



The Christ Conspiracy: Part 1

The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus The Christ



Rhawn Joseph, Ph.D.

Abraxis Books
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The Christ Conspiracy

The Christ Conspiracy
The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus Christ

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The Christ Conspiracy



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The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

The Christ Conspiracy: Part 1

Chapters 1-14 & Pages 1-82

Rhawn Joseph





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“The Kingdom of God, is within you.”

“With God all things are possible.”



“For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”





The Christ Conspiracy: Jesus Must Die

And Jesus said, “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again...”

“...Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

“And Jesus said unto him, So sayest thou.”

And the multitude cried out, “Let him be crucified.”

“When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it...”

“Then the soldiers took Jesus and platted a crown of thorns upon his head, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and smote him on the head.”

“Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

Then they nailed his hands and feet to a cross...they crucified him... and in agony Jesus hung on the cross....

....and as the pitiless crowds sneered and mocked





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him, the dying Jesus, in mortal agony “cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

And as the crowds laughed and jeered, “Jesus, cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up the ghost.”

Jesus Christ was dead. They had crucified him.

He had died to cleanse the world of evil and to redeem it of its sins.

God had now sealed the New Covenant.

“Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.” - Luke 24.



And yet, had Jesus truly died on the Cross?

And, if he had, was it according to plan?

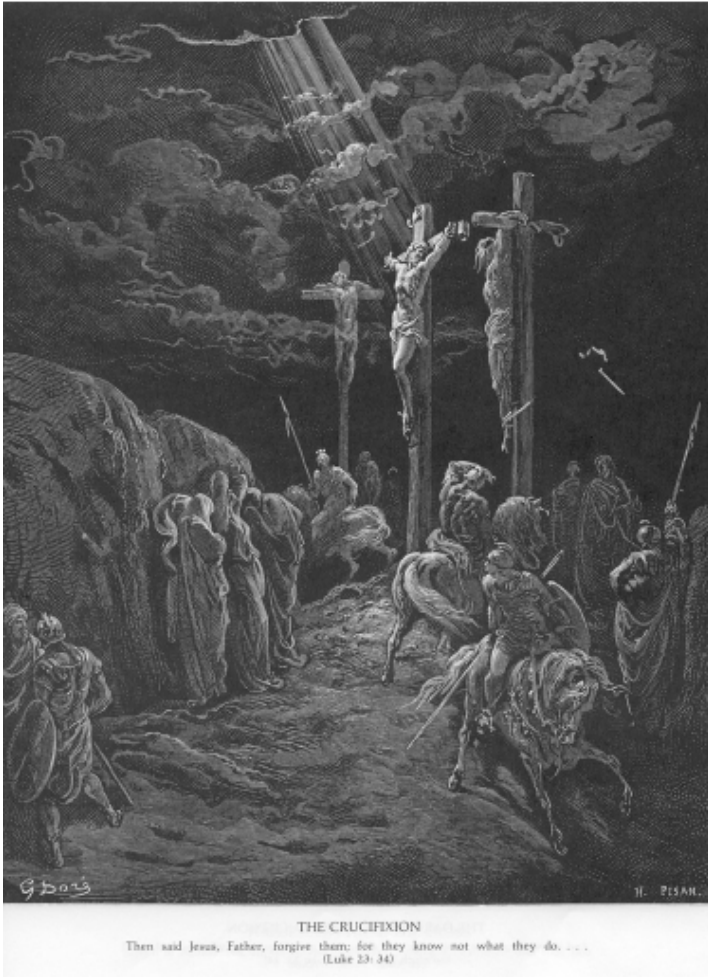
Jesus had meticulously planned to cheat death, and to rise, from sleep, on the third day. Then, and only then, could Jesus be proclaimed The Christ, that is, King of the Jews, and thus, King of Israel.

But then, something went terribly wrong.





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The Covenant With God

“You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the LORD your God, a covenant the LORD is making with you this day and sealing with an oath.” -Deuteronomy 29:12

“Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.” -Deuteronomy 7:9



In the book of Daniel, it was prophecied that the Messiah would appear, seventy weeks of years (490 years) after “the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem.”

What is known as the “Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks” was proclaimed around 500 B.C., after the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah and the sacking and burning of the first Temple of Jerusalem—God’s punishment against the Jews for violating his first covenant.

Thus, the coming of the Messiah, and the second covenant with God, was to become a reality, sometime around the year 10 B.C.

According to prophecy, the appearance of the Messiah would be followed by an Era of Righteousness, in which all people and all the nations





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would live in harmony and without war or sin. Universal justice would prevail and the ideal of the Brotherhood of Man would become a reality. The Messiah would unseal God's New Covenant and would rule the world. War, poverty, and injustice, would be no more.

“With righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.” -Isaiah 11.

“He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. -Isaiah 2:4, -Micah 4:3

All men and women would worship and be ruled by the One True God and in so doing, would reach a state of perfection achieved through justice, righteousness, and total obedience to God and His commandments.

The Jews believed that this World Theocracy was to be governed by “a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation” the state of Israel:

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.” - Deuteronomy 28:1.

This was also the promise of the First Covenant,





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which God made with the children of Israel, after Moses led them out of slavery in Egypt, and onward to the Promised Land.

“And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey...”

Yet the promise of the First Covenant would only be realized if the Jews could themselves reach a state of perfection through justice, righteousness, and blind obedience to the will of God and his commandments (Exodus 20): 1 And God spake all these words, saying,

2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.





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Moses and the ten commandments
Gustave Doré





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8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

13 Thou shalt not kill.

14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15 Thou shalt not steal.

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

“And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day....This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his





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commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice: And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.” - Deuteronomy 26.

“If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your forefathers.” -Deuteronomy 7:12



“If a man or woman living among you in one of the towns the LORD gives you is found doing evil in the eyes of the LORD your God, they are in violation of his covenant.” -Deuteronomy 17:2



“Tell them that this is what the LORD , the God of Israel, says: ‘Cursed is the man who does not obey the terms of this covenant.’” - Jeremiah 11:3

Yet, despite these warnings, the people of Israel had failed and yet failed again, to uphold the laws of God. They had repeatedly sinned and broken the covenant. And the Jewish people were repeatedly punished by God for their transgressions, and finally, their cities were destroyed, the Temple was destroyed, and they were driven from the Promised Land, just as God had promised:





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JESUS PREACHING TO THE MULTITUDE
The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment... But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.
... (Luke 12: 23, 31)





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“And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.” - Deuteronomy 28, 63-64

Punishment followed punishment. The people failed God time and again. Some began to believe that it was impossible for the people to maintain the laws. Many believed only through the direct intervention of God, could they achieve the heavenly ideal, and that this could only be accomplished by a Messiah.

The Messiah would offer the people a New Covenant and new laws, and eternal salvation.

“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant. “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.” -Jeremiah 11, 31, Hebrews 8.

“For the LORD your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers, which he confirmed to them by oath. Behold, saith the Lord, the days come that I will





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make a New Covenant with the house of Israel.” -
Deuteronomy 4:31

God, it was believed, would lead the people to perfection and offer them salvation and ever lasting life, by means of an Anointed One—a man like Moses, a Priest-King whose bloodline, whose “Branch of righteousness” would spring from King David, and “he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.”

It was to be this man, this “son of David,” this Messiah, a God-appointed King of the Jews, who would usher in the Kingdom of God and an era of ever lasting Righteousness. But first, the Messiah would have to teach, preach, and lead the Jewish people to righteousness, and reestablish the relationship with God that had been established with the Covenant of Sinai when Moses led the people out of bondage from Egypt and onward to the Promised Land.





The Last Times

“We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” -John 1.

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. -John 1.

“Behold, the days come, said the Lord, and I will remember their sin no more.” -Jeremiah 31.



The “Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks” would be fulfilled, the priests and learned men believed, sometime around the period we now know as 10 B.C., Thus, during the rein of Herod the Great (37 B.C. to 4 B.C.) a great sense of almost hysterical excitement spread among the Jews. Whereas previously few dared lay claim to the mantle of the Messiah, hundreds of pretenders were now claiming the glory of the godhead, and many had disciples.

Jews from all walks of life, were now clamoring for a Messiah, a priest-king who like Moses, would lead them to salvation and out from under the yoke of the hated Roman Empire.

Israel was an occupied land, defiled and deflowered by brutal pagans. Thousands had been killed without mercy. It was a sign of the coming of





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The Last Times.

The Romans had captured Palestine and the Holy city of Jerusalem, around 63 B.C.. Pompey, the Roman general, had committed blasphemy by trespassing into the Holy of Holies of God's Temple in Jerusalem.

Israel had lost her independence and was now a defiled vassal state. A puppet king, Antipater, who claimed to be a Jew but who some believed to have been of Arab stock, was installed as King, by the Romans around 63 B.C. Antipater was kept in power through fear, terror, and brute military force. Upon his death, around 37 B.C, his son, Herod the Great ascended to the throne and became King of Israel. The rein of Herod were troubled times. There were great earthquakes, droughts, pestulence, disease, mass murders and arrests and the ever present terror of Roman brutality. Even Jewish babies and children were mass murdered by Herod —signs that the Woes of the Last Time had come.

And when Herod suddenly died, there was chaos. The people rebelled. "And thus did a great and wild fury spread itself over the kingdom." -Josephus.

The Romans struck back with an iron fist. Tens of thousands were arrested, killed and crucified. The integrity of the country itself was rent assunder. The Romans split Palestine into two parts, the puppet king, Herod Antipas ruling Galilee, and with Judea and the Holy city of Jerusalem becoming subject to direct Imperial Roman rule.

The arrests and mass killings did not stop. Thousands were tortured and crucified. Even children,





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THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS
Then Herod...was exceeding wrath...and slew all the children that were in
Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under...
(Matthew 2:16)

first born sons, were torn from their mother's breasts and smashed lifeless to the ground. God's Temple was again defiled and plundered. Cruel taxes were imposed on the people. Palestine had again been crushed by the Roman Imperial boot. Pagans ruled the holy land.

Among the pious, the signs were everywhere. The Last Times had begun. The Messiah would soon be coming. The Kingdom of God was near.





John the Baptist - Messenger of God

“As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.” -Mark 1.

According to prophecy and scripture, a messenger, a prophet, would be sent by God, to prepare the way for the Day of the Lord. Some believed this messenger would be none other than the Prophet Elijah.

Elijah, was considered Israel’s second greatest prophet, after Moses. Elijah was not just a prophet, and law giver, but could heal the sick and raise the dead (1 Kings, 17, 22).

It was the prophet Elijah who had previously paved the way for the Lord, by condemning Ahab, the King of Israel, and by defeating and destroying the pagan priests who worshipped the false gods Baal and Asherah.

“You have abandoned the LORD’s commands and have become a worshipper of Baal” Elijah said to Ahab, the King Of Israel. And these were false gods.

Elijah offered a challenge. “Now summon the people from all over Israel...and bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table...Get us two bulls” he said, and cut them to pieces and lay them upon two piles of wood, “but not set fire to them.





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Then you call on your god,” he told the priests of Baal, “and I will call on the LORD . The god who answers by fire-he is God. Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”

“Then they called on Baal from morning till noon. “O Baal, answer us!” they shouted, and they danced around the altar they had made. Still, their “god” did not respond.

“Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or on a journey. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.” So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.”

Then Elijah instructed the people to “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood. Do it again,” he said. Do it a third time, he ordered. The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.”

Elijah began to pray: “Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

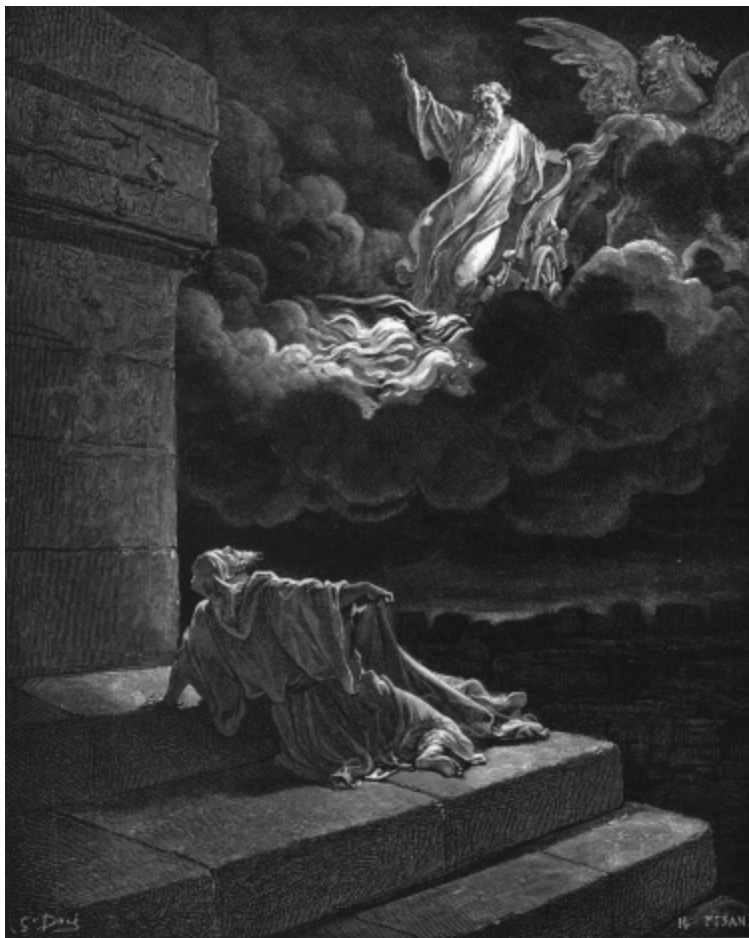
“Then Elijah commanded them, “Seize the prophets of Baal and kill them.” The people slaughtered them one and all.

That Elijah might return, was based in part on the





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ELIJAH TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN IN A CHARIOT OF FIRE

Behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more. . . . (II Kings 2: 11, 12)





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belief that he had never died. According to scripture, God had “taken up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind” as he stood and prayed along the Jordan river—exactly as Elijah prophesied (1 Kings 18:33).

“And Elijah said to his disciple, Elisha, the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And it came to pass that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.” -2 Kings 2.

Elijah, it was believed, would return from heaven. Elijah would pave the way and then anoint and announce the Messiah to the peoples of Israel and to the world.

Thus the Day of the Lord and the Era of Righteousness would not be initiated and the Messiah could not begin his work until the way had been paved by the return and second coming of the Prophet Elijah, or by some unknown messenger of God.

As retold by Mark (1): “As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

Yet, no one knew in what way or form Elijah might reappear. As Elijah, according to the Bible, had never died, but had been taken straight up into heaven, some thought Elijah would return in his own body.

Others believed he would become a transmigrating





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or reincarnating spirit which would enter and possess yet another man—a stranger who would come preaching and crying out in the wilderness for the people to repent.

Enter, John the Baptist, the son of a Temple priest, Zechariah, and Elizabeth, a cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

“Now Elizabeth was quite old and was barren. But one day, the angel Gabriel appeared before Zechariah: The angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.” -Luke 1.

Six month later, the angel Gabriel also appeared before Mary, who was pregnant with Jesus, and said: “Behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.” -Luke 1.

How John spent his early years we do not know.





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The Holy Family and the Infant Baptist
Bartolomé Esteban Murillo





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However, as prophecied, during these troubled times of Roman rule and near hysterical excitement, John, while wondering in the wilderness, heard the word of God. Like one of the ancient prophets of Israel, John emerged like an apparition from the wilderness, proclaiming that the Kindgdom of God was at hand. And this was in accordance with prophecy:

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the





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way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” -Matthew 3.

We can assume, since they were cousins, that John the Baptist must have known of Jesus, perhaps since early childhood. Nevertheless, according to the Gospels, it was the adult John the Baptist, who upon laying his eyes on the adult Jesus, first proclaimed: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” -John 2.

Having received the prophetic anointing, it was then that Jesus Christ, who was now, “about thirty years of age” (Luke 3) announced “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” -Mark 1.





Who and What Is the Messiah

Despite the feverish excitement, and the near universal desire for a liberator sent by God, the Jews were not of one mind as to exactly what purpose a Messiah might serve.

In large part, this was a function of which sect a Jew might belong, such as the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes. Even within these groups there was no general agreement.

The pious and the common people longed for a Messiah who would usher in the Kingdom of God, banish sin, and bring freedom, justice, peace, and salvation to all makind. This was also the desire of the Essenes, a mystical sect to which Jesus might have belonged.

Those who owed their wealth and positions of power to Roman rule, such as the Sadducees, wished only to maintain the status quo. The politically powerful Sadducees hoped a Messiah would never come as they were content with their lot.

The membership of the Pharisees included Sadduccee-like collaborators, and aristocratic priests who had created their own “hypocritical” interpretations of the Bible which some believed strayed from Biblical-truth. Jesus repeatedly referred to the Pharisees as hypocrites.

The majority of the Pharisees and Sadducees





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THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin
And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one
of these. ... (Matthew 6: 28, 29)





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were united in that they wished only to maintain the status quo. Anyone claiming to be the Messiah—that is, the King of the Jews—might bring about a revolution and much loss of life and wealth, and this they opposed. Thus, when Jesus came preaching the new covenant, the Pharisees began plotting his destruction:

“Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.” -John 11.

Yet others hoped for a warrior Messiah, a “King David” who would slay the Roman “Goliath.” These were the Zealots, a militant, revolutionary group who sought a warrior King who would fight the Romans in the name of God.

When the Romans imposed an imperial tax on the Jews in 6 A.D., Judas of Galilee, a leader of the Zealots, proclaimed: “No ruler, but God” and repeatedly called for armed resistance.

But it was not a warrior Messiah whom God promised, but one of Righteousness, faithfulness, who would preach justice and love for all mankind. The Messiah would not strike out with the force of arms, but with “the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.” -Isaiah 11.

With the coming of the Messiah, there would be no more war: “Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.” -Isaiah 2:4, -Micah 4:3

The teachings of Jesus, were those of the promised





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Messiah:

“And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” -Matthew 5.





Is Jesus the Messiah

Many did not believe in Jesus and slandered him:
“This man blasphemeth” said the scribes.

The Jews of Judah in fact tried to stone him to death, which is why the followers of Jesus repeatedly questioned his decision to return to where “the Jews sought to stone thee.”

Over and over again, throughout the Gospels we are told how priests, Pharisees and scribes plotted to kill Jesus:

“Then the chief priests and the elders of the people plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him.”
-Matthew 26.

“And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him.” -John 5.

“The chief priests, and unto the scribes...condemn him to death.” -Mark 9.

“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him.”
-John 5

“But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth.” -John 8.

“And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him.” -Luke 22.

Some rejected him and refused to believe Jesus was the Messiah based on geography: “But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the





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scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him.” -John 7.

Scripture tell us that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea—probably between 6 B.C. and 6 A.D. However, he was known as “Jesus of Nazareth” because he was raised in the Galilean town of Nazareth. Jesus was a Galilean, a Nazarean and some Jews did not believe a Messiah could come from such a place.

“And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” -John 2:46.



THE WISE MEN GUIDED BY THE STAR
And, by the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. (Matthew 2: 9)





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Even those who lived in Nazareth and Galilee found it hard to believe a Messiah could come from their home country.

“And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? And they were offended in him.... And Jesus did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.” - Matthew 13.

“Jesus, said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.” -Mark 6.

Yet, according to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and he was a direct descendant of King David—exactly as prophesied.

As retold by Matthew 1: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat...And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon, and Soloman begat...and Matthan begat Jacob; And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.”

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying,





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Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things...he had gathered all the chief priests and demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet.” -Matthew 2.

And yet, it was also prophesied that the Messiah would come from Nazareth. After the birth of Jesus, Nazareth is where his family chose to dwell:

“And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.” -Matthew 2.

Yet, even though he had all the right credentials, Jesus was a threat to those who desired only a peaceful coexistence with their Roman rulers, and he was a disappointment to those who wanted rebellion and war.

The message of Jesus was forgiveness, peace and love. Jesus preached love not war.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” -Matthew 5.

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” -Matthew 6.





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“Love one another.” -John 14.

“Judge not, that ye be not judged.” -Matthew 7.

“For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world” -John 12.

“The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” -Luke 9.





The Messiah Must Die

“Behold, saith the Lord, the days come that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel.” - Deuteronomy 4:31.

Jesus came not to slay men, but to save them, and that too had been foretold. And so too was his rejection by the Jews, his suffering, and his death by crucifixion:

Jesus told his disciples, “He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.” -Matthew 16.

In a just world, the wicked are punished. Sinners must experience some form of retribution. Yet the severity of punishment may vary depending on the nature of one’s crimes. The truly evil might be cast into the black depths of a fiery hell and experience eternal torment and damnation. Others may dwell in a purgatory of the mind, the length of their sentence varying depending on the nature of their sins.

Some believed they need not die in order to be punished; that their’s is a life of misery and suffering, because they are being punished for their evil ways.

However, some believed it possible to atone for one’s sins and attain salvation by doing good deeds, or by seeking and experiencing punishment in this life. By whipping, or flogging, or cutting of the flesh, the





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sinner undergoes retribution and experiences redemption. By the shedding of one's blood, punishment is received, justice is served, payment is made, and one's sins are washed away.

In the ancient world, and in some "primitive" societies, a "scape goat" was employed as the recipient of one's sins or the collective guilt of the village. Characteristically, a ritualistic "cleansing" ceremony would be performed, and the collective evil or sins of the entire village would be cast into a goat, lamb, swine, or some other sacrificial victim, which would be stoned, stabbed, whipped, beaten, and driven from the village and killed.

A similar ritual is told in the Gospels: "and there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit...But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him... and Jesus said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. Now there was unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought Jesus, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choked in the sea." -Mark 5.

Jesus was a "scape goat" by choice, or to be more exact, in his words: "a lamb to be slaughtered." Jesus would receive unto himself, all the unclean spirits, and the collective guilt and sins of all the people. Jesus would suffer, and would shed his blood, in order to obtain salvation for all humankind. Fallen man would thus be risen up and redeemed, his sins washed away





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by the blood of a sacrificed Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.” -John 4.

Jesus willingly accepted his fate, as foretold by scripture as the “Suffering Just One.” Jesus knew he would be rejected and tormented by the very people whom God had sent him to save—that he would not only suffer, but die a horrible and agonizing death.

It was only through suffering and dying that Jesus could fulfill his Messianic mission, and atone for the sins of others so there would be no more sin and no more iniquity and only redemption in the eyes of God.

“Behold, the days come, said the Lord, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31.



As stated by Jesus: “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” -John 3.



“Jesus answered and said, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” -John 4.

As summed up by Jesus: “That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not





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his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” -John 3.

Atonement could be achieved by suffering, and this too had been prophecied for the “son of man” and the “Elect of the Last Times.”

Only his blood, the blood of a crucified Christ, could unseal the New Covenant:

“Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, “The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified.” -Luke 24.

“These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me... And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”-Luke 24.

“Then He said to them, Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.” -Luke 24.

Jesus died on the cross, not because of the Jews, but to fulfill the prophecies and demands of the old testament: To bring forth the New Covenant, and to fulfill the will of God.





The Royal Family of Jesus

Jesus (“Joshua”) was the firstborn son of Joseph, a “carpenter.” Jesus also had at least two sisters and four brothers: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (Matthew 13).

The name of Jesus (“Joshua”) was fortuitous. “Joshua” was also he who led the Jewish people into the Promised Land. It was Joshua whom God appointed as the successor to Moses.

“Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.” -Joshua 1.

Joshua was also a mighty warrior.

To the followers of Jesus, the name “Joshua” was thus of prophetic significance. Just as Joshua followed Moses, the law giver and the greatest prophet, leading the people to the promised land, Jesus (“Joshua”) would also lead them and then fulfill the promise of the New Covenant.

Some assume Jesus must have been born into humble circumstances because his father was a “carpenter.” The term “Carpenter” however, may be misleading. A “carpenter” is also a builder, and the term may in fact refer to a contractor with a workforce





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that constructs dwellings for the people. The parents of Jesus may well have been aristocrats—which is exactly what we might expect of a man, Joseph, who traced his lineage to King David, and whose wife’s cousin was married to a high ranking Temple priest, Zacharias.

That this family was not impoverished, is also suggested by nature of their friends. For example, there is the “governor” who attends a wedding at which Mary, the mother of Jesus, appears to play hostess, and to which Jesus is called.

His family, and Jesus himself, had in fact, numerous well-to-do friends and benefactors, including those who showered upon the family precious gifts long before Jesus began his ministry. Indeed, the aristocratic bloodline would explain why at his birth, Jesus was showered with gold and precious gifts: “And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.” -Matthew 2.

That this family frequently traveled about the country, including even taking a journey to Egypt where they dwelled for some time, certainly does not lend itself to a suggestion of impoverishment.

Mary (Miriam), the mother of Jesus, also may well have been of Jewish priestly royalty or of noble birth. Her cousin was married to a high priest at the Temple, and yet another sister (also named Mary) was the wife of Cleophas (John 19). Cleophas (also spelled Cleopas) is a name associated with royalty, i.e.





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Cleopatra; and it is not uncommon for royal families to intermarry—in this case progeny from the royal houses of Egypt and Israel.

The family of Jesus also traveled to Egypt, and this is where they stayed for a number of years, possibly in the house of rich relatives, i.e. Cleophas: “And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.” -Matthew 2.

Then there are the extremely rich and wealthy friends, benefactors, and “disciples” of Jesus, including, “Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance” (Luke 8:1-3), as well as Lazarus of Bethany, Joseph of Arimathaea, and Nicodemus, “a ruler of the Jews” (John 3:1). Nicodemus may have also been the “ruler of the feast” who attended a wedding seemingly hosted by Mary (John 2).

Mary, we are told, also had command over numerous servants and appears to have had an incredible amount of leisure time at her disposal. For a woman of that period, Mary had an uncommon freedom of movement, even traveling long distances, alone, to visit and stay with relatives in the Temple.

As detailed in the Gospel of Luke: “And Mary





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arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth....And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.”

There is also the story of a huge wedding in Galilee, at which Mary appears to have played hostess—a wedding attended by a “governor” and numerous servants whom she commanded.

The family, in fact could trace its ancestry to the royal house of King David from whose blood line the Messiah would spring.

That Jesus was of royal blood is repeatedly stressed in the Gospels, and this is exactly what one would expect of He who is destined to become King of the Jews.

By contrast, there is no suggestion that his family was poor.

A king does not ascend to the throne dressed in rags.





A Messiah is Born

Mary and Joseph were well aware that their son, Jesus, was special and favored by God. However, as to when they became fully aware that he was the Messiah, is never made clear.

The Gospels of Luke 1 tell us that before Jesus was conceived, his mother Mary was a virgin engaged to Joseph. Much to her astonishment, the virgin bride-to-be was informed by an angel that she would give birth to “the Son of God.”

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”





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“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

And yet, by scripture and tradition, it could be said that every Jewish male was a son of god, and every woman, his daughter. As said by Jesus: “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom





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the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world.”

Thus, according to Jesus, we are all sons and daughters of God—a phrase misunderstood not only by contemporary Biblical scholars, but by some of the priests and scribes of ancient Israel:

When Jesus called himself the Son of God, the Jews sought to stone him because they believed he was claiming to be God. Jesus protested this accusation: “You say I blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”

Those who condemned him dismissed this explanation, saying “we stone thee...because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” -John 10.

No, Jesus argued. He was not making himself God. There was a distinction. He was referring to his Heavenly father, and was saying we are all gods and sons of God. His detractors were not impressed. They were well aware Jesus often spoke in parables so his true meaning might not be clearly understood and used against him.

Thus if Mary was told she was to give birth to the “Son of God,” this could well apply to every Jewish mother.

Even so, according to the Gospels, not just Mary, but his earthly father, Joseph, were informed by the same angel, that Jesus had been anointed by God. For example, as retold in the Gospel of Matthew (1), when Joseph discovered his wife-to-be was already pregnant: “The angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall





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bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

As detailed in the Gospel of Luke (2:7), Mary and Joseph received yet another indication as to the greatness destined for their son, soon after Jesus was born: “And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

“And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.”

Mary was confused and not yet convinced as to exactly what all this meant or what the future held in store for her first born son. Secretly, she ponders the implications in her heart.

Mary and Joseph were again apprised of the future greatness of their son after baby Jesus had been





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circumcised. And “they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord...And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law. Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,





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Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against.” -Luke 2.

But were they convinced? Their son and his intentions, were in fact, a mystery to them.

“Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be





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about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart." -Luke 2.

Mary may have had her secret hopes and doubts which she pondered in her heart; but Jesus, by age 12, with his astonishing intelligence, was already well aware he'd been chosen by God for a very special mission. Thus he says to his parents, "I must be about my Father's business," the Father, being God.

In addition to his amazing intelligence and





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astonishing understanding of scripture, we are also introduced to yet another unusual trait of the young Messiah which will become a characteristic: a tendency to wonder off alone, seeking solitude, and answers. Repeatedly Jesus seeks isolation, to commune with God, the Father, but without telling family, or his disciples were he is going and why.





Jesus Is Called to Marriage

Joseph, his earthly father, must have died soon after Jesus turned 12, for he is not again mentioned in the Gospels. In the Gospel of John (2) for example, Joseph, is explicitly excluded and ceases to play any role in family affairs after Jesus turns 12. In fact, not only does his father disappear from the scene, but the young, teenage Jesus also appears to have attracted a devoted entourage of followers, that is, disciples.

“After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.”

Although Joseph has likely died, Mary, his mother, continues to play a significant role after Jesus becomes a teenager and then a man. It is also clear that even before he begins his ministry, that Mary has become aware of his amazing powers, including his ability to perform “miracles” such as turning water into wine.

What is curious about the wine episode, is it takes place during a marriage, in Galilee, when Jesus was perhaps, thirty years old—on the “third day” (John 2); meaning that Jesus may have just turned 30. By “curious” we note that Mary may have been the hostess, and that Jesus played a role suggestive of a bridegroom.

Consider: “when they wanted wine” and had no more wine, Mary, his mother, instructs Jesus to make





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wine for the guests. She also gives orders to the servants to do the bidding of her son—which would be unthinkable unless they were in her command and it was her home or party.

Jesus also appears to be both miracle worker and bridegroom. Thus, after Jesus makes the wine which is then served to the guests, “the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and said unto him...thou hast kept the good wine until now.”

The bridegroom is never identified, though it is clear that Jesus in fact provided the wine, and thus, logically, he is the one to be thanked.

Consider also the term “calling.” We note that just as a man might be “called to the ministry” that is, to become a minister, “Jesus was called to the marriage” and his disciples came as guests.

As retold in the Gospel of John (2): “And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.”

But Mary was to have her way. She commands the servants: “Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.” and then “Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.”

“When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith





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unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.”

What this implies is that Mary was the hostess, Jesus the bridegroom and his disciples were there as guests. Of course, there is no explicit statement to that effect, in the Gospels, either pro or con.



THE MARRIAGE IN CANA

Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water ... (John 2:7)





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We do know, however, that Jesus was in favor of marriage: “For man shall cleave to his wife and they shall be of one flesh.”

And Jesus condemned divorce:

“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.” -Matthew 5.

Likewise at least two of his disciples were married, including Peter (also known as Simon). Jesus designates the married Peter to become the “rock” upon which the church of Jesus is to be later established: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.” - Matthew 16:18.

We also know that Jesus did not advocate celibacy, though he did have this to say about eunuchs—men who’ve been castrated:

“His disciples say unto him... it is not good to marry. But he said unto them... there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” - Matthew 19.

Some have interpreted this passage to mean that priests and men of god should remain celibate. Strictly speaking, of course, what this saying means explicitly, is there are those who wish to castrate





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themselves, and thus sacrifice their manhood, in order to serve heaven. Jesus does not say, however, that men who become eunuchs serve God, and this may well be because castration was part of the initiation rite for becoming an acolyte or priest of the goddess cults, the queen of heaven. By eliminating one's manhood, and thus by making one's self into a woman, one could identify with and become one with, the goddess, and therefore, one of her priests.

Jesus was not a eunuch, but a man who loved women and children and who enjoyed their attentions and their company.

And Jesus "said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom." - Matthew 13.

"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." -Matthew 19.

"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." - Luke, 17; Matthew 18,

Many of those in her entourage, were women, some quite wealthy, and others who were little more than beggars, all of whom showered him with attention and love (e.g., Luke 7:37-50).





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JESUS BLESSING THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God... (Mark 10: 14)

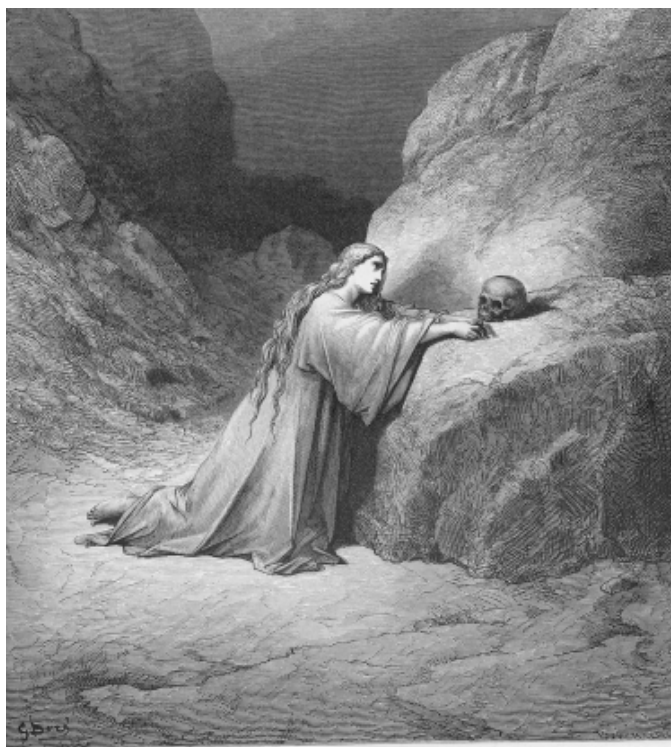




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There is also the question of the young woman known as Mary—sometimes referred to as Mary Magdalen (from the Galilean village of Migdal), or Mary of Bethany.

Mary is mentioned in all four gospels. In Luke, this woman is introduced quite early, while Jesus is still in Galilee where the marriage took place. Jesus is said to have performed an exorcism, that she was possessed with seven devils, which Jesus drove out.



MARY MAGDALENE REPENTANT

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little... (Luke 7: 47)





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As based on the Gospel of Luke, it has been supposed that Mary Magdalen may have also been a prostitute. The “prostitute” however, is never named, and is introduced in t he chapter before Mary Magdalen:

“And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.”

Jesus, however, responds by saying: “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.” Luke 7:37-50.

This woman is never named and there is no suggestion in any of the Gospels that she and Mary are one and the same.

According to three of the Gospels, Mary is also present at the Crucifixion. There are in fact several Marys present, incuding one who is also identified in the Gospels of John and Mark as the mother of Jesus:

“There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome.” - Mark 15.





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“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.” -John 19.

In the Gospel of John “Mary” is identified as Mary (of Bethany) and the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Lazarus is a beloved disciple whom Jesus later raises from the dead.

The Bethany “Mary” and Mary Magdalen may be the same person.

Jesus, as is clear from the Gospel of Luke, also has a very tender relationship with Mary of Bethany, “which shall not be taken from her.” This relationship also provides Mary with special privileges which makes Martha, her sister, intensely jealous:

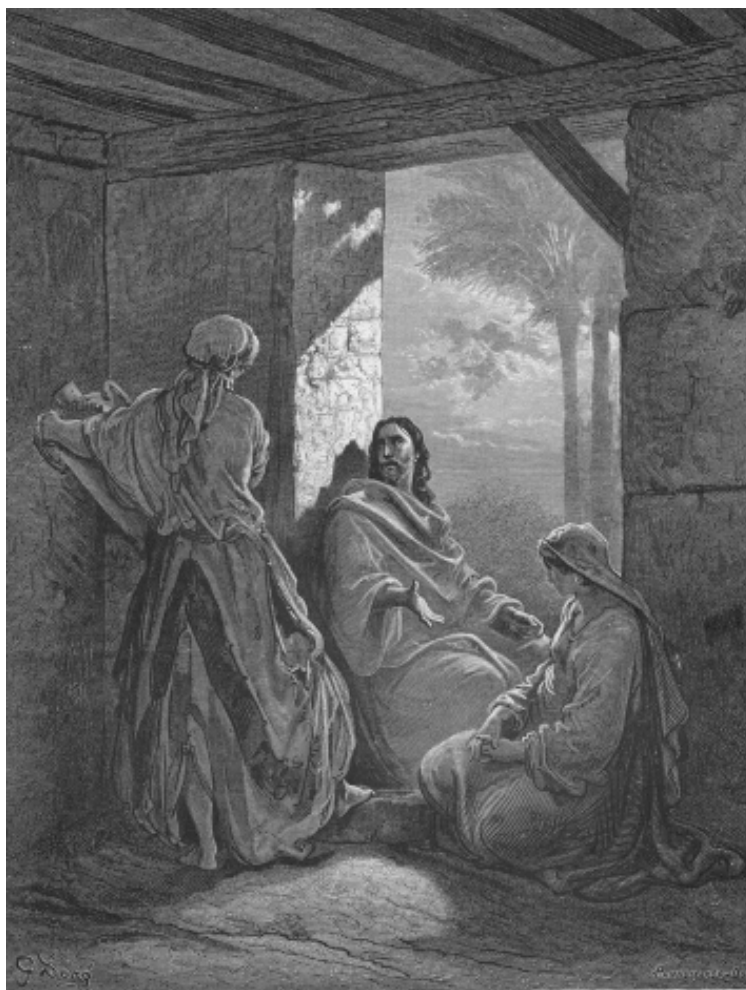
“Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” -Luke 10.

“They made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.” -John 12.





The Chirst Conspiracy



JESUS AT THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AND MARY

Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her ... (Luke 10: 41, 42)





The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

Mary of Bethany not only has a tender, loving relationship with Jesus, but she is also under his command in a way that is suggestive of wifely submission:

“And... she [Martha] went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him” -John 11.

Jesus is her “master” and master also means “husband.” And, as noted, although Mary is Martha’s sister, Martha obviously has no power over her. Mary is under the control of Jesus: “bid her therefore that she help me” Martha pleads.

We also know that Jesus had a very special relationship with Mary’s brother, Lazarus. Lazarus was also a “beloved disciple;” the “disciple whom Jesus loved” the “disciple who should not die;” which may be yet another reason why Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead. Indeed, his other followers, in observing Jesus’s attitude toward Lazarus had this to say: “Behold how he loved him” (John 11:26).

On the other hand, one of the “beloved” disciples may have also been a woman; such as his wife. Mary may have been one of the beloved disciples. Indeed, it is very curious that the name and sexual identity of those referred to as the “beloved disciple” is not always stated, even though this individual was so “beloved.”

It was also his relationship with Mary which played a major role in the decision of Judas to betray Jesus. Judas was greedy and jealous.

In fact, the family of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (who Jesus loved), played a repeated role in the events





The Chirst Conspiracy

before and probably during and after his Crucifixion, such as providing the “colt” for the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and the lodgings and the food for the last supper.

As he hung, dying on the cross, Jesus may have also entrusted the care of his mother to this beloved family, and to his “beloved disciple.” Jesus instructed his mother to consider this disciple “whom he loved” to be her “son.”

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” - John 19:25-27.

Thus, one might argue that Mary may have been his wife, and Lazarus, his brother-in-law—a brother to Jesus, and a “son” to his mother. This in turn could explain the relationship between the two Marys that became evident at the Crucifixion and why Lazarus was therefore a “son” to Mary (mother of Jesus) and why Mary was now a mother to this son; i.e. a mother-in-law and a son-in-law—or a brother-in-law who takes care of the mother of his “brother” when his “brother” dies.

It is also of note that Jesus, although he already had disciples, did not begin his ministry until after he had been “called” to this marriage on the “third day.” According to ancient Jewish tradition, a man cannot become a teacher or a priest, until he is married.





The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

Likewise, before the marriage ceremony, when his mother asked him to perform a small miracle, turning water into wine, Jesus declines saying: “mine hour is not yet come.”

His “hour” does not come, until after the “third day” and after the marriage” and after he turns 30.

On the other hand, if Jesus did not have a wife, this would have been a mark of distinction, yet another characteristic that set him apart from the crowd and other priests, including those claiming to be the Messiah. In fact, it would have been a scandal, and it was a scandal.

“And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.” -Luke 8.

Women were passionate followers of Jesus, and the presence of so many women in his entourage scandalized the Pharisee aristocrats who were shocked by and condemned this sinful behavior.





Born Again Into the Family of God

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” -John 3.

Even before the “third day” and the marriage in Gallilee, Jesus had established a following and was accompanied by disciples. However, he had yet to display his full powers, or his ability to perform miracles, as his “hour had not yet come.” Rather, it appears that others began following Jesus, even as a teenager, because of his commanding, charismatic personality and incredible and astonishing intelligence. As was made clear even at age 12, Jesus was a man of God, who “amazed” and “astonished” priests and teachers, and he was going places. Many sought to follow.

According to the Gospels, Jesus did not truly begin the first phase of his ministry, until after the “third day;” that is, after he turned 30, for on the “third day” and before the marriage, he told his mother: “my hour is not yet come.”

Likewise, in the Gospel of Luke, we are told that Jesus was “about thirty years of age” when he was annointed by John the Baptist.

It was also after the third day, and after the marriage, that Jesus seperated himself from his family, and began to establish a new family of brothers and





The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

sisters. His new family would become sons and daughters of God.

“For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.” - Mark 3.

Those who would follow Jesus would be born anew into the family of God. They would become as little children. And Jesus said: “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven....That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” -Matthew 18.

But to accomplish this rebirth and to be reborn, Jesus, and his followers, had to cut the cord which bound them to the demands of and ties to their earthly families. God, the heavenly Father, must come first.

After the third day, Jesus severed all ties with his earthly family, and left the family nest. However, this act of independence apparently caused some consternation among his family who followed after him and sought him out. But Jesus recognized them not: He in fact, disowned them. Jesus had a new family of brothers and sisters and those he would refer to as mother: the multitudes who followed him and accepted his teachings.

As retold by Mark (3): “There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.”

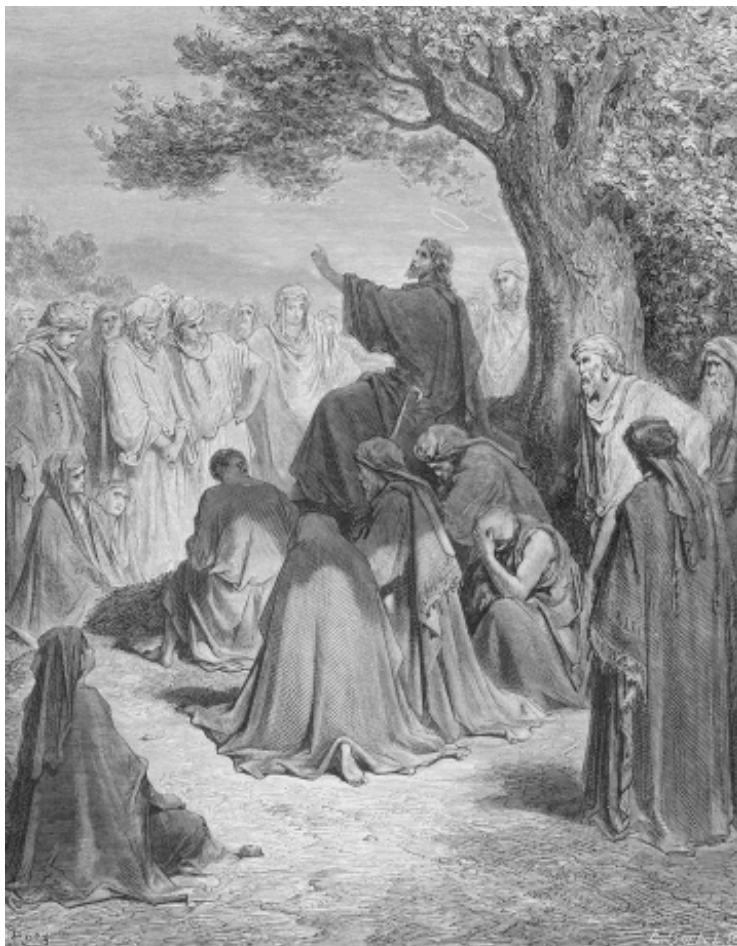
But Jesus refused to even acknowledge their presence.

“And he answered them, saying, Who is my





The Christ Conspiracy



JESUS PREACHING TO THE MULTITUDE

The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment... But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.
... (Luke 12: 23, 31)





The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

mother, or my brethren. And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.”

Indeed, although his teachings emphasized love and the commandments to honor thy mother and father, it was also his teaching that those who accepted God would be born again, into a new family. And to accomplish this, one must sever the ties to one’s earthly family and the claims they might make upon them.

When one of his disciples asked Jesus for permission to attend to his family “and to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.” -Matthew 8.

“For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.” -Matthew 10.

Thus after “the third day” Jesus began forming his new family. He was now taking the first momentous steps on a long road that would lead to his death and sacrifice by crucifixion. Soon, he would announce that “the time has come.”

But first, Jesus would need to be baptised by John the Baptist so as to be annointed and reborn as the Messiah.





John the Baptist: Anointing the Messiah

“And Jesus said, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” -John 3.

According to scripture, the Day of the Lord would not begin and the Messiah could not start his work until the way had been paved by a prophet and messenger from god. Many believed this prophecy referred to the return and second coming of the prophet Elijah. Elijah, it was believed, would anoint and announce the Messiah to the peoples of Israel and to the world.

As retold by Mark 1: “As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

Yet, no one knew in what way or form Elijah might reappear. Some thought Elijah, who’d been taken directly to heaven by God, would return in his own body. Others thought he would become a reincarnating spirit which would possess yet another man—a prophet who would emerge from the wilderness calling upon the people to repent, and thus making the way straight for the coming of the Lord.





The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

Enter, John the Baptist, the son of a priest, Zechariah, and Elizabeth, a cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

How John spent his early years we do not know. Yet, as prophecied, John the Baptist heard the word of God and emerged from the wilderness, crying out to the people to repent.

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” -Matthew 3.

As promised by prophecy, “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

Moreover, John was baptizing the masses along the banks of the Jordan river, and Elijah stood upon the banks of the Jordan when God took him to Heaven. The prophecies were being fulfilled: “For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias.” -Matthew 3.

Many were convinced that John was the promised messenger from God, that the Kingdom of God was near.

Jesus, too declared that John the Baptist was the prophet who would pave the way, as promised by God: “This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.” -Luke 7.





The Chirst Conspiracy

The fame of John quickly spread far and wide. Noblemen, priests, aristocrats, soldiers, peasants, and a constant flow of huge masses of people flocked to the Jordan to be baptised by John:

“Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” - Matthew 3.

Many, in fact, thought John was the promised Messiah and they sought to worship him. But John declared this was not so. He was but a messenger who had heard the word of God, and God had given him a divine mission, to pave the way for the establishment of the Kingdom of God, and to anoint the Messiah:

“I baptize you with water unto repentance. But he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” -Matthew 3.

John baptised and preached, condemning sinners, be they man, woman or king. And among those he condemned was King Herod. Herod had divorced his wife, and married the wife of his dead brother. This was a sin, John preached, thus drawing the ire of Herod and his new wife, and amazing the people who flocked to him in even greater numbers.

John the Baptist declared again and again that he was on a mission from God, that he was searching for he who “is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear:” the promised Messiah.

Word soon reached him of Jesus and the miracles he performed: And “John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus. When the men were come





The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

unto Jesus, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"

Seeing is believing, and as they watched, Jesus performed miracles, healing the sick and casting out devils: "And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." -Luke 7.





The Anointing: Born Again

“Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” -John 3.



According to prophecy, the Messiah could not anoint himself. This was the task of the reincarnated Elijah: John the Baptist.

Jesus, in order to fulfill scripture, would have to first be baptised, and in so doing, be born again and then recognized and anointed as the Messiah.

As retold my Matthew and Mark: “And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.”

But, at first, John refused to baptise Jesus. The notion was scandalous. Preposterous. He was unworthy of the task, protested John. If anything Jesus should baptise him: “I have need to be baptized of thee,” said John “and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then





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he suffered him.”

As retold my Mark 1: “And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

The experience must have been a spiritually profound, awe-inspiring exhilarating confirmation of all he believed: Jesus was the Messiah. That which is Spirit is spirit, he had said, and the spirit had spoken.





The Chirst Conspiracy

He had been recognized and annointed by John/Elijah, and God had spoke, a voice from heaven: Jesus was the Son of God.

And that which is spirit not only spoke, but that spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness.





The Spirit of Temptation

Jesus had now been confirmed as the Messiah. And, as soon as the baptism and anointing had been complete Jesus left his disciples and being driven by the spirit, sought isolation in the wilderness in order to fully experience the Spirit of God.

“And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness” -Matthew 4.

Jesus brought no food, and for forty days he fasted; and this too, had prophetic significance.

Jesus was to introduce to the Jews and the world, the New Covenant of God, and it was for this reason that he sojourned alone, without food in the wilderness, for Moses, the bearer of the first covenant, had done the same:

“And Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.” -Exodus 34:28.

Wondering alone in the wilderness, without food, is a common form of “spirit quest” that has been employed by those seeking truth and spiritual enlightenment, for thousands of years. Not uncommonly, the seeker is rewarded with heavenly or hellish visions or a spiritual awakening and may be visited by angels, devils, or spirit-guides such as wolves, lions, eagles, hawks, or even “a spirit like a dove.”





The Chirst Conspiracy

As is now well established, prolonged periods of isolation also induce vivid and realistic hallucinations which may range from the simple to the profoundly complex. Likewise, prolonged periods without food or water can induce hallucinations of both. And, it has been reported that those who undergo long periods of sensory deprivation may hallucinate not only food or water, but angels, devils and gods.

It is also not uncommon for those seeking spiritual nourishment while sojourning in the wilderness, to be tempted to break their fast, to eat or drink, or to return home to friends and family because they can not stand the isolation or the constant pain of hunger.

To overcome temptation is part of the spirit quest.

Jesus went without food and was isolated for forty days. And Jesus was tempted to use his powers to “command that these stones be made bread.”

But Jesus resisted temptation as he was seeking God, saying: “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Given his powers, his ability to heal the sick, raise the dead, and draw multitudes of worshipping crowds, the prospect of conjuring up bread when he hungered so, might well have been a compelling temptation and a simple feat. Given his powers, Jesus need not “command stones” but could command armies and achieve unlimited power and glory. Indeed, as he well knew, Jesus might be able to achieve all this without the need to suffer the prophecied torture and Crucifixion that would end his life, before being risen, as the king, on the third day.



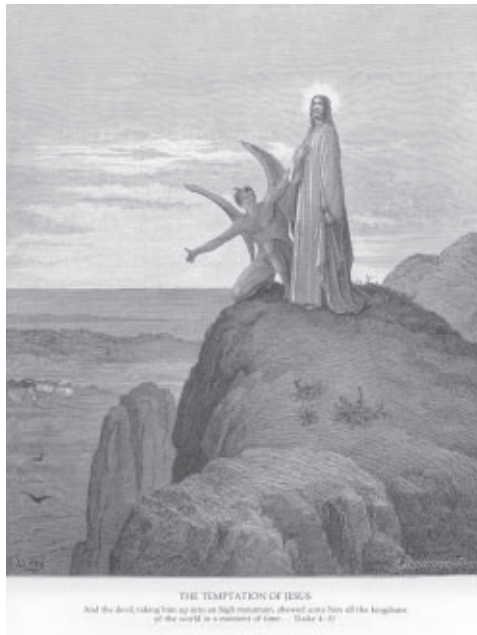


The Life, Death & Marriage of Jesus

The temptaton was there. He could have all that a man might desire, if only he would abandon his mission, abandon God, and embrace evil, and worship the devil in his place.

“Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” -Matthew 4.

But Jesus refused temptation: “Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”





The Chirst Conspiracy

Satan had been defeated. Evil had been defeated. Temptation had been defeated.

Having withstood temptation (the Devil), Jesus now received authorization from God, to go forth as the Messiah, and to announce: “The time is fulfilled.”

After 40 days without food, Jesus, returned from the wildnerness and “came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” -Mark 1.

But Jesus dared not declare himself the Messiah, or the King of the Jews; not yet. The time was not ripe. His hour had not yet come. To do so before he had finished his mission, and fulfilled the prophecies, would be to invite failure and an early death.





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Dr. Rhawn Gabriel Joseph, obtained his Ph.D. from UHS/The Chicago Medical School, and completed his Internship and training at the Yale University Medical School and the VAMC Depts. of Neurology, Neuropsychology, and Clinical Psychology. Dr. Joseph is the author of several best selling text books, and his works have received rave reviews in scientific journals. He has published numerous scholarly and scientific articles on spirituality and religious experience, and he is the editor of and a major contributor to the widely acclaimed text, NeuroTheology: Brain, Science, Spirituality and Religious Experience (see BrainMind.com)

