; Psalm 49:6, 11. Note Ecclesiastes chapter 2.

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its attendant worries about tomorrow, amplified by occasional arrogant self-preservation, spirituality is sacrificed, placed in a secondary place, or abandoned altogether.

#260. The prayer of the Nazarene reflects this mental inclination of not being overly concerned about tomorrow, for he asks the Father only for today's bread, not tomorrow's. Not tomorrow, not the month after. This disposition is right at the top of the Nazarene's teachings. He not only taught it, he lived it. The idea is exactly what we would expect from a highly spiritual individual with absolute faith in his Father.

#261. First, examine the life of the Nazarene. How different he was from many modern religious leaders. No matter the religion you wish to examine you will likely find religious men living in either grand style, or at least one considerably above their "flock" in general. (1 Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:7, 11; 1 Peter 5:2) From East to West, it is the same, even among those who have taken so-called "vows of poverty." Today the Gospel of Success is proclaimed by prosperity preachers. "Give to me and God will give to you," is a recurring theme. It all flies in the face of the Nazarene's teachings.

#262. Admittedly, a Western reader living in a society driven by materialism and greed, or a person raised on the upper middle class norms of affluent countries, will find the Fifth Principle "unrealistic" or "foolish"³¹⁴ and difficult to live by. This teaching of Jesus³¹⁵ contradicts every materialistic principle to which these capitalists have been exposed. But, the Fifth Principle is a goal to strive for as one seeks balance between material concerns and spirituality in a simply life centered on God.³¹⁶

#263. When a young Jewish scribal copyist suggested he follow the Nazarene, the Lord's response was a simple, '**Birds have roosts and foxes have dens, but the Son of Man has no where to lay his head.**' (Matthew 8:20) When a rich young prince asked what he had to do, he was told, '**Go, sell all your belongings and give to the poor and then come³¹⁷ and follow me.**' (Luke 18:18-30) The rich prince's reaction, and that of the disciples, prompted the famous, '**How difficult it will be for those with money to enter the Kingdom of God. Really, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the Kingdom of Heaven.**' Peter's answer to this was: '*Master, we have left all things to follow you.*' To which the Nazarene said, '**Really, I tell you, any who have left house or wife or brothers or**

³¹⁴ **FOOLISH.** Compare the Physical Man's attitude at 1 Corinthians 2:14.

³¹⁵ **THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS.** Compare Luke 18:18-30. That riches are a danger and should be shared in charity is a characteristic of the Nazarene's teachings: Luke 3:11; 6:30; 7:5; 11:41; 12:33, 34; 14:13, 14; 16:9; 18:22; 19:8. See the NJB footnote on Luke 18:18-30.

³¹⁶ **GOD-CENTERED.** Compare 1 Corinthians 15:28: "God is everything to everyone." (MOF)

³¹⁷ **AND THEN COME.** The man had to actually sell all before becoming a disciple of the Nazarene!

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parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God will receive many times more now and in the coming New Age life everlasting.'

#264. The Nazarene made plain his teachings on material things, and the anxieties associated with them, during his famous *Mountain Teachings* at Matthew 6:19-34:

'Save³¹⁸ no treasures for yourselves on earth, where it may be turned to dust by worms and weather, where thieves come in by force. But, keep saving your riches in heaven, where neither moth nor wear-and-tear destroys and where thieves cannot break in and steal. For where your treasure is you may be certain your heart will be there too.

#265. *The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is focused correctly the whole body will be illumined. But, if your eye is selfish and envious, the whole body will be blind. If the very source of light in you is darkness, how intense must be that darkness! No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be loyal to the one and make light of the other. You must serve God or money. You cannot serve both.*

#266. *Stop worrying about your life as to what you will eat or drink nor wondering what you will have to wear. Surely, life means more than food. Surely, the body means more than clothes. Look at the wild birds. They sow not, neither do they reap. Yet your heavenly Father keeps feeding them. Are you not much more valuable to Him than they are? But which of you with all his worry can add a single hour to his life? And why should you trouble over clothing? See how the wild flowers grow. They neither work nor weave and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not dress like one of these. But, if God so beautifully dresses the wild fields of grass, which are green today, but tomorrow is dry and thrown into an oven, is He not more likely to clothe you? O, people, how little you trust Him!*

#267. *So, do not worry and do not keep saying, "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear?" For the people of the world run after all these things. Your heavenly Father already knows you need these things. But, you must make His Kingdom and uprightness before Him your greatest care. Seek first the Kingdom! And all that you need will be yours over and above. So never be troubled about tomorrow for tomorrow will take care of itself. Every day has trouble enough of its*

³¹⁸ **SAVE.** In the Christian Scriptures there are only three references to saving money. (Matthew 25:27; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Ephesians 4:28) The later two both encourage the sharing with others exactly as the Nazarene taught. The word here "save" is a paraphrase of the Greek *thesaurizete* which is usually translated "treasure (not)". Various renderings are: KJV: lay not up; WMS: stop storing up; PHM: don't pile up.

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own.'

#268. What a powerful statement to rock the obsessively self-satisfied and security conscious who claim to be disciples of the Nazarene! The Nazarene also made it clear how to earn "credit" with the Father by the use of one's material possessions: ³¹⁹ ***'Give to everyone asking you and do not ask back from the one taking your things. As you wish men to do to you, you do to them. And if you are loving only those loving you, what credit or reward is there in that? For sinners are loving those who are loving them. And if you only do good to those doing good to you, what credit or reward is there in that?'***

Sinners do the very same thing. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit or reward is there in that? Sinners are lending in order that they might get back at least the same.

#269. ***Be loving even your enemies by doing good to them, lending to them,*** ³²⁰ ***hoping for nothing in return. And then you will be Sons of the Most High. Because He is kind toward the unthankful and the wicked. Become merciful and compassionate in your giving even as your Father is merciful and compassionate. You must be complete in this matter of giving just as your heavenly Father is complete.***

#270. ***Stop judging and being critical and you will not be judged or criticized. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Release others from their debts and you will be released from your Debt. Practice giving. Give to the one asking and do not turn away from the one wishing to borrow from you.'***

#271. This will unsettle many in the modern Western world, even that part which professes Christianity. For proof of spiritual sonship is found in the way one uses material possessions. It is one of the single most apparent ways God judges a person. It is in this unselfish giving, without any agenda, that one has "credit" with God. When the Nazarene teaches about love it is almost always

³¹⁹ **MATERIAL POSSESSIONS.** The following phrases are found in Luke 6:30-38; Matthew 5:42, 48.

³²⁰ **LENDING WITHOUT INTEREST.** This breathes of Nehemiah 5:10, 'Let us cancel these pledges', and Proverbs 19:17, 'Whoever is kind to the poor is lending to Yahweh who will repay him the kindness done.' (NJB) Compare Psalm 37:26; 112:5. Jews were discouraged by Moses to take advantage of loans to fellows. (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-37; Deuteronomy 15:7, 8; 23:19, 20) Jews could loan to Gentiles with limitations. (Deuteronomy 23:20) Jewish commentators understand this to apply, not to cases of need, but to business loans. (*The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, edited by J. H. Hertz, London, 1972, p. 849) Note also Psalm 15:5; Ezekiel 18:7, 8, 13. With the coming of Christianity periods arrived in which Christian businessmen were prohibited banking and usury which they then allocated to the hated Jews. After centuries of this practice, and the Jewish profits which came from it, the economy in Europe reached a stage which finally led to the *Holocaust*.

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couched in the context of material giving.

#272. The Nazarene continues to teach after the parable of the rich farmer and the shrewd steward, ***'Make friends with your unrighteous riches in order that when these material things fail the angels might receive you into eternal dwellings.'*** (Luke 16:9) It is this phrase “when these material things fail” which frightens the materialistic. For there are many ways for financial security to fail: theft, extortion, bank failures, wars, catastrophic illness with its attendant medical expenses, accident, or some unknown electronic failure of the world's computerized systems.

#273. Well, did the Nazarene live this way. Surely he did. We see him leading a simple, even an austere life. A guest here and a guest there. Sleeping nights in the open mountains or deserts with only his cloak. (Luke 5:16; 6:12; 21:37; Mark 1:45) Accepting hospitality from one quarter then another. (Mark 2:14, 15; Luke 5:27) Humble and appreciative enough to allow a group of women to *'minister to him from their belongings.'* (Luke 8:3) In no way did he take advantage of this charity for he leads a simple life and on occasion was actually hungry and tired. (Matthew 4:2; 21:18; 25:35; Mark 11:12; Luke 4:2; John 4:6)

#274. The Nazarene taught his disciples to do the same, for when he sent out his Apostles, and later the Seventy Disciples, he told them: ***'Take nothing for your trip. No staff or food pouch or bread or money or extra clothing.'*** (Luke 9:3) He was to teach them a lesson in faith, for later, after his resurrection, he reminded them, ***'When I sent you out without money or food, did you want for anything?'*** His Apostles said, “No.” (Luke 22:35)

#275. Many efforts have been made to liberalize or water-down the straightforward teachings of the Nazarene on the subject of property and material things. The hidden agendas behind some of these should be obvious. His language is too simple and plain: follow the simple life, free of worry, and trust to the Father to provide your elemental needs. He clearly taught and lived the divestiture of all “things.” To that small circle of his Apostles, he said: ***'Fear not, little flock, for your Father has approved of giving you the Kingdom. Go and sell everything and give charitable gifts (to the poor).'*** This he also taught in the parables of the pearl of great price and the hidden treasure. (Matthew 13:44-46)

#276. The same theme runs through Paul's writings: *'Reverential devotions along with contentment are great gains. For we did not bring anything into the world and it is for sure we are not leaving here with anything. But, having food and clothing, we will be satisfied and content with just these. However, those who are resolved to be rich³²¹ fall into temptation and a snare and many hurtful*

³²¹ **RICH.** The definition for the word “rich” from a Biblical standpoint is one having a “surplus.”

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things which sink them to the bottom of ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a source of every kind of evil and by resolving upon this kind of love some Christians have been seduced and distracted from the faith, inflicting themselves with many pains.' (1 Timothy 6:6-10 PME) These words are very similar to those of the Nazarene's parable: **'And other seed are those sown among the thorns. These are the ones who heard the Word but the anxieties of this Age, and the seduction of riches and the desire for things, choke the Word and it becomes unfruitful.'** (Mark 4:18, 19)

#277. Paul does not give commands for rich Christians to divest themselves of their wealth, but he does give these "orders": *'Lay this charge to those who are rich in this Age, not to be high-minded but to put their hope, not on non-existent riches, but upon God. Work at good. Be rich in fine works. Distribute well to the needy. Be ready to share. Treasure up a fine foundation on the Future and thus attain Life in reality.'* (1 Timothy 6:17-19) Under such a charge, the rich who claim to belong to the Nazarene Community of Christian Saints, or the Christian Church, must look well to their charitable spirit, lest they experience shipwreck of the Faith. This is an individual decision which other believers should never criticize.

#278. However, Paul's disposition was clear. He wrote, *'I consider all things a complete loss because of the priceless privilege of knowing the Christ, Jesus my Lord, for whom I suffered the loss of everything, considering all of it lot of dung that I might gain Christ.'* (Philippians 3:8) In 2 Corinthians 8:9 he echoes the Nazarene's spirit, *'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: though he was rich he became poor for your sakes that you might become rich by his poverty.'*

#279. Further, Paul writes in words that could have come from the Nazarene: *'I have learned, in whatever state or condition I am, to be self-sufficient. I know how to exist in humble circumstances. I know how to have an abundance. In every situation I have learned the lesson of both how to be filled and how to hunger, how to abound and how to lack. I can do anything by the One empowering me, Christ.'* (Philippians 4:11-13) And another time, *'Let your life-style be free of the love of money, satisfied with the present things. For He has promised, "I will never leave you. I will never forsake you."'* (Hebrews 13:5)

(Mark 12:44; Luke 21:4; 2 Corinthians 8:14) Standard definitions in English vary but generally keep the word "rich" in a careful abstraction: "having large possessions." The word "large" makes it clearly a matter of perspective. *Webster's New World Dictionary* (College Edition 1960) explains "rich" and related words: "**SYN.---**rich is the general word for one who has more money or income-producing property than is necessary to satisfy his normal needs; **wealthy** adds to this connotations of grand living, influence in the community, a tradition of richness, etc. (a *wealthy* banker); **affluent** suggests a continuing increase of riches and concomitant lavish spending (to live in *affluent* circumstances); **opulent** suggests the possession of great wealth as displayed in luxurious or ostentatious living (an *opulent* mansion); **well-to-do** implies sufficient prosperity for easy living."

"They follow the Lamb no matter where he goes." --- 83

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#280. HOW DID THE DISCIPLES RESPOND? Did the Apostles and those later disciples of the Nazarene take this so literally? How did Peter, John, James, Paul and others live as adherents of Jesus Christ the Nazarene?

#281. The historical account in the Book of Acts makes it clear they took the Nazarene quite literally: *'And all the believers were together and had all things in common. Their goods and possessions they sold³²² and distributed them to everyone as they had a need. They shared food in gladness and simplicity of heart. And no one claimed any of his possessions as his own but all things were common among them. For neither was anyone needy among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses, sold them and they brought the value of the things sold and laid them at the feet of the Apostles. And it was distributed to each according as any had need.'* (Acts 2:44-46; 4:32-35)

#282. This was the ideal Paul recommended to the rich and urban Corinthians. He relies on Moses for this: *'For if the eagerness is there first it is proper according to what a person has and not according to what a person does not have. Not that I want to be hard on you and easy on others. But, just for now, if your surplus was equalized, you could compensate for their lack, so there should be some kind of equalization. So it was written (regarding the collection of manna), "The one with much did not have too much and the one with little did not have too little."* (2 Corinthians 8:12-15; Exodus 16:18) Paul outlines the standard for the Nazarene Community: social and economic equality by mutual sharing in a classless community of Saints. Obviously all the above can only come about among a people genuinely selfless and in love with humanity. It is not something everyone can or will do.

#283. This does not mean there were not rich and propertied Christians. The Corinthians are an example of such. However, this communal sharing in equality was on a volunteer basis. This was to be a personal choice without judgmental criticism or reverse snobbery. But, there is no ignoring the fact that when the rich are mentioned it is either in a negative context or couched in what can only be described as extreme caution. (Matthew 13:22; 19:23, 24; Mark 10:5; Luke 6:24; 8:14; 12:16, 21; 16:16, 19, 22, 23; 1 Corinthians 4:8; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; James 1:10, 11; 2:5, 6; 5:1; Revelation 3:17)

#284. The earliest example of this kind of warning involved the Christian couple, Ananias and Saphira, who hypocritically sold some property and gave the appearance of contributing all. However, they held back some of the value of the sold property. Peter says they played false to the holy spirit and as a result both died. (Acts 5:1-11) Peter does establish in his condemnation of Ananias that this was voluntary despite what might appear to be peer pressure from the Nazarene Community, *'As long as the property remained in your*

³²² **SOLD.** Compare also Acts 4:36, 37.

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name did it not belong to you?’ The couple’s sin was not one of refusal to share their property, but lying about it. This case ought to stress the serious danger of hypocrisy as well as that principle found in the Nazarene’s teachings. (Matthew 6:3, 4)

#285. Paul questions the rich Corinthians, so slow in fulfilling their year-old promise to use their riches to help needy brothers, *‘You are already filled³²³ and satisfied? You are already rich? You are ruling like kings,³²⁴ and without us? Down to this hour we apostles³²⁵ continue to hunger and thirst and to be poorly clothed and to be homeless and unsettled.’* (1 Corinthians 4:8, 11) Some did not *‘share with the Saints according to their needs.’* (Romans 12:13) Paul mentions this to the Philippians: *‘All the rest are seeking their own personal interests and not those of Christ Jesus. ... When I departed from Macedonia not a congregation shared with me in giving and receiving but you Philippians alone. Yes, you sent something not once, but twice, for my need.’* (Philippians 2:20; 4:15, 16)

#286. Paul, like the Nazarene, did not take advantage of the hospitality of his brethren for in Acts we find him working as a tentmaker for a brief period about the time he visited Corinth and Thessalonica. For he writes to the Thessalonians, *‘You know how you ought to imitate us because we were not disorderly, nor did we eat food free, but night and day we labored and worked so we were never a real burden on anyone. We used to give this instruction: “If anyone does not work neither let him eat.”’³²⁶* (2 Thessalonians 3:6-11)

#287. This does not mean the Christian minister or teacher who has responded quite literally to the Nazarene’s teachings at Luke 12:33 is not “worthy” of some stipend or hospitable assistance. For Paul quotes the Nazarene to the Corinthians: *‘Do I not have authority to refrain from secular work? Who is it that serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants and does not eat the fruit? Who shepherds and does not drink the milk? If we have sown spiritually why is it so big that we reap physically? However, in your case, we have not used this authority, though the Lord ordained that those proclaiming the good news could live by the good news.’* (1 Corinthians 9:6-14) There Paul alludes to what Jesus said to his disciples when sending them forth, ***‘The worker is worthy of his wages and food.’*** (Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7)

#288. Paul again uses this principle of the Nazarene with Timothy: *‘For the Scripture³²⁷ says: “The workman is worthy of his wages.”* (1 Timothy 5:18)

³²³ **FILLED.** Compare Luke 6:24, 25.

³²⁴ **KINGS.** Compare Matthew 11:8; Luke 7:25.

³²⁵ **APOSTLES.** Is it clear that of this date, about 60-65 AD, the Apostles had literally followed the Nazarene’s command at Luke 12:32, 33.

³²⁶ **NO WORK NO EAT!** This phrase is quoted by Mao in his little red book.

³²⁷ **THE SCRIPTURE.** Paul includes Luke 10:7 as part of Scripture, which would indicate the Gospels were already written and available.

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Indeed, there is much to learn about Christian economics in the two letters to Timothy: the caution regarding riches; and, financial responsibilities to family and others. In part some of these injunctions include: a) caution regarding expensive dress (1 Timothy 2:9); b) elders not to love money (1 Timothy 3:3); c) deacons not given to greed or dishonesty (1 Timothy 3:8); d) recompensing parents and grandparents (1 Timothy 5:4); e) providing for family members (1 Timothy 5:8); f) double honor to hard-working elders (1 Timothy 5:17); g) warning against taking advantage of religion (1 Timothy 6:5); h) warning regarding love of money and riches ³²⁸ (1 Timothy 6:9-19); j) balanced view of making a living (2 Timothy 2:4).

#289. Interestingly, in all of this, Paul never makes use of the Nazarene other than Luke 10:7. For example, he does not use Jesus' instructions to the apostolic "little flock": **'Sell everything and give charitable gifts.'** (Luke 12:32, 33) This would have been a strong argument to present to the Corinthians or others. Unless the precise injunction of Luke 12:33 was directed specifically to that "little flock" of the Twelve. It seems reasonable to assume that the Nazarene's anti-materialistic themes are not intended to violate that care of family and others which is inferred in God's own command to Adam and Noah: *'Be fruitful and multiply.'* (Genesis 1:28; 8:17; 1 Timothy 5:4, 8)

#290. In addition to this, Paul encourages those disciples and learners of the Nazarene's teachings, *'The (person) under (Christian) instruction should be willing to contribute toward the livelihood of his teacher.'* (Galatians 6:6 PME) This kind of charity was common both in the Jewish and Greek world and judging from Paul's own life-style this counsel did not mean maintaining a "teacher" in a luxurious manner. (2 Peter 2:1, 13) Paul would not expect it, and neither would the Nazarene.

#291. In the Book of Revelation, we have the Glorified Lord, upon his inspection of the congregations, warning the lukewarm Laodicean presbyter, **'You claim, "I am rich and have gotten wealthy and I have no need at all." But, really, you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.'** (Revelation 3:17) The Nazarene had not changed in his disposition toward riches and the love of money.

#292. However, it is left to the Lord's brother, the disciple James, to give the most stinging denunciation of the selfish rich. Note the following from a variety of verses in the letter of *James* which echo parts of the Sermon on the Mount or the Plain Teachings: *'Let the brother in humble circumstances glory in his*

³²⁸ **RICHES.** Paul's instruction to the rich at 1 Timothy 6:17-19 is drawn right out of Deuteronomy 5:4-11; 24:14; Job 29:16; 30:25; Psalm 69:33; Proverbs 14:31. To Timothy himself, Paul warns in his second letter to the young presbyter: *'No enlisted recruit gets involved in enterprises for making a living so that he may satisfy the officer who enlisted him. He must be wholly at his commanding officer's disposal.'* This echoes the famous, *'You cannot serve God and Riches.'* (Matthew 6:24)

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high estate as a Saint, but the rich at being reduced in circumstances. Because as the flower of the fields, the rich shall pass away. For as soon as the sun is up with its scorching heat and dries up the grass and the flower withers, its lovely appearance ruined, that is the way the rich will fade and die in the midst of their pursuits.’ (James 1:9-11)

#293. *‘Are you not drawing class distinctions in your minds and proving to be critics with evil motives? Listen, God chose poor men whose only wealth was their faith and the promise as heirs of the Kingdom by the God that loved them. But you rich in contrast have insulted, humiliated, dishonored and shown contempt for the poor. Is it not the rich who grind you down and domineer you? Are not (the rich) who drag you into law courts?’ (James 2.4-6)*

#294. *‘Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow, we will go into this city, spend a year there, go into business and make money,” although you do not have the slightest knowledge of tomorrow. Your life, what is it? You are no more than a mist, seen for a little while and then disappearing. You ought to say instead, “If the Lord is willing³²⁹ we shall live and we shall do this or that.” But, as it is, you pride yourselves on your pretensions. All such pride is wrong. The principle is this: that whosoever knows what is right to do but fails to do it, he is guilty of sin.’ (James 4:13-17)*

#295. *‘Listen to me, you rich³³⁰ men, weep and wail for your hardships which are coming on you. Your wealth has rotted and your fine clothes are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is tarnished and their rust shall be a testimony against you, biting into your flesh like a fire! You have piled up wealth in an Age³³¹ that is near its close. Behold, the hired workers in your fields, they cry for their wages, which you have been fraudulently keeping back. They are crying out against you and their cries for help have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.³³² You have lived in luxury and dissipation here on earth. You have gratified your appetite, fattening yourselves for the day of slaughter.’ (James 5:1-5)*

#296. The last few pages are enough to document what the Nazarene taught about daily material needs. How the apostles responded to it and how later

³²⁹ **LORD IS WILLING.** Paul uses this formula. (Acts 18:21; 1 Corinthians 4:19)

³³⁰ **RICH MEN.** There is the disturbing thought that he has in mind, not rich men in general, but those within the “synagogue” or Christian meeting places. (James 2:2) When James defines the phrase “faith without works is dead” he explains “works” to be that of charity toward those in need. (James 2:15-17)

³³¹ **AGE NEAR ITS END.** Compare Matthew 24:3; Hebrews 9:27; Daniel 9:27 and the end of the Jewish Temple Age.

³³² **LORD OF HOSTS.** This is a Hebraism drawn from the OT and it is possible, but not likely, that YHWH could occur here; however, if James adhered to the Jewish custom he would have used “Lord” in its place. Josephus wrote: “Then God revealed to him His name, which ere then had not come to men's ears, and of which I am forbidden to speak.” (*Jewish Antiquities*, II, 276 [xii, 4])

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disciples copied the Lord's life-style and teachings. The entire testimony of the Scriptures reinforces the simple principle of the Nazarene: lead a simple life free of anxiety and put spiritual priorities first. If you consider living a life without anxiety and without those modern industrial diseases brought on by a competitive financial world interested only in profits and greed --- Yes! If you consider your family and loved ones more important than your credit limit or check book balances --- Yes! If you consider a longer life without stress --- Yes! If you compare the alternative of humble discipleship to the Nazarene with the promise of wealth in heavenly proportions --- Yes! If you consider first service as a disciple of the Nazarene and selfless giving to your neighbors as part of your worship of the heavenly Father --- Yes! If you want to have the freedom to read and meditate on the Nazarene's teachings --- Yes! If you wish others learn of the Kingdom hope taught by the Nazarene --- Yes!

#297. Make your humble prayer: *'Give us our bread for this day.'* (Matthew 6:11) Then live your life in harmony with your sincere petition.

THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE: *An Attitude toward Others*

#300. FORGIVENESS AS AN ATTRIBUTE OF LOVE. In the Sixth Nazarene Principle, Jesus prayed, *'Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us.'* (Luke 6:4) Or, as Matthew the tax-collector puts it, *'Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.'* (Matthew 6:12) The whole prayer with its godly appeal, breathes of brotherhood and fellowship with the use of the words "our" and "us."

#301. In this request there are two perspectives: a) ours; and, b) others. It is an admission or confession of one's own sins as well as the sins of others. In the Christian Bible these take two forms: personal, as in offenses or sins against your person; and, material or financial, as in actual material debts. Actually, in the handful of occurrences of the Greek word group *opheilemata* or "debt" in the Gospels it is virtually always a financial one. (Matthew 18:24, 28, 30, 32, 34; Luke 7:41; 16:5, 7) Judging from what the Nazarene taught at Luke 6:30-35 the main thrust of this forgiveness in the Sixth Nazarene Principle is a financial obligation. We have to go outside the Gospels and the Nazarene's teachings to find other types of "debt." (Romans 1:14; 4:4; 13:7, 8; 15:1, 27; 1 Corinthians 7:3)

#302. The first commentary on the Lord's Prayer and its Sixth Principle was provided by the Nazarene himself, for as soon as he has finished the prayer, his very next words are: *'For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But, if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.'* (Matthew 6:14, 15) Paul echoes this in his own commentary: *'Put up with one another, graciously forgiving any complaint you have just as the Lord (YHWH) forgave*

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you.' (Colossians 3:13)

#303. The word group "forgive" occurs over 50 times in the Gospels. It is a theme word of the Nazarene and the idea of forgiveness appears several times in his parables. (Matthew 18:23-25; Luke 7:41-50) The Greek word *apsiemi* literally means to "let go" or "release" from an obligation or debt. It is impossible to separate the word "forgive" from the word "love." In Paul's definition of love at 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, there are several expressions which would include forgiveness: *'Love does not pursue its own things. It is not easily provoked. It quietly covers all things.'*

#304. One might wonder why the Nazarene opted for the word "forgive" instead of say, "love." First, "forgive" may be a more concrete word whereas "love" is abstract enough to carry several meanings and applications. The Greek word generally used for "love" in these contexts is the well-known *agape*. This word is principled love based on two things: motive and principle. Now both motive and principle can be in error and so the *agape* may be wrongly placed. It is hard to do that with the word "forgive." Either one forgives or does not. Either one is forgiven or not. Let us examine this matter of forgiveness in the Sixth Nazarene Principle from two aspects.

#305. OUR NEED FOR GOD'S FORGIVENESS. The idea of needing God's forgiveness is not a new one, for the Psalms are filled with such requests, particularly on the part of David. (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51) In the days of the Nazarene self-righteous religious leaders were not willing to admit any such thing and viewed themselves as perfectly correct and therefore superior to the general crowd. They viewed common folk as the sinners. (Luke 18:9-14)

#306. To admit the need of forgiveness means to acknowledge sin and violation of law, for "sin" is lawlessness. (1 John 3:5) It requires a bent of mind that is willing to change actions, attitudes, and speech. This change of mind is called "repentance."³³³ Repentance, if genuine, is followed by fruitage or conversion, a turning around to a new and better course. (Matthew 3:8)

#307. No Jew had any difficulty in understanding what sin³³⁴ was and what the Law said, for it was right there in the books of Moses and the Ten Commandments. Paul discussed it this way, *'You, the one preaching, "Do not steal," do you steal? You, the one saying, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You, the one who says he hates idols, do you rob temples?'* (Romans 2:21, 22) Sin is heightened when hypocrisy is involved. (Matthew 7:5;

³³³ **REPENTANCE.** The Greek is *metanoia* and means "to think differently, reconsider." The word group occurs about 60 times with the *Apocalypse* using it most often, 12 times.

³³⁴ **SIN.** Both in Hebrew and Greek the word carries the idea of missing the target or falling short of a perfect bull's eye. At the very best a person is marred by the inability to attain perfect righteousness all of the time; or, sins because of failure to perform some godly duty --- the sin of omission. (Matthew 25:35-46) Examples are found in James 1:27; 2:15-17; 1 John 3:17.

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23:28; Luke 12:1)

#308. The Book of Romans is the key source dealing with mankind's sinful condition due to inherited imperfection from Adam's one act of disobedience. (Romans chapters 2, 5) Paul declares the miserable and callused state of mankind, a slave to sin no matter how hard one tries to escape the practice of sin, or attain perfect righteousness.³³⁵ Paul cries out as a representative member of mankind, and particularly Israel, *'Wretched man I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'* (Romans 7:24, 25) Try as he may, this righteous man was unable to attain perfection. He admits he struggles with habitual failure: *'I do not understand my own actions. For I am so far from what I want to do that I find myself doing the very thing I hate. ... This being so, the action is no longer my own but that of Sin which is within me.'* (Romans 7:15, 17 TCNT)

#309. THE SIN OF COMISSION. There are those sins of commission which are direct violations of God's commandments regarding sexual morality, theft, lying, slander, covetousness and greed. Most cultures, no matter how primitive, carry similar bans or taboos.³³⁶ The Nazarene gives his own list of those attitudes and actions which spiritually defile an individual in Matthew 15:18, 19 and Mark 17:20-23. They include:

1. Wicked reasonings or suspicions (Mark 7:21; Romans 1:21)
2. Murders (Exodus 20:13; Job 24:14; Matthew 5:21; 19:18; 23:31; Acts 8.1; 9:1; 1 Timothy 1:9; James 4:2)
3. Adulteries (Exodus 20:14; Proverbs 6:32; Jeremiah 5:7; Matthew 5:27, 28, 32; 19:18; Romans 13:9)
4. Fornications (Acts 15:20, 29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:13, 18; 10:8; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3)
5. Thieveries (Exodus 20:15; Matthew 19:18; John 10:10; Ephesians 4:28; Titus 2:10)
6. False testimonies or slander (Deuteronomy 19:18; Proverbs 6:19; 12:17; 14:5; 19:5, 9; Mark 10:19)
7. Blasphemies or abusive speech (Matthew 12:31; Luke 22:65; Colossians 3:8; 2 Peter 2:10, 12)
8. Covetings or greed (Proverbs 20:21; Luke 12:15; Acts 20:33; Romans 1:29;

³³⁵ **PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Compare Philippians 3:6.

³³⁶ **TABOOS.** Note the Universal Human Conscience at Romans 2:14, 15.

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7:7, 8; 13:9; 2 Corinthians 5:10, 11; 6:10; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; James 4:2)

9. Acts of wickedness (Job 34:8; Psalm 45:7; 141:4; Proverbs 4:17; 11:5; 16:12; Ezekiel 3:19; 18:27; 33:19; Romans 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)

10. Deceit (Proverbs 14:25; 26:26; John 1:47; Romans 1:29; 3:13; 1 Peter 2:1)

11. Loose conduct (Psalm 26:10; Proverbs 10:23; Romans 13:13; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:19; 1 Peter 4:3)

12. Envy (Psalm 106:16; Mark 15:10; Romans 1:29; Philippians 1:15; 1 Timothy 6:4; Titus 3:3)

13. Haughtiness (Proverbs 8:13; 16:18; 29:33; 1 Timothy 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:4; James 4:16)

14. Foolishness (Proverbs 12:23; 13:16; 14:8, 17, 29; 15:2; 18:13; 22:15; 26:11; Ecclesiastes 10:1; 1 Corinthians 3:19)

#310. Paul also gives a list similar to the Nazarene's when he evaluates the condition of those who have turned away from God: *'Therefore God abandoned (the apostate Jews) to impurity, letting them follow the cravings of their hearts, so they degrade their own bodies with one another. For they substituted a lie for the truth about God, reverencing and worshipping the creature in preference to the Creator. God, therefore, handed them over to disgraceful passions. Their women exchanged natural for unnatural intercourse. Also, the males, leaving the natural use of the female, were ablaze with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men, and are paid in their own persons the fitting wage of such perversion. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, He abandoned them to depraved thoughts, to improper conduct. They are filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, depravity, greed, maliciousness, stabbers-in-the-back, God-haters. They overflowed with insolent pride and boastfulness and their minds teemed with diabolical inventions, scoffing at duty to parents, devoid of conscience, false to agreements, without affection and without pity. They were fully aware of God's penalty for these crimes. Not only are they guilty of them but they applaud those who do them.'* (Romans 1:24-32)

#311. In Romans chapters two and three Paul makes it clear that these very sins, no matter in what generation of history they occurred, will not escape God's judgment. There is another type of sin, however.

#312. THE SIN OF OMISSION. There are sins of omission stressed by the

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Nazarene in matters of human decency. The parable of the sheep and goats, which describes the *parousia*-Judgment at Matthew 25:31-46, is an example of this kind of sin. The “goats” are guilty of failure to act in a humane way to persons in need of warmth, food, drink, hospitality, care of the sick, and visits to Christ’s brothers in prison.

#313. As if commenting on this parable, James writes regarding this sin of omission: *‘If a fellow Christian is cold, lacking sufficient clothing, or lacking daily food, and yet you say, “Go in peace and keep warm and eat well,” but you fail to give them their physical needs, what is the profit to you? If one knows how to do good and does not do it, it is a sin.’* (James 2:15, 16; 4.17)

#314. The beloved Apostle John writes in a similar vein, *‘Whoever has the worldly means to sustain life and sees a Christian in need, but shuts the door of affection, how does the love of God reside in such a person?’* (1 John 3:17) So, whereas many a Christian has been heard saying, “As long as I don’t hurt my neighbor,” such a hypocrite is guilty by the sin of omission. There are many great commandments which many dread to break but think nothing of ignoring the plight of those in need. This is not the Nazarene way. Such a disciple ought to spend a couple months getting reacquainted with the Mountain Teachings of the Nazarene and then make a concerted effort to walk daily in this way.

#315. Such an attitude of love and forgiveness may be daunting to a modern reader so used to the mutual greed and self-centeredness in a materialistic and Me-First environment. Not only has Christianity drifted from the Nazarene’s teaching on what could be called doctrinal matters, it has also left those Nazarene Principles which appeal to love and kindness and forgiveness. If you cannot find it in your heart to change your character and personality to fit the requirements of the Nazarene then you best try some other path where your selfishness and greedy life-style will be accepted as the norm. The Christ cannot reside in the same heart where lust, greed, selfishness, egocentricity, or deceit, have already taken up residence.

#316. “Sin” is a word which has come into much disuse. Doctor Freud eradicated it and the modern religions of the world have behaved in such dastardly fashion they can no longer speak of morals and commandments and sin without extreme embarrassment and chuckles from the audience. In this modern period there is every tendency to blame others for our own sins, so certainly there is no need to ask God’s forgiveness, for we are not at fault. Because you came from such a dysfunctional family, or were abused, or suffered some terrible social injustice, or were born into abject poverty, or eat an improper diet --- you remain completely innocent of any wrong. Everyone is wrong, but me! This attitude of blaming others is not new. It began with Adam who blamed both his wife and God for his own failure. (Genesis 3:12, 13) Another aspect of the Sixth Nazarene Principle will demonstrate how to gain

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God's forgiveness.

#317. A WILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE. We have seen how love and forgiveness are kissing cousins. When we forgive others there is a sudden rush of pleasant relief, an exhilarating sense of our own forgiveness, as if there were more "credit" to the forgiver than the forgiven.

#318. Read the parable of Matthew 18:21-35 and the Nazarene's answer to Peter's question, *'How many times must I forgive my brother?'* Such a powerful illustration to drive the point home regarding the need to forgive! The Nazarene summarizes it, ***'Just so my heavenly Father will treat you if you do not forgive everyone in your heart of hearts.'***

#319. Another parable, and the circumstances in which it is given, is among the most heart-rendering the Nazarene ever gave. It is recorded in the Gospel of Luke 7:36-50) we see the Nazarene reclining at table with a Jewish Pharisee and likely other guests. During the supper a notorious woman enters and begins to bathe the Nazarene's feet with her profuse tears and then wipe them with her hair. The self-righteous Jewish rabbi thinks to himself, "How could this man be a prophet and let this sinner touch him?" There may have been a look of disgust, for Jesus responds by relating a parable:

#320. *'Two persons were debtors to a lender. One was in debt for (\$5,000 US)³³⁷ and the other (\$500 US). Neither could pay their debts, so the lender forgave both of them. So, which one will love the lender more?'* To this Simon answered, *'The one forgiven the most.'* Acknowledging this to be correct, the Nazarene turned to the woman and continued: ***'You can see this woman? I came into your house but you provided no water to wash my feet. But she has washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. There was no warmth in your greeting, but she, from the moment I came in, has not stopped covering my feet with kisses. You gave me no oil for my head, but she has put perfume on m feet. That is why I tell you, Simon, that her sins, many as they are, are forgiven; for she has shown me so much love. But the man who has little to be forgiven has only a little love to give.'***³³⁸ (PME)

#321. This knowledge of our debt to God, which amounts to a figure we can never repay ourselves, and which he is willing to forgive upon our own repentance and conversion, ought to move us to take a kindly and forgiving view of others. The person who carries Christ with him into his daily life will discover how easy this becomes when self is pushed into the background.

³³⁷ **DEBT.** \$5,000 would roughly equal 5 years' income, impossible for a slave to repay from debtor's prison.

³³⁸ **LOVE TO GIVE.** Another rendering is: "He that is forgiven little, loves little; he that is forgiven much, loves much."

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When the focus is taken off self and turned onto others, forgiveness becomes a natural reaction to any offense experienced throughout the day. Forgiveness breeds tolerance and tolerance breeds patience, which is tendered with a warm smile.

#322. “I AM SORRY.” There is the need to learn to say, “I am sorry. Forgive me.” Not a, “Okay, okay. I am sorry. There. Are you satisfied?” Just as forgiveness needs to be genuine, repentance also needs to be from the heart and not forced out begrudgingly. Luke 17:34 has the Nazarene teaching, ***‘Watch yourself! If your brother sins, give him a rebuke, and if he repents, forgive him. Though he sin seven times a day against you and he returns each time and pleads, “I am sorry,” you must forgive.’*** And Paul later writes, breathing the same fresh air from the Nazarene’s mouth: *‘Put on the garments that suit God’s Chosen People. Be merciful in action, kindly in heart, humble in mind. Accept life and be most patient. The Lord’s generosity to you must be loving, for love is the link of the perfect life.’* (Colossians 3:12-14 PME) The perfect description of forgiveness.

#323. If you would live the “perfect life” practice the above for one day. Set aside a single day a week to become this kind and forgiving person. “This is my day to become more Christ-like,” tell yourself. Make forgiveness a daily pattern of your life: at home, at work, at the market, on the road, at school. Remember, today may be the final page in your own Book of Records, that log God is keeping upon which He will render a decision through His own Son on Judgment Day. (2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12-14) Remember, also, the Nazarene taught, ***‘Stop criticizing others. For exactly as you criticize others, you will be criticized.’*** (Matthew 7:1 WMS) The measuring tape you use with others will be the same one used to measure you on that Day. How happy you will be when this “last page” of your personal record is filled with forgiveness. Make it your prayer every morning that this new page be one you are confident God will approve. Pray continually, “Forgive me, Father, just as I forgive others.”

#324. After the model prayer of the Nazarene, seek God’s forgiveness. Freely admit your sins and failings to Him, begging forgiveness, while you assure Him, this same kind of forgiveness you have already exercised in behalf of your neighbor. Then you can sleep in peace and walk in daily life with the sure knowledge you stand forgiven before God. (Romans 8:35-39)

THE SEVENTH PRINCIPLE: *Temptation and your Enemy*

#325. Jesus closed his model prayer with the words of the Seventh Nazarene

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Principle, **'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'** (Matthew 6:13) What an excellent phrase to follow the theme of forgiveness. Having recognized our own need for God's forgiveness, demonstrated in our willingness to forgive others, we are in a better mood to think about the subject of temptation. Only if we desire to do God's will and walk in the footsteps of the Nazarene are we concerned about temptation.

#326. In Greek this phrase is more literally, **'You should not bring us into temptation, but rescue us from the Wicked One.'** Translators either render *ponerou* as "evil" or "the Evil One." The word is used to mean what is hurtful or ethically bad and malicious. It is used as a substitute for the word "evildoer" and is often associated with wicked men or evil spirits. Though it may refer to that which is morally or lawfully evil, it is also used to refer to Satan. (Matthew 13:38; 1 John 2:12, 14; 5:18, 19)

#327. The Nazarene was fully aware of such an Evil or Wicked One called Satan the Devil, for he himself was tempted in the wilderness at the end of his forty day retreat. So, Jesus knew something of efforts to tempt him. The record of this is found in Matthew and Luke and a paraphrase of this portion would demonstrate that Satan is a real person and also the methods ³³⁹ he often uses. The accounts read: *'Then Jesus, full of holy spirit, was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. And after fasting forty days and night he felt hungry. The Tempter approached him and said: "If you are a son of the God tell these stones to become bread." Jesus replied: "It is written: 'Not by bread alone will man live but by every word coming forth from the Mouth of God.'* ³⁴⁰

#328. *'The Devil transported Jesus into the Holy City and stationed him upon the battlement of the Temple and then said to him: "If you are a son of God, hurl yourself down from here, for it has been written: 'He will give his angels a charge about you and upon their hands they will carry you so you never strike your foot against a stone.'"* ³⁴¹ *Jesus said to him: "Again, it is written: 'You shall not put the Lord ³⁴² (YHWH) your God to the test.'"* ³⁴³

#329. *'Again, the Devil transported Jesus to an unusually high mountain where the Devil showed Jesus all the glory of the kingdoms of the Cosmos in a time-*

³³⁹ **METHODS.** Note the Greek *methodias* at Ephesians 6:11 rendered: RHM: strategies; NEB: devices; NASB: schemes; PME: methods; TCNT: stratagems.

³⁴⁰ **MOUTH OF GOD.** This quote is from Deuteronomy 12:32 and in the Hebrew, and likely the oldest Jewish Greek LXX, YHWH occurs. Did the Nazarene use the Divine Name here, out in the desert, within the hearing only of the Devil? Some would say he did, others, no. Note Luke only uses part of the quote, omitting the Name of God. (Luke 4:4)

³⁴¹ **AGAINST A STONE.** The Devil quotes precisely the LXX of Psalm 91:11, 12. Luke changes the order of the three temptations.

³⁴² **LORD.** Again, in the ancient LXX YHWH was used as it is in the Hebrew Text.

³⁴³ **TEST.** This is a quote from Deuteronomy 6:16 (LXX).

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puncture and then said to Jesus: “All of this authority and its glory I will give you, because it has been given me. If you will fall down and do an act of worship to me, it will all be yours.” Then Jesus said to the Devil: **“Go away, Satan, for it has been written: ‘It is the Lord (YHWH) your God you shall worship and to Him alone shall you render service.’”**³⁴⁴ Then, the Devil, having concluded the temptation, let Jesus go until another time. And angels came to minister to Jesus.’ (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)

#330. It ought to be clear from this record that Jesus considered Satan the Devil a real person just as the account in Job chapters one and two. The designations “Satan” and “Devil” are used nearly 30 times in the Gospels. The word “Satan” occurs as a name 72 times and most often (17x) in Job. The designation “Devil” never occurs in the Old Testament but does occur 42 times in the Christian Bible. The Nazarene calls the Devil “Beelzebub.”³⁴⁵ Additionally, the word “demon(s)” was used over 60 times. So, whether in the Lord’s Prayer the Nazarene limited the idea of *ponerou* to that attribute of evil or to an invisible person whom he knew to be Satan, the thrust of his petition remains the same: “guard and protect or rescue us from whatever evil influence which may allure us into error.”

#331. It is not that the Father will “lead” us into temptation, for James puts it, *‘For God cannot be tempted by evil nor does He ever tempt anyone with evil. But each one of us is tempted by our own desire, drawn out, baited and seduced by those inner passions. And then this heightened desire, having been conceived, gives birth to sin, and sin when fully consummated, gives birth to death.’* (James 1:13-15) Our inner self is the hidden beast, the real enemy, sometimes stimulated by immoral influences. Paul promises, *‘God will never let us be tempted beyond what we can bear. And, along with the temptation,’*³⁴⁶ *He will provide the means of escape.’* (1 Corinthians 10:13)

#332. Like Christ, we are all temptable. Our prayer not to be tempted beyond our ability to withstand assumes we will make our best effort not to put ourselves in a position to be tempted. The Nazarene instructed his disciples the night of his agony in the garden, **‘Keep praying that you do not enter into temptation.’** (Luke 22:40) So, prayer is vital in resisting temptation and can never be under estimated. However, there are two other factors which can assist in this matter: a) avoid situations, settings and circumstances which will make you a victim of temptation; and, b) be aware and on guard against the Tempter’s methods.

³⁴⁴ **SERVICE.** The Nazarene quotes Deuteronomy 6:13 from the LXX and again YHWH occurs. So three times the Nazarene used the Divine Name or a surrogate against the Devil.

³⁴⁵ **BEELZEBUB.** Compare Matthew 12:24,27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18, 19.

³⁴⁶ **TEMPTATION.** Compare the dangers in riches. (1 Tm 6.9) Pride can be a danger. (Matthew 16:1)

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#333. Regarding the first matter, it is obvious that if one is an alcoholic or drug addict and is struggling one day at a time with this temptation, it is necessary to avoid that environment which weakens resolve. If one is weak in any moral or ethical area, then it is best to fill the mind with upright, positive and virtuous thoughts, as well as flee ³⁴⁷ from those things which stimulate wrong desires. It is sometimes a simple matter of mentally saying, “No!” when wrong thoughts invade the Christian mind.

#334. Note how Joseph flees from Potiphar’s wife. (Genesis 39:10-12) But, David does the opposite and compounds his desire with multiple sins of murder, lying and deceit with far-reaching complications. (2 Samuel 11:2, 3) Paul tells the young man Timothy, *‘Take flight from youthful passions.’* (2 Timothy 2:22) In an exaggerated metaphor or hyperbole, the Nazarene warns, ***‘Gouge out your eye that lusts if it makes you stumble. Cut off your hand if it stumbles you.’*** (Matthew 5:29, 30; Genesis 2:3-6)

#335. Secondly, it is wise to “know your enemy,” Satan. Paul warns, *‘So we are not over-reached by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his methods.’* (2 Corinthians 2:11) And, again, *‘Stand firm against the craftiness of the Devil.’* (Ephesians 6:11) It is in the context of this warning that Paul outlines the proper armor to wear into battle against the Enemy. He writes, *‘Put on the armor of God and so be able to hold your stance against the methods of the Devil. Because we wrestle, not against blood and flesh, but against governments and authorities, against the master-spirits of this dark world, against spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil.’* (Ephesians 6:12 GDSP, PME)

#336. Paul continues to describe this “armor.” (Ephesians 6:10-18) We read these keeping in mind the Devil’s key “methods”:

1. Doubt (Matthew 14:31; 21:21; Mark 11:23)
2. Greed (Proverbs 20:21; Ephesians 4:19; 5:3)
3. Desire (Proverbs 6:25; Galatians 5:16, 17; Colossians 3:5; James 1:14, 15)
4. Pride (Proverbs 8:13; 16:18; 1 Timothy 3:6; 6:4; James 4:16)
5. Fear (Matthew 10:26, 28; Hebrews 2:15; 1 Peter 3:14; 1 John 4:18)

#337. (1) THE BELT OF TRUTH. (KNX) The Wicked One flees from Truth as if his eyes cannot stand the illumination. We remember the Nazarene’s use of Truth when quoting the inspired Scriptures. Later he is to pray, ***‘Your Word is Truth.’*** (John 17:17) The Devil did not argue that these quotations were a false premise or ridicule them. He knew them to be the Truth and quotes them himself. However, the Devil “twists” these to his own use (2 Peter 3:16) just as false prophets are foretold to do later. (Ephesians 4:14; Luke 21:8)

³⁴⁷ FLEE. Compare 2 Timothy 2:22 with Genesis 39:6-12. (1 Timothy 6:10, 11)

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#338. As pointed out in John 17:17, the Nazarene understood the Truth to be God's Word. This is in harmony with his statement to the Devil when he used Deuteronomy 8:3, *'To make you know that not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of Jehovah's mouth does man live.'* (NWT) These "expressions" are found in the inspired Scriptures, as Paul describes: *'All Scripture is God-breathed and beneficial for teaching, for refuting error, for resetting the directions of a person's life, for moral discipline so that the Man of God will be perfectly fit for every good work.'* (2 Timothy 3:16, 17 RHM, PME, MOF, WMS) There is only one source of Truth and it is found in the Holy Scriptures.

#339. In order to take advantage of this "belt of Truth" it seems clear the Nazarene Saint ought to become very familiar with the written Word of God. He can do this by reading and hearing the Truth from the Scriptures. There is a danger, of course, because the Devil has his own instruments or agents. (John 8:44; 1 John 3:10; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15) For this reason, John cautions: *'Beloved, do not believe every "inspiration" but prove them whether they are from The God, because many false prophets have gone forth into the world.'* (1 John 4:1)

#340. Certain ones who did this were commended by the historian Luke, when he records Paul's missionary work: *'Paul reasoned with (the Thessalonians), opening up thoroughly the Scriptures, that the Jesus he preached was in fact the Messiah. ... (Now) the Boreans were of a nobler disposition than the Thessalonians for they receive the Word with a mental readiness, making a daily study of the Scriptures, to verify Paul's interpretation.'* (Acts 17:2, 3, 11 WEY, MOF, RIEU)

#341. Only by such a study can the Nazarene Saint be on guard against false prophets and teachers who may present an erroneous doctrinal creed, a moral guide out of harmony with the Nazarene, and certain prophecies which may not originate with God. Many ask where to begin or how to go about reading the Bible. Using Hebrews 1:1 as a guide, *'God used to speak to our fathers by the prophets, but now He speaks to us by a Son,'* it seems wise to first become familiar with the words and teachings of the Nazarene. That is, the purpose of the *Nazarene Principles*.

#342. Begin this study by reading "the red letters" or those words specifically of the Christ. A large portion of these are found in Matthew chapters 5, 6, 7, 13, 16, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25; Mark chapters 4, 13; Luke chapters 6, 12-21; John chapters 3-17. While reading make a list of the Nazarene's "commandments" (John 14:15; 15:12-14) and note certain "doctrine" (John 7:16, 17; Hebrews 6:1; 2 John 9,10 KJV) such as "kingdom," "judgment," and "coming." A concordance can help study these words as a harmonious body.

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#343. By this study of the Truth the serious Christian can be protected from temptations and untruths and not become the victim of “false prophets.” (Matthew 24:5, 11, 24; Mark 13:6; Luke 21:8; 1 John 2:26; 3:7) Group studies or discussions can incorporate the prayerful meditations of others as well as provide encouragement. Sharing what you learn with others will guide you in walking in the Lamb’s footprints. (1 Peter 2:21; Revelation 14:5) When speaking to others, imitate the Nazarene and do so with “mildness and respect” along with “graciousness.” (1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:6)

#344. This publication, *Nazarene Principles*, is prepared for group Bible study in mind. Questions may be prepared on each numbered paragraph to draw out the main points. Various texts cited but not quoted can be compared for further clarification. Just two persons can study together using their Bibles and *Nazarene Principles*.

#345. (2) BREASTPLATE O RIGHTEOUSNESS. The breastplate protects the heart and other vitals. The Nazarene Saint must walk righteously. When John the Baptist resisted the notion of baptizing the Messiah, Jesus responded, ***‘Let it be for in this way we may fulfill all that is righteous.’*** (Matthew 3:15) Righteousness means obedience to law. The Hebrew *tsedheq* and *tsedhaqah* as well as the Greek *dikaioyne* have the thought of "rectitude," "uprightness," indicating a *standard* or *norm* determining what is upright. "Righteousness" is frequently used in connection with a judge, or with judgment, giving the term a some what legal flavor.

#346. No Nazarene Saint should ever succumb to the Satanic idea that righteousness is not important because a Christian “is saved by Grace not works.” John, the Beloved, makes it clear this is not true in the third chapter of *First John*. Read this chapter and ask yourself if righteousness is important. The word group (righteous[ness]) occurs 869 times in the Bible. The four books which emphasize it most are Psalms (155x), Proverbs (97x), Isaiah (82x), and most often in the Christian Bible in Romans (63x). There can be no doubt that anyone who claims, “I have no sin,” is a liar. This is the judgment of John. (1 John 1:6, 8)

#347. Since righteousness is related to observing law or commandments then those “commandments” of the Nazarene ought to be right at the top of the list of anyone striving to please God. (John 14:15, 21; 15:10, 12; 1 John 2:3, 4, 7, 8; 3:22-24; 4:21; 5:2, 3; 2 John 4-6) These “commandments” for the “righteous” have one major theme: love. (John 13:34) John writes that these “commandments are not burdensome.” (1 John 5:3)

#348. With this Paul agrees, *‘Because of her freedom Christ liberated us; so stand firm and do not become yoked again as slaves (to the Law of Moses). ... You have nullified Christ if you seek to be righteous by (the Law of Moses).*

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You have fallen from Grace. Your calling liberated you. ... Do not use this liberty as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but by love serve one another. For the whole body of the (Mosaic) Law stands fulfilled and complete in one precept: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." But, I tell you, conduct yourselves spiritually then you will never satisfy fleshly passion.' (Galatians 5:1,13, 14, 16)

#349. Paul then goes on to list fifteen characteristics of the flesh's fruitage:

1. fornication ³⁴⁸
2. uncleanness ³⁴⁹
3. loose conduct ³⁵⁰
4. idolatry ³⁵¹
5. druggery ³⁵²
6. enmities ³⁵³
7. strife ³⁵⁴
8. jealousy ³⁵⁵
9. anger ³⁵⁶

³⁴⁸ **FORNICATION.** The Greek is *porneia*, B. F. Westcott, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (1906, p. 76) says: "This is a general term for all unlawful intercourse, (1) adultery: Hos. ii. 2, 4 (LXX.); Matt. v. 32; xix. 9; (2) unlawful marriage, I Cor. v. 1; (3) fornication, the common sense as here [Eph 5:3]." Bauer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (revised by F. W. Gingrich and F. Danker, 1979, p. 693) defines *por-nei'a* as "prostitution, unchastity, fornication, of every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse." The word "fornication occurs about 75 times in the Bible. It occurs most often in Hosea (17x), 1 Corinthians (11x), and Revelation 11x. (Compare Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3.)

³⁴⁹ **UNCLEANNES.** Or, "filthiness; depravity; lewdness." Gr., *akatharsia*; See Ezekiel 22:15. Compare Romans 1:24; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Ephesians 4:19; 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 2:3; 4:7.

³⁵⁰ **LOOSE CONDUCT.** Or, "licentiousness; wantonness; shameless conduct." Gr., *aselgeia*; see Proverbs 10:23. (Compare Romans 13:13; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Ephesians 4:19; 1 Peter 4:3; 2 Peter 2:2, 7; Jude 4.) The word occurs most often in Ezekiel. (14x)

³⁵¹ **IDOLATRY.** The word occurs most often in Ezekiel (41x). Note 1 Corinthians 10:14; Colossians 3:5; 1 John 5:21. See a concordance on "images."

³⁵² **DRUGGERY.** Or, spiritism, witchcraft. The Greek word for "spiritism" is *pharmakia*. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (1981, Vol. 4, pp. 51, 52) says of the word: "(Eng., pharmacy etc.) primarily signified the use of medicine, drugs, spells; then, poisoning; then, sorcery, Galatians. 5:20, R.V., 'sorcery' (A.V., 'witchcraft'), mentioned as one of 'the works of the flesh.' See also Revelation 9:21; 18:23. In the Sept[uagint], Exodus 7:11, 22; 8:7, 18; Isa. 47:9, 12.

³⁵³ **ENMITIES.** Or, "hatred, quarrels." On "hatred" compare Proverbs 10:12, 18; 14:20; 15:17; 26:26.

³⁵⁴ **STRIFE.** Or, "variance, contentious temper." It is sometimes associated with quarreling or jealousy. (Jeremiah 15:10; Habbakuk 1:3; Romans 1:29; 13:13; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Timothy 6:4; Titus 3:9) Some mss add: *moikheia* (adultery); *phonoia* (murder). See Majority Text. Compare Matthew 5:21-30.

³⁵⁵ **JEALOUSY.** The Hebrew noun *qinah* and Greek *zelos* mean "insistence on exclusive devotion; toleration of no rivalry; zeal; ardor; jealousy [righteous or sinful]; envying." Compare Proverbs 6:34; 14:30; 27:4; Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20; James 3:14, 16.

³⁵⁶ **ANGER.** The word occurs about 266x with the first at Ge 4.5 in the case of Cain. Compare 2

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10. contention ³⁵⁷
11. divisions ³⁵⁸
12. heresies ³⁵⁹
13. envies ³⁶⁰
14. drunkenness ³⁶¹
15. revelries ³⁶²
16. and things like these ³⁶³

#350. Paul next lists the nine spiritual fruits:

1. love ³⁶⁴
2. joy ³⁶⁵
3. peace ³⁶⁶
4. patience ³⁶⁷
5. kindness ³⁶⁸
6. goodness ³⁶⁹

Corinthians 12:20; Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:8.

³⁵⁷ **CONTENTION.** Or, intrigues, selfish ambition. Compare Proverbs 15:18; 16:28; 17:14; 22:10; 26:20; 28:25; 29:22. Sarah's original name Sarai meant "Contentious."

³⁵⁸ **DIVISIONS.** Or, seditions, dissensions. Compare Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 11:18.

³⁵⁹ **HERESIES.** Or, sects, sectarian parties, party intrigues. Compare 1 Corinthians 11:19; 2 Peter 2:1.

³⁶⁰ **ENVIES.** Compare Matthew 27:18; Romans 1:29; Philippians 1:15; 1 Timothy 6:4; Titus 3:3.

³⁶¹ **DRUNKENNESS.** The first case is Noah. (Genesis 9:21) Compare Proverbs 20:1; 21:17; 23:20-35; 31:4-7; Matthew 11:19; Romans 14:21; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Timothy 3:8; 5:23; Titus 2:3; 1 Peter 4:3.

³⁶² **REVELRIES.** Or, carousing. Compare Romans 13:13; 1 Peter 4:3.

³⁶³ **THINGS LIKE THESE.** Gluttony. (Luke 21:34 NWT, ASV, KJV; Proverbs 28:7 ASV, JPS; Titus 1:12, 13 NWT, NKJV)

³⁶⁴ **LOVE.** Of the noun *agape* and the verb *agapao*, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* says: "Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. God's love is seen in the gift of His Son, I John 4:9, 10. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects, Romans 5:8. It was an exercise of the Divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself, cp. Deuteronomy 7:7, 8."-1981, Vol. 3, p. 21. The word "love" occurs over 400 times. Compare 1 Corinthians 13:5-8; Philippians 2:1-3.

³⁶⁵ **JOY.** The English comes from the Latin for "smooth" meaning an unfurrowed brow or forehead. "Happy" is derived from the market place. The two may be compared with the momentary elation of finding a good buy as opposed to the gladness of being able to go to the market. The word group occurs about 250 times and is first associated with worship. (Deuteronomy 28:47) Compare Romans 14:17; 15:13; Philippians 2:29; 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:6.

³⁶⁶ **PEACE.** The first occurrence of "peace" is Genesis 15:15 with regard to the grave. The word occurs over 300 times. Compare Proverbs 3:2, 17; 12:20; Matthew 5:9; John 14:27; 16:33; 20:19, 21; Philippians 4:7, 9; Colossians 3:15.

³⁶⁷ **PATIENCE.** Or, long-suffering, forbearance. Compare 1 Corinthians 13:4; 2 Corinthians 6:6; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 1:11; 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Timothy 3:10; 4:2.

³⁶⁸ **KINDNESS.** Or, gentleness. Compare Matthew 5:7; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 2 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:32.

³⁶⁹ **GOODNESS.** Or, benevolence. Compare Proverbs 11:10; Matthew 5:8; Romans 15:14; Ephesians 5:9; 2 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:8.

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7. faith ³⁷⁰

8. gentleness ³⁷¹

9. self-control ³⁷²

#351. Many Friends of the Nazarene make these a special study in their search for righteousness. By this absorption of “spiritual words” (1 Corinthians 2:13) the “heart” of the Christian experiences that promise of the New Covenant: *‘Look, the days are coming, Yahweh declares, when I shall make a new covenant with (Israel) . . . but not like the covenant I made with their ancestors (at Sinai), a covenant they broke. . . . No, this is the covenant I shall make with (Israel) when those days come, Yahweh declares. I shall plant my Law inside them, writing it on their hearts. Then I shall be their God and they will be my People.’* (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12; Romans 2:14, 15) Thus, this “law” is not that written on “stones” but one inscribed on the heart. (2 Corinthians 3:7-17) There is an inner “seed” which produces a bent toward righteousness and habitual sins ceases. (1 John 3:9)

#352. Dressed in the Breastplate of righteousness there is less room for the Wicked One in a pure and clean environment. Satan hates the light of righteousness preferring a dark atmosphere to do his work.

#353. (3) FEET EQUIPPED WITH THE GOSPEL. Various renderings are: “in readiness to publish the gospel” (KNX); “put on your feet the preparation the good news of peace supplies” (WMS); “with the readiness to serve the Good News” (TCNT); “shod as ready messengers” (CON). Our feet carry us on our path in life: to work, to school, to market, to friends, and home. When leaving the home most often we put on our shoes or sandals. So, Paul encourages us to carry the Gospel wherever we go. The spirit of this is echoed in the *Apocalypse*, *‘They follow the Lamb no matter where he goes.’* (Revelation 14:5) Or, Peter’s encouragement, *‘Christ left you an example to follow in his footsteps.’* (1 Peter 2:21)

#354. Where the Nazarene walked, the Friends of the Nazarene follow. Clearly, many of the thousands of miles Jesus walked involved his preaching of the Kingdom gospel. His Apostles followed him. Later the Seventy followed him. The Gospels record this activity: *‘And Jesus made a tour, traveling into the cities and villages preaching the good news of the Kingdom. . . . And the Twelve*

³⁷⁰ **FAITH.** Or, belief, trust. The first occurrence is Genesis 15:6 with regard to Abraham. The word group occurs over 500 times, mainly in the NT, with most in Romans (60 times). The Greek *pistis* is either the Latin bias “faith” or the OE bias “belief” or “trust.” Paul defines it at Hebrews 11:1, 6. The importance is stressed by Jesus (John 3:16, 35) and Paul (Romans 5:1, 2; 14:23; Ep 2:8).

³⁷¹ **GENTLENESS.** Or, meekness, mildness, tolerance. Compare Proverbs 3:34; 16:19; Matthew 5:5; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:12; 1 Timothy 6:11; Titus 3:2; James 3:13.

³⁷² **SELF-CONTROL.** Or, temperance, self-restraint. Compare 1 Corinthians 7:9; 9:25; 2 Timothy 3:3; 2 Peter 1:6.

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were with him. ... By the sight of the crowd Jesus was deeply moved with pity because they were distressed and thrown down, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he spoke to his disciples: **“Indeed, the Harvest is great but the workers few. So, beg the Lord of the harvest to send out more workers into His harvest.”** (Matthew 9:35-38)

#355. Shortly after this observation by the Nazarene the group of Twelve was formed. (Matthew 10:1-11.1; Mark 3:14-16; Luke 8:1; 9:1-6) This chapter outlines the “instructions” of Jesus to his Apostles. He tells them specifically the theme of their message: **‘The Kingdom of heaven has drawn near.’** (Matthew 10:7) A modern Nazarene Saint may do well in reading these “instructions,” not that they directly apply to each Christian, but to gain some insight into the methods of the Nazarene. To what extent all of these “instructions” apply, successive generations of disciples are left for each one to determine.

#356. Next, the Nazarene sent out Seventy disciples in groups of twos. He gave them similar instruction. However, he cautioned them, **‘Do not go from house to house.’** (Luke 10:7) This sounds similar to what some translations³⁷³ record the Apostles actually doing later in Acts 5:42 and Acts 20:20, “from house to house.” Is there a contradiction? The Greek phrase in Luke 10:7 is, *ex oikias eis oikian*, or literally “from house into house.” The Greek in Acts is *kat oikon*, or “according to house.” The later is more like, “in private homes.”³⁷⁴ It is more likely the Apostles and later disciples obeyed the Nazarene’s “instructions” not to go “from house to house.” However, they did preach in private homes as well as in a variety of public places.

#357. What responsibility falls on each Nazarene Saint as disciples of Jesus Christ? Often certain texts are expanded from their original meaning to be applied to modern Christians. For example, Matthew 28:19, **‘Go your way and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them, teaching them to observe everything I commanded you.’** That this applies specifically to the Apostles is shown by Acts 1:2, **‘Until that day, having giving a commandment to the Apostles he chose, he was received up.’** This would seem to limit the application of Matthew 28:19 to the Apostles. However, we note that these Apostles were to “teach all nations to observe my commandments.” Thus, whatever Jesus taught might have a fine application to new disciples in all nations of the earth.

³⁷³ **TRANSLATIONS:** KJ: every house; ASV: at home; TCNT: in private houses; KNX: from house to house; NW: from house to house (see fn).

³⁷⁴ **PRIVATE HOMES.** *kat oikon* is not limited to the “distributive sense” of “from house to house.” *The Expositor’s Greek Testament* states: “... the words may mark a contrast between public preaching which was not discontinued ... and the teaching continued at home in a household assembly, or ... distributively, and refer to the Christian assemblies met together in various houses in the city as in Acts 2:46 ... (Acts 20:20) ... privately as in the Church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (1 Corinthians 1:24).”

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#358. When the heart swells up with an exciting idea it cannot but be enthusiastic about it, with the result of telling others. This is reflected by what Paul says at 2 Corinthians 4:13, *'But, having the same spirit of the Faith of which it was written: "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE, I SPOKE."* (Psalm 116:10) *We also believe, and therefore, we speak.'* How could one not "speak" about what is dearest to the heart? A "public confession" is what comes from the heart's conviction: *'For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved. For in their hearts people exercise the faith that leads to a right standing with God; and it is stating his belief by his own mouth that confirms this salvation.'* (Romans 10:9, 10 WMS, PME)

#359. How does the Nazarene Saint go about this? The natural thing is to do what is called "networking"; that is, begin with those closest in the family, among relatives and friends. (John 1:40, 41, 45) Then work-mates and fellow school students. Paul preached wherever people gathered: schools, markets, synagogues, and in private homes. A reading of the Book of Acts will reveal the various methods used by history's greatest missionary. In the Electronic Age there are other avenues: radio, television, and the computer Internet. The Nazarene Saint is free to "speak" in any manner which shows due regard for the spirit of Colossians 4:5, 6 and 1 Peter 3:15. This is how the "shod feet" of the Nazarene Saint are "equipped" with the "gospel of peace." Thus, *'How beautiful are the feet of those declaring the good news.'* (Romans 10:15; Isaiah 52:7)

#360. The Nazarene assured his disciples, ***'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am among them.'*** (Matthew 18:20) From this we can draw encouragement that if we meet with only one or two others, we have the support of Jesus Christ. It is usually not too hard to find one or two others who would enjoy a weekly Bible reading and discussion. From this may grow a group of ten or twenty, meeting regularly in homes to read and study the words of Jesus the *Nazarene Principles*. The first goal ought to be to learn and understand a reasonable portion of Jesus' teachings and from these the "elementary doctrine" found in his disciples' writings. (Hebrews 1:1; 6:1)

#361. Following in the footsteps of the Lamb is a daily process. In Matthew 16:24, 25 we find these words: ***'Then Jesus said to his disciples: "If anyone wishes to walk in my footsteps, let him deny himself,³⁷⁵ take up his own cross and keep on following me. Whoever cares for his own safety is lost but if a man will let himself be lost for my sake, he will find his true self.'*** (RIEU, KJV, NEB) Walking with "feet shod with the good news" will not always be easy. There will be some difficult times. There will be periods of the greatest

³⁷⁵ **DENY HIMSELF.** Or, "renounce self" (TCNT); "leave self behind" (NEB); "he must disregard himself" (GDSP); "he must say 'No' to self" (WMS) Compare Philippians 2:7.

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joy.

#362. (4) THE GREAT SHIELD OF FAITH. (WEY) One of the Devil's greatest tools is doubt. He is powerless in the face of strong conviction for he no longer understands it. Paul describes the large Roman shield which covered the whole body. It was constructed in such a way the soldier could lay under it when scores of flaming arrows arched toward him. Note Paul's description: *'for with it you will be able to extinguish all the flaming darts of the Evil One.'* (Ephesians 6:16 TCNT) The Wicked One, Satan, will not hesitate to shower a barrage of flaming arrows in the form of doubts. These may take the form described by Paul: *'Then we shall no longer be like infants, nor resemble mariners tossed on the waves and carried about with every changing wind of doctrine, through the trickery and the craftiness of men, experts in the craft of the presentation of lies.'* (Ephesians 4:14 TCNT, WEY, PME) Or, again, *'Be careful that nobody spoils your faith through intellectualism or high-sounding nonsense. He may set forth some human tradition, or some theory about the nature of the universe, but not the teachings of Christ.'* (Colossians 2:8 PME, NOR)

#363. One of the best ways to strengthen faith is through study of the Bible, for the more one learns about it, the more it rings of truth as God-breathed Scripture. (2 Timothy 3:15-17) The Bible is unique in that it never begins an account, "once upon a time in a land far away." No, it provides locations and often contemporary rulers in order to prove the chronology. (Luke 3:1-4) It is a historical record which depends on its accuracy of ancient events in its presentation. Those matters which touch on science prove to be uncannily accurate. Archaeology confirms much of what the Bible describes. There are numerous books and writings on these subjects.

#364. A final matter on "faith." The Nazarene spent three and a half years teaching and healing among "the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Thousands observed his miracles: healing, expelling demons, feeding multitudes, and raising the dead. After full three years, there were only 120 gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost. Paul states that Jesus appeared to about 500 disciples after his resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:6), so there was substantial eye-witnesses that a man had been raised from the dead. Specifically that Jesus the Nazarene had been raised from the dead, a man crowds had seen hung on the execution stake.

#365. Though only 120 were gathered in response to the Nazarene's command, within a few days thousands of visiting men from all nations were baptized as new disciples of the Nazarene. Most of these had never seen Jesus' miracles, but they reacted to the eye-witness reports of others. This was enormous proof, convincing testimonial evidence, that Jesus the Nazarene had been raised from the dead and thereafter ascended to heaven in fulfillment of

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Daniel 7:13. This sudden and astounding growth found its source in this Gospel, the resurrection of Christ, and not the healings and miracles of Jesus or his Apostles. This was indeed Faith. And, this Faith swept the Roman Empire and then the world, all based on the original eye-witnesses. (Luke 1:2; Acts 1:8; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39, 41; 1 Timothy 2:2)

#366. Regarding this faith which would result from the testimony of these eyewitnesses, it is written about the glorified Nazarene: *'But Thomas, one of the Twelve, whose name means "Twin," was not among the disciples when Jesus appear the first time. So, the other apostles would tell him: "We have seen the Lord!" but Thomas responded: "I will not believe unless I see in his hands the nail puncture and put my fingertip into the nail puncture and place my hand into his side."* About a week later all the Nazarene's apostles were inside, Thomas with them; and Jesus appear suddenly among them though the doors were locked. He said: *"Peace to you!"* Then Jesus said to Thomas: *"Insert your fingertip here and see my hands and placed your hand here into my side. Stop this disbelief. Believe! To which Thomas cried: "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Thomas: **"You believe because you have seen me? Happy are those who do not see me and yet believe."***" (John 20:24-29)

#367. We are among those millions throughout the last nineteen centuries who have come to believe because of the eyewitness report of these men. The Nazarene prayed regarding this group of millions, if not billions, *'I make this prayerful request, not for the Apostles only, but also regarding those who believe in me by their word.'* (John 17:20) This belief or faith is like a great shield which protects us against the temptations from the Evil One.

#368. (5) THE HELMET OF SALVATION. At 1 Thessalonians 5:8 Paul uses a similar phrase, but adds a word: *'as a helmet the hope of salvation.'* The head, and thus the mind, is where hope resides. When one looses hope then all life begins to fail. For the Nazarene Saint there is only "one hope". (Ephesians 4:4) This is the "heavenly calling." (Hebrews 3:1) To the Christian there is only one kind of "salvation." One belonging to heaven.

#369. The word "salvation" may occur over 250 times in the Bible with the word group "save(d)" another 500. The first occurrence is in the context of a prophecy at Genesis 49:18. The Psalms contain the theme most with 80 occurrences. (Isaiah 30x) The Nazarene only used the word "salvation" twice: regarding the house of little Zacchaeus (Luke 19:9) and to the Samaritan woman at the well. (John 4:22)

#370. Jesus Christ is the agent or captain of salvation. (Acts 5:37; Hebrews 2:10) His name means: "Yehowah is Salvation." Peter declares regarding his Master: *'And Salvation comes through no one else, for there is no other Name in the whole world, given to men, by which we must look for our Salvation.'*

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(Acts 4:12) The power in this “name” is seen in the Book of Acts where the “name” of Jesus the Nazarene is the center of focus over four dozen times. Just the name “Jesus” occurs 732 times in the Christian Bible making it the premier “name” in the Bible’s last 29 books.

#371. What is required to gain this salvation? First, note there is a difference between being “saved” and “salvation.” In order to be “saved” or enter the Realm of Profession (the Son’s Kingdom) faith or belief is the main criteria. This is shown throughout Paul’s epistles. However, note this experience recorded in the Book of Acts 16:25-33:

#372. *‘But about the middle of the night Paul and Silas were praying and praising God with song; yes, the prisoners were hearing them. Suddenly a great earthquake occurred, so that the foundations of the jail were shaken. Moreover, all the doors were instantly opened, and the bonds of all were loosened. The jailer, being awakened out of sleep and seeing the prison doors were open, drew his sword and was about to do away with himself, imagining that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying: “Do not hurt yourself, for we are all here!” So he asked for lights and leaped in and, seized with trembling, he fell down before Paul and Silas. And he brought them outside and said: “Sirs, what must I do to get saved?” They said: “Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will get saved, you and your household.” And they spoke the word of (the Lord) to him together with all those in his house. And he took them along in that hour of the night and bathed their stripes; and, one and all, he and his were baptized without delay.’ (NWT ftn)*

#373. We note Paul’s answer is . . . “Believe on the Lord Jesus.” Two things followed this “belief”: the Roman jailer’s family were instructed within a few hours in “the word of the Lord” which must have acquainted them with “the word of salvation” (Act 13:26, 47) and the primary teachings of the Nazarene. Possibly this instruction included, *‘talk about righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come.’* (Acts 24:25) Or, something similar to Paul’s speech to the Greeks. (Acts 17:22-31) And, then, baptism. This put the family on the road to salvation though they could have been called “saved”. (Acts 2:40, 47; Romans 8:24; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 15:2; 2 Corinthians 2:15; Ephesians 2:5, 8; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5)

#374. However, “salvation” is a future experience. This is shown in a half dozen texts. (Romans 13:11; Hebrews 1:14; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 7:10; 12:10; 19:1) Peter, for one, shows this when he writes: *‘Blessed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for by His great mercy he gave us a New Birth*³⁷⁶ *by a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead into*

³⁷⁶ **NEW BIRTH.** Compare John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:23. The Greek here is *anagennesas* and is rendered: begotten again, born anew, new life.

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*an incorruptible, undefiled, unfading inheritance,³⁷⁷ reserved for you in the heavenly realms, you who are safeguarded by God's power through faith in a salvation ready to be revealed³⁷⁸ in the Last Time.'*³⁷⁹ (1 Peter 1:4, 5) This "salvation" follows the Return of Christ. (Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 7:10; Matthew 24:31)

#375. This hope of future salvation will realize its fulfillment at that moment of the *Parousia* when the dead hear the Voice (Jn 5.28, 29) and the living hear the "commanding call." (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17) The Christian dead will experience no passage of time while they rest in unconscious sleep and in that future moment the first sensation they will have is hearing his "voice." The living will undergo that foretold experience following the celestial darkness and Appearing of the Son of man: they will hear, "Come on up here!" and then they will ascend, even as their Lord did, toward a celestial gathering. What a glorious hope! This hope has sustained the whole body of Christians throughout centuries. (1 Thessalonians 4:18) Truly, it is a "helmet of salvation."

#376. What matters are necessary to make this "saved" state permanent? The Bible lists several: 1) It requires "work". (Philippians 2:12) 2) Familiarity of the Bible is involved. (2 Timothy 3:15) 3) Obedience to the King by observing his commandments. (Hebrews 5:9; John 3:16, 21, 36) Those who do will experience that ultimate "salvation" when the Son of Man is revealed. (Luke 17:30, 34-37) They will then join that celestial chorus which sings: '*Salvation we owe to our enthroned God and to the Lamb.*' (Revelation 7:10)

#377. (6) THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT. Paul continues listing the parts to "the complete suit of armor": '*(Accept) the sword of the spirit which is God's Saying.*'³⁸⁰ (Ephesians 6:17) Paul compares "the word of God" to a sword at Hebrews 4:12, '*For the Word of The God is living and energetic, more cutting than any sword with a double edge, penetrating deeply, making a distinction between the (physical) soul and the spirit, to the innermost intimacies of a person's being, a judge between thoughts and mental inclinations of the heart.*' (RHM, MOF, NOR, PME, NW) Elsewhere, Paul speaks of '*weapons of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.*' (Or, "for offense and defense." (2 Corinthians 6:7 NW) This "sword" may be used defensively or offensively in defending the Faith after the manner of 1 Peter 3:15.

³⁷⁷ **INHERITANCE.** Note Matthew 25:34 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-52.

³⁷⁸ **REVEALED.** The Greek is *apocalyphtenai* and is rendered: unveiled, disclosed. Compare Luke 17:30 and Romans 8:19.

³⁷⁹ **LAST TIME.** Or, "last appointed time." The Greek is *kairo eskhato*. This is similar to the *kairos* of the Nazarene at Mk 13.33. It is that *kairos* the Apostles cannot know; and, the *kairos* false prophets will predict and who disciples should not follow. (Luke 21:8)

³⁸⁰ **SAYING.** The Greek is *rhema* and is also translated "word, message, voice." This *rhema* is related to the *rhemati* of Matthew 4:4 and represents all that God has spoken including His *theo-pneustos* (god-inspired; God-breathed) Scriptures. (2 Timothy 3:16; John 17:17)

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#378. However, in the matter of temptation and protection from the Wicked One, the “sword of the spirit” is most useful in reaching the inner recesses of our mind and heart, “soul and spirit.” What our thoughts and motives are we can learn from a study of the spirit’s “sword.” This becomes a matter of humble willingness to disregard self-centered motives and justification of our opinions regarding ourselves and others. By daily meditation on the Bible, particular the words of the Nazarene (Hebrews 1:1), we can search the depths of our “soul” and “spirit.” We can identify our inclinations and motives which might be out of harmony with God’s will. (John 3:19-21)

#379. It is unfortunate so few “Christians” are only mildly acquainted with the Bible, most unable to find even simple Scriptural truths. This is so even among some of the more vocal “Christian” groups and organizations who, though encouraging: “Read the Bible, God’s Word, daily,” are ill-equipped to actually “defend” their “hope.” (1 Peter 3:15) Therefore, the Nazarene Saint must make the Bible a daily friend which is read, meditated on, memorized, shared with others, and used respectfully in the defense of the *Nazarene Principles*.

#380. (7) PRAYER. *‘Use every kind of prayer and entreaty, and at every opportunity pray³⁸¹ in the Spirit and always be on the alert to seize opportunities for doing so, with unwearied persistence and entreaty on behalf of the Saints.’* (Ephesians 6:18 GDSP, WEY) Paul lists prayer as part of the “armor.” It is true it is vitally important for a soldier to remain in contact or communication with his commander. Prayer is the way the Nazarene Saint battles temptation. Jesus Christ is an example of this.

#381. We have an example of this in the Garden of Agony (Luke 22:40-46): *‘On going out he went as customarily to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him. Having come to the place he said to them: **“Carry on prayer, that you do not enter into temptation.”** And he himself drew away from them about a stone’s throw, and bent his knees and began to pray, saying: **“Father, if you wish, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, let, not my will, but yours take place.”** Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. But getting into an agony he continued praying more earnestly; and his sweat became as drops of blood falling to the ground. And he rose from prayer, went to the disciples and found them slumbering from grief; and he said to them: **“Why are you sleeping? Rise and carry on prayer, that you do not enter into temptation.”**’* (NW) Two times the Nazarene encourages his disciples to pray so they do not become tempted. Possibly he has in mind the coming “night in which no man can work” during his suffering and death. The temptation to scatter, as all the apostles did; or compromise, as Peter did, is on the Lord’s mind. Three times he counseled them to pray. They all “scattered” and at least one denied his Lord. Did they fail

³⁸¹ **PRAY.** The words “pray” and “prayer” occur over 200 times, first occurrence of “pray” is the woman Hannah (1 Samuel 1:10) and “prayer” Solomon. (2 Samuel 7:27)

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to pray? (Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:27; John 16:32)

#382. The Nazarene's example in the Lord's Prayer, as well as Paul's, is to pray for others. Such prayers for others make it difficult to become judgmental and critical. Jesus encouraged praying for enemies. This action has a profound influence on attitudes toward others, even those who hate. Hate is a breeding ground for Satan. The Wicked One cannot invade that home where God resides. Do not give up in prayer not to be tempted.

#383. Two things defeat the Wicked One: prayer and meditation on spiritual words which cause us to draw close to God. (James 4:7, 8) We have the promise, *'We are convinced that everyone who is God-born does not habitually sin, for the One God-born keeps watch so the Wicked One never touches the God-born. We know our source is The God though the entire world is in the power of the Evil One. The Son of God has come and he has given us the right kind of mind to "know" the true God and His Son, Jesus Christ.'* (1 John 5:18-20)

#384. Doubt is created by ignorance. Faith is made strong by study and experience. Greed is created by selfish longing for more. Contentment is brought about by spirituality and learning to lead a simple life. Pride is created by natural beauty, ability, intelligence, social standing and riches. Humility triumphs where modesty resides in a deep relationship with Christ and his Father. Fear is created when one honors the glory of men above the glory of God. Fear is defeated in the triumph of faith in God's promises. Where fear of God exists, fear of man and what he can do vanishes even in the face of the worse threats.

#385. Though temptations abound in this modern world under the control of the Wicked One it is not hopeless as long as these final words of the Seventh Principle are kept close to the heart: ***'Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.'*** (Matthew 6:13)

#386. You can be victorious in your faith because of seven *Nazarene Principles*:

- 1) Your relationship with the Father
- 2) Your effort to sanctify the Name of God
- 3) Your place in the Kingdom
- 4) Your part in fulfilling the Divine Will for the Earth
- 5) Your satisfaction with Daily Bread
- 6) Your forgiveness of your neighbor
- 7) Your prayers to be rescued from the Wicked One

What do we do now?

"They follow the Lamb no matter where he goes." --- 110

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HOW TO BECOME A FRIEND OF THE NAZARENE?

#387. We have considered in brief the seven *Nazarene Principles*. What is one to do or become now? The Nazarene taught, ***'My true friends are those who keep my commandments. . . Those who really love me will observe my commandments.'*** (John 14:15; 15:12-14) A study of the Gospel of Matthew will reveal about 60 of these “commandments” both in their positive and negative forms. Now, you are encouraged to let the One Teacher and One Leader guide you in The Way ³⁸² of the Nazarene. (Matthew 23:8, 10) By closely studying and following these commandments you will show your love and friendship for the Nazarene. All of Christ’s commandments can be reduced to two: *'This is His commandment: believe in the name of the Son Jesus Christ; and, be loving one another.'* (1 John 3:23) Faith and love. If one always struggles to be strong in these, one may be assured of friendship with the Nazarene and thus have God’s approval.

#388. Find others who share these beliefs and draw encouragement from their company. Your faith will make you speak about these *Nazarene Principles*. You have started and you will continue to grow in faith and love. The way ahead will become clearer and clearer as you step exactly in the footsteps of the Nazarene. For more information on how to form a Bible discussion group or even a House Church see the online publication [***Nazarene Community***](#).

#389. You are encouraged to help your relatives and friends to know the Way of seven *Nazarene Principles* and the wondrous life it promises. If what you have read has the ring of truth to it and satisfies that spiritual side of the Real You, then you may wish to share the *Nazarene Principles* with those close to you. Find three persons who you feel would benefit from the *Nazarene Principles* and make copies for them and encourage them in turn to make three copies of this manuscript and give them freely to three others.

#390. Additionally, this online publication could be sent as an attachment to those you know might benefit from the Bible study material. The object of this is love. The love taught by the Nazarene.

#391. Nothing is asked of you. You have received the *Nazarene Principles* free. The authors are anonymous as were half a dozen writers of inspired epistles and Gospels. No contributions are being solicited. If you wish to give, do as Jesus said, give in secret and to those within your own environment. (Matthew 6:1-4)

#392. Nothing written in the *Nazarene Principles* is inspired or infallible save those words of the Nazarene himself, those of his personal disciples, as well as

³⁸² **THE WAY.** Compare Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23. The first designation for Christians.

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the rest of the Bible. The truth of what is contained within is for you to judge. If you judge it to be truth in part, then accept and follow that truth. If you can improve on this truth, then do so with God's blessing. Let the qualities of faith and love reside in you richly so that all can see an image of the Nazarene in you: *'But all of us who are Christians have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transformed in ever-increasing splendor into his own image, and the transformation comes from the spirit of the Lord.'* (2 Corinthians 3:18)

#393. Our prayer for you is an ancient one:

*The Lord bless you and protect you.
The Lord deal kindly and graciously with you.
The Lord bestow his favor upon you
and grant you peace.
In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ the Nazarene.
Amen.*

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