



Bethany

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This material is copyright. It is based on the *Reality Search* workshop kit c/f www.realitysearch.com.au. The kit contains five explanatory Versions of an original Gospel Analysis in hard copy and on a colour CD. The Analysis sets out lists of social values in a step by step line of logic.

The kit also contains an introductory thesis showing that when the gospels were written there was need for a new paradigm of society. Problems similar to what the writers were dealing with in their own milieu are still around today.

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Bethany, a Novelette

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BETHANY - A NOVELETTE

Using the *Reality Search* Analysis

Introduction

Sometimes the outlines of a person's life and circumstance are well-known. Sometimes extra, apparent insights come to light and these can be used to fill in more connections. But a new framework may not be generally known or accepted. In the case of details revealed through the *Reality Search* analysis, it appears easier to provide an outline of non-traditional connections in a novelette form. Many films are based on historical novels. One is not absolutely certain that this or that detail is historical fact. But an attempt has been made to avoid contradiction of facts that have been handed down. An attempt has also been made to incorporate new, apparent facts that have come to light when original texts have been considered in a different way.

When well-known original texts are considered, there are usually a range of opinions about the historical correctness of this or that perspective. Some subjects are more controversial than others and probably the most controversial of all is that of religion. In the books of *Reality Search*, an analysis of Scriptural texts throws up connections that fit in with the texts, but the connections are not traditional ones. Also, it is not the primary aim of the *Reality Search* kit to speculate about historical possibilities. So mention of possible connections tend to be scattered throughout the Versions of *Reality Search*.

In terms of presenting an 'overview' of a possible background story, a step is being taken back here from the texts in order to provide instead, a 'parallel' account of what could have been. By changing the names of the major figures, a reminder is presented that this is a 'possible' story rather than an assertion that this is 'absolutely' what took place. By presenting references at the end of the novelette however, evidence is given to show that this or that connection or event, does in fact fit the text.

The "novelette" called *Bethany*, is a reminder of *The Life of Brian*, (c/f Monty Python) a popular film made several decades ago. *The Life of Brian* selected out some points in tradition and then developed these into a 'parallel historical' sketch with comic overtones. In the case of the novelette *Bethany* however, the story and characters are not intended to be comical. Also the story avoids any contradictions at all with the texts it is based upon.

Because *Bethany* is only a 'make-up' story it is possible to add to it, change it around and develop it, so as to clarify parallels between it and original texts. At the same time, in a novelette there is less academic pressure to provide justification for every single point that is made.



Part One

A Special Life

First Century Jerusalem

In the early part of the first century, Jerusalem was the hub of the Jewish world. The Jews were a small minority of people who were monotheistic, that is, they only believed in the one God. Their society was (and is) ultimately based on their knowledge of "the Law", or *Torah*, c/f the first five books of the Bible.

People in Jewish society contrasted with that of their Roman overlords who had a pantheon of gods similar to that of the Greek world. Roman society was largely based on the philosophy of the Greeks, namely Plato and Aristotle (c.a. 500 B.C.).

On a Sabbath day the Jews assembled at the local Synagogue where their Scriptures were read out and discussed. In turn, the life of the Synagogue was structured around the celebration of Jewish festivals. A large number of Jews made the effort each year to travel to the Jerusalem Temple to worship.¹ This included the offering of sacrifices, by which they could be 'cleansed' of their inevitable sins, both against the 'Torah' and their fellows.² A key festival related to such cleansing was the feast of Atonement when sacrifice was offered on behalf of all, by the Chief Priest. There were other cleansing rituals as well, such as after child birth.³

Because sacrifices were only allowed at the Temple, the hierarchy of priests there had a special power and status over the thousands of Jews coming to the festivals.⁴ These priests came from the tribe of Levi and could trace back their lineage to Aaron, the brother of Moses who led God's Chosen People into the promised land and who gave them God's Ten Commandments (about 1200 B.C.).⁵

Priests were not the only power group within Judaism. There were a considerable number of sects or groups that operated within Jewish networks. A reason for the number and variety of "sects" was the Jewish emphasis on practice of 'law' rather than on what people thought. Consequently people could hold a wide range of opinions, so long as they practiced what the law set out.

There were the **Scribes**, largely involved in paper-work including the copying of 'the law' on parchment scrolls. There were local **Synagogue Leaders** scattered around the Roman Empire. There were the **Pharisees** who took great care to follow the law in minute detail.⁶ There were the **Zealots**. Some of these were keen to shake off the yoke of Rome so Israel could be governed by 'the law' directly.⁷ Others focused instead on a strict observance of the law.⁸ There were the **Sadducees** who did not believe in an after-life.⁹ There were the members of the **Sanhedrin** who were mainly concerned about the governance of Judaism, especially around the Temple in Jerusalem.¹⁰ The range of sects included **Herodians** who followed the worldly King Herod.¹¹ There were the Nazarites who took a vow of commitment¹² and avoided alcohol. Another group again were the **Essenes**.¹³

The Essenes

The Essenes focussed on an idealistic observance of the Ten Commandments as given by God to Moses. In the first century there was a large monastery of Essenes at Qumran near the Dead Sea.

The Essene 'monks' in particular "raised the bar" of the Commandments given by Moses. That is, they not only tried to observe these commandments but they made their standard of observance as high as possible. In doing this they focused in particular on the key social commandments.

- They forfeited their right to personal property and lived a common life in community, (c/f 7th commandment, "Thou shalt not steal").
- The 'monks' were celibate (c/f 6th, "Thou shalt not commit adultery").
- Their life-destiny was determined within the group which helped to prevent them from interfering with the life destiny of others. (c/f 5th, "Thou shalt not kill").¹⁴

Thus their approach to the Commandments set extra controls on inclinations towards avarice, lust and self-promotion at the expense of other people. Essene monks who made this extreme form of commitment to the sect, lived in and around the monastery and eventually died there. Other, "fellow travellers" could practice a similar commitment within their marriage and to varying degrees.¹⁵ As far as outsiders were concerned it appeared the Essenes were not only idealistic about the key social

Commandments, but about the whole of their lifestyle as well.

A Boyhood Scene

For a boyhood scene against this background, consider two individual boys. One of them was called Joshua. He was the only child of Essene parents and this family lived in a village in Galilee called Nazara. They had come to this township from Egypt where they had fled as refugees about twelve years beforehand. The family fled from "King Herod the Great" who had built the present Jerusalem Temple. ¹⁶ Herod the Great was also father of the present King Herod.

When Joshua was born, Herod the Great heard prophecies from Eastern wise men who came looking for a child whom they described as a new-born king. They then went on to Bethlehem and found Joshua. Herod knew that Jews in general were waiting for some kind of Saviour who would fulfill a promise made to King David about 1,000 years previously. The promise was that his descendants would inherit a Kingdom that would last forever. ¹⁷ People were living in anticipation of this Kingship coming about. Herod however, was determined to eliminate any opposition to his own position. So he killed all the male children around Bethlehem under two years of age. As it turned out Joshua's family was warned about his plan through a dream and they escaped. ¹⁸

Consider a second boy (against this first century background) who was called Lazara. Lazara belonged to a priestly family that was so well connected to the priestly

establishment in Jerusalem that he could bring his friends into the High Priest's inner courtyard.¹⁹ Lazara lived with his family in the village of Bethany, a comfortable walk from Jerusalem

According to custom, priests of the day took turns serving in the Temple. This meant they could live outside of the city rather than inside of it. Lazara's father who was a priest, chose to live in Bethany and he was usually occupied in teaching and health care.²⁰ As a priest he did not have a 'secular' occupation such as farming, carpentry or trading. But one way his family could top up their income was by providing hospitality to pilgrims visiting Jerusalem. Several times a year, there would be thousands of people²¹ looking for accommodation. Pilgrims appreciated the chance to stay with a priest's family because they could hear his explanations of the Scriptures in the evening and go to the festival next morning. Some such festivals lasted a week. Some regular visitors to Jerusalem had a 'permanent booking' with people who lived near the Temple. This accommodation was more comfortable than a 'tent city' on the outskirts of the city. For regular visitors, when their children were old enough for a long walk, they came with their parents to Jerusalem in a caravan group from their own district.²² It was generally agreed that travelling in a caravan was safer and it was a chance for people to catch up with each other.

At the time larger homes were built like a 'compound', similar to those found today in the ruins of Pompeii. There would be a number of fairly independent rooms opening onto a central courtyard. Thus families could have their own room while they also shared a common, central space

in the middle of the compound. Here there were water storages and also a fire in winter.²³ Sometimes this central area was partially covered to protect against wind, rain and thieves.

A Significant Meeting

Re-consider the two boys. When Joshua and Lazara were about twelve years old it was time for their Bar Mitzvah ceremony. This ceremony involved a public reading of Scripture to show that the boys were indeed literate. Literacy meant they were therefore capable of reading the Law for themselves and capable of taking responsibility for their own actions. Until then the parents were responsible for any misdemeanors. Bar Mitzvah ceremonies held at the Temple involved a number of boys. And, friendships formed here amongst the boys could last a life time. In the case of Joshua and Lazara, when they met at their Bar Mitzvah ceremony, there was an instant bond of friendship between them. Each found in the other 'the immediate brother' they had never had.

Over the next days Lazara took his new friend into the inner precincts of the Temple to meet with his teachers and friends. His father was there as well. Joshua was given the opportunity to ask questions of the scholars and he did so. In fact he confounded them with the depth of his understanding. As the hours slipped by Joshua, now responsible for his own actions, opted to stay on.

In the meantime, Joshua's parents' set off with their caravan group back to Nazara. When night came and the families re-grouped the parents discovered that Joshua was not with

them. They returned to Jerusalem in a state of "sorrowing". Then, after three days of searching they found Joshua deep within the Temple buildings and still in discussion with the scholars there.²⁴ In a burst of relief and emotion they challenged Joshua about his behaviour. But he replied that he had been busy about his (Heavenly) Father's business. With such a statement he showed that from now on his life would be focussed around a single purpose. He would return to Nazara and live a family life of obscurity. But during the years to come he would be preparing.

Time went by. Joshua and Lazara continued the friendship that they had struck up as boys in the Temple. Lazara's father, deeply impressed with Joshua, had extended an invitation to his parents to stay at Bethany when they came to Jerusalem on their annual pilgrimage. There was general agreement this would be more comfortable and the two boys could continue their studies together. Even so, while Joshua's parents accepted the invitation, they asked for caution about any public reference to their son's capacities.²⁵ The family knew that the present King Herod, like his father, would be watching out for anyone who could be seen as a threat to his own position.²⁶ For as long as possible therefore, Joshua would have to stay unnoticed.

As the two boys grew into adulthood they continued to formulate ideas about Judaism and the Roman Empire which surrounded them. Like other people at the time, they were assessing the advantages and limitations of both of the social systems in which they had to function.

Over the years Joshua's education continued. On the one hand he was given, through the connections of Lazara, an

inside view of the Temple system. There were so many things about this that he loved. On the other hand, through his parents and extended family back at Nazara, he was given an inside view of Jewish sectarianism. On top of that, travellers passing through Nazara provided a passing overview of Greek philosophy. This was basic to Roman society and its Empire. Joshua was aware that all of these groups were critical of each other and critical as well of other groups that existed within the Israel of the day.

For instance Joshua heard Essene criticisms of Pharisees who would break the fourth Commandment which requires respect for parents. He heard of how some Pharisees avoided supporting their parents by putting a religious caveat on their property. In this way they could keep their assets for themselves.²⁷ So much for their minute observance of the Law. Also Joshua had little time for the present King Herod whose self-interest was similar to that of his father. Again Joshua had first hand knowledge of Roman cruelty. He had realized from childhood experience that something was radically amiss with Roman ethics. How so? When Herod the Great died, Joshua's family returned to Israel and settled in Nazara hoping for a life of seclusion. But Herod the Great's death was followed by a drawn-out political uprising. Eventually the Romans crushed this. But in doing so they crucified two thousand people up and down the roads of the countryside - including around Nazara.²⁸

A Gradual Parting of the Ways

As Joshua grew up he not only adopted criticisms of the range of non-Essene sects around Israel and Jerusalem. He

also became critical of his own sect as well. He saw how the Essenes, like other groups, failed to pick up an increasing number of marginalized Jews.²⁹ Many people felt that the Essene's idealistic practice of the law as expressed in their "Book of Rules" was all too exclusive for them. At the same time people found the minute observances of the Pharisees, and the fanaticism of the Zealots were also beyond them. Also, the Jerusalem establishment treated people from elsewhere, especially from Galilee as though they were inferior and ignorant of the law ³⁰ Ordinary people considered the Herodians (c/f King Herod) were too worldly. ³¹ etc.

In fact as far as Joshua was concerned, there was a danger that Jews in general would fall away from their religion and be absorbed into the lifestyle of the Romans. They would therefore miss out on an appreciation of what their own law offered them in terms of moral living.

Joshua's Essene relatives were aware of his brilliance and the power of his presence, as well as at least some of the prophecies about him. ³² They believed he could play an important role in their own hopes for the future. His parents had continued involvement with the sect and had entered so fully into its 'idealistic' practice of the Law that they had committed themselves to a life of celibacy. ³³

But Joshua had recognized elements of self-destruction within the Essene sect and others like it, such as the group of people who were living at a rock fortress at Masada to the south of the Dead Sea. For instance, hatred of the Romans was dangerous.

Joshua realised something else about the Essenes, though it was most unlikely they would ever admit to this. Joshua had indirect contact with the Greek philosopher Plato and his definitive work *The Republic* via travellers through Nazara. He saw there were parallels between an Essene practice of the Law and the pattern of governance held up by the Greeks. How so? In Plato's utopian *Republic* there was an "elite" group of people who did not have personal possessions. They did not lead a family life and they were totally committed to the welfare of the state. This "elite" was led by a supreme "philosopher ruler".³⁴ Where were the parallels? Like Plato's Elite, the Essene monks had few personal possessions but rather shared goods in common. They did not lead a family life and were celibate. Furthermore their life-destiny was focussed around the existence and promotion of the group's ideas. Another parallel was that the Essenes looked forward to the coming of a 'supreme' "teacher of righteousness"³⁵

Also, Joshua saw a parallel between the Greeks and the Essenes which related to closure. Plato's *Republic* was a closed society because only some people were Greek citizens. On the one hand, the citizens were equal. But they were also set apart from others. In a similar way in the Roman Empire, only some people were Roman citizens with special rights. As with citizenship amongst the ancient Greeks and present Romans, amongst the Essenes there was a clear demarcation line between people who were "in" and people who were "out".

There was another form of closure in the Roman Empire as well. The Romans put a controlling 'blanket or blueprint' of governance over whole geographical areas. Ironically

enough, uniform local government in such areas opened up places to each other, especially with the straight and 'safe' roads and bridges built within the Roman Empire.

But it was not easy for the Essene Sect to practice such 'Closure'. Instead of applying this approach to places, the Essenes were trying to apply it to the practice of morality (or Law). How could they impose "idealistic behaviour" on people similar to the way that Romans imposed order? Or, to put it another way, how could they "force" people to measure up to idealistic behaviour. As far as the Essenes were concerned their main method of control would have to take the form of evictions and/or refusal to deal with certain individuals and groups to start with. But as far as Joshua was concerned this resulted in a rigidity that in itself was against the spirit of the Law. ³⁶

In Joshua's concern about marginalised Jews, he reflected that a policy of 'forgiveness' would provide the key to a more open approach. It would also promote a more 'three-dimensional' approach to Law as such, because it would put focus on some more pivotal laws, rather than on everything.

One person that he began to have more contact with about his concerns was his cousin Johan. Johan had been raised as a strict Essene. His father Zacharia was a priest and his mother Eliza was a cousin of Joshua's mother Miriam. ³⁷ Johan had lived in the desert from a young age in the vicinity of the Essene monastery. ³⁸ But he, like Joshua, realized there were numbers of mainstream Jews falling away from Judaism altogether. ³⁹

Johan reasoned that Judaism is centered around the understanding that the God of the Hebrews (or Jews) is essentially a moral, all pervasive God. Such a moral God wants obedience to the moral law. Johan saw that people needed to re-find themselves in terms of their own morality and they needed to repent of their sins - whether such sins consisted of apathy or of hypocrisy. Johan determined to preach a message of repentance to Jewish pilgrims on the outskirts of Jerusalem.⁴⁰ He based himself at Bethany and was baptising people in the Jordan river there.⁴¹ Johan's baptism was not so much an initiation into a group (as with the Essenes)⁴² but rather a rite to take people (any people) out of their condition of sin.

By this stage Joshua was also living in Bethany. Over the years he had continued to stay here each year with his parents. As he moved into adulthood the periods of his stay in Bethany had lengthened. In the course of time Lazara's father had died and now Lazara himself was a functioning priest and head of the household. This primarily consisted of himself and his two sisters Marthar and Maria. Mathar was a hard-worker and did the business-side of running the house/compound. On the other hand, her younger sister Maria tended to be more reflective. She loved to sit and listen to the discussions that were held in the Bethany house and in its surrounding gardens.⁴³

Gradually Joshua had in fact become an extended part of Lazara's family. In his time in Bethany he continued to clarify his ideas about a society that he could put forward as the "kingdom of God". He continued to organise material that he wanted to preach, for example through parables. He was formulating ideas that incorporated the best elements

of societies around him while warning of their inherent deficiencies.

Back at Nazara Joshua's family members became aware of some of his ideas about outreach to marginalised Jews and disagreed with these. The extended family and friends were also indignant that Joshua's cousin Johan, had apparently moved away from the Essene Sect. He was extending the rite of baptism to people who had no hope of keeping to the Essene "Book of Rules"

They wondered if Joshua's defection would be next. Unfortunately for Miriam, mother of Joshua, she was caught up in all the resultant tension.⁴⁴ By now Miriam was a widow and Joshua an only son, was responsible for her care. Yet he was planning for a future that would involve teaching marginalized Jews about a new type of society or "Kingdom". He knew that in doing this he would be putting his own life "on the line". Given the social unrest and multiplicity of allegiances around Israel, it would not be that long before some fanatical individual and/or group killed him off. As a dutiful son he wanted to ensure that his mother Miriam would be cared for in a stable, supportive household. He was hoping that the haven of Bethany would continue on despite the impending crises. He hoped that Lazara would take on the responsibility of caring for Miriam. He did not want her to continue living in an extended family at Nazara. As far as he was concerned, it was becoming ever more critical of him and ever more dysfunctional.⁴⁵

The First Preaching

While forgiveness was to be a key theme of Joshua's thinking and teaching, the prelude to this forgiveness would be repentance. This was what his cousin Johan was now preaching.

People were coming out from Jerusalem to Bethany to hear Johan and to be morally re-born. But when the Pharisees and scribes came out, Johan challenged them with language such as "you brood of vipers."⁴⁶ He readily pointed out to them that a major reason why ordinary Jews were becoming disillusioned with Judaic law, was because of their own hypocritical behaviour. One day Joshua, came walking by. Johan pointed him out as "The Lamb of God."⁴⁷ Johan was in awe of the power of presence that emanated from his cousin and at times he felt he hardly knew Joshua.⁴⁸ When Joshua asked to be baptized along with everyone else Johan protested that he was 'unworthy to untie the strap of his (Joshua's) sandal'.⁴⁹ When he did baptize Joshua it seemed the heavens themselves opened and God Himself spoke affirming Joshua as "This is my son in whom I am well pleased". Later on two of Johan's followers approached him and asked "Master, where do you live?" He answered them "Come and see."⁵⁰ He then took them back to the Lazara's compound and began to teach.

The teaching of Joshua showed his awareness that people were searching. How could they focus on the essentials and spirit of the "law" rather than on its externals? How could the law be adopted as a support and guide to daily living rather than being such a burden? How could marginalized

people be made to feel welcome? How were Jews to deal with the Greek Philosophy of their Roman overlords?

Some people, like King Herod, were living a Roman lifestyle with a tendency towards a moral vacuum. As time passed, Joshua's cousin Johan challenged Herod about his marriage to Herodias, wife of his deceased brother. Such a marriage was against Jewish law. Herod was interested in what Johan said, but he put him in prison anyway and kept him there. In time when the glamour of court life and desire for popularity over-rode imperatives about respect for life, Herod caved into pressure from Herodias and had Johan beheaded.⁵¹ With the death of Johan it became more apparent than ever to Joshua and their mutual friends, that even though the Romans did not allow Jewish leaders to impose a death penalty, Herod could get away with killing people if this suited him.

After Joshua began teaching, he had returned to Nazara. He went to the Synagogue and read a passage from Isaiah the prophet. This was about how he, Isaiah, had been sent to release the people who had been cursed and sent away. After reading the passage Joshua rolled up the scroll and sat down. He then claimed that this passage in Scripture referred to himself in the here and now. At first the people thought that he was applying the reading to themselves and they were full of praise for Joshua. But then he started talking of Scriptural stories in which it was non-Jews who were chosen by God. From this, his hearers realized that Joshua intended to go around and gather up the people that they themselves had rejected and would have nothing to do with. They were so angry about this that they threw him out of the synagogue. Then they hustled him outside the

town and to a cliff intending to throw him over it. But Joshua slipped through the crowd and walked away.⁵²

As a township, Nazara already had a "reputation." In another context when someone was told that Joshua had come from Nazara they replied "Can any good come out of Nazara?"⁵³ But as far as Joshua himself was concerned, he had moved on.

The Disciples

Around the time of the Nazareth episode Joshua approached a number of people that he knew were interested in the ideas being formulated in Bethany. He picked up these people as his disciples. Later on, from the numbers of people now constantly following him, he chose twelve 'special' men. These were to form an 'inner circle' and he would prepare them so they could take on the role of leadership when the time came for his fairly inevitable demise.

When Joshua took this step of choosing 'the twelve', his former friends were outraged. They arrived and attempted to take control of him by force, claiming that he had lost his mind.⁵⁴ Joshua ignored them. But he did understand their viewpoint. They were upset that he had turned away from a context they believed he was destined for. They had been looking forward to a future beside him. Also they were convinced that the journey he was now embarking upon would result in his own death. Joshua, like them, wondered if all the effort and sacrifice would be worth it. But in his heart he knew he had to try.

At a wedding feast at Cana Joshua met up with his mother Miriam. In her usual role of caring about others, she was helping with the catering and realised the hosts there had run out of wine. She nudged Joshua into exercising the extraordinary power she knew that he had over nature. She had retained faith in him despite all the pressures from her extended family around Nazareth. She continued to believe in his destiny as 'Saviour' to his people. At the feast there were some large jars of water standing by and at Miriam's prompting Joshua changed these into wine. Thus began his public ministry.⁵⁵

As a human being Joshua realized he had an extraordinary connection with the creative energy that exists at the crux of the universe and beyond it. He addressed the Living Source of this Energy as His Father. ⁵⁶ He realised Its Energy would work through him to help people who were sick ⁵⁷ or who had been born with a range of deformities.⁵⁸ He channeled It to drive out the demons of people who were possessed, especially when these tried to point him out to frighten people.⁵⁹ The one thing Joshua did not do and did not want to do however, was to force people into changing their attitudes. Rather, he chose to use the ordinary powers of persuasion here, and he had varying degrees of success.

The first miracle or sign at Cana was to be followed by so many others that people were coming from near and far with their sick relatives and friends to be cured. Word about Joshua soon arrived at Jerusalem. ⁶⁰ The Scribes and Pharisees realised this person was going to be outside their own sphere of influence and began to criticise him.⁶¹ It was not long before Jewish leaders in general were planning to

kill him. ⁶² As time went, on some Pharisees told him that Herod was looking for him to kill him (as well). Joshua sent a message back. "Go and tell that fox....." ⁶³

Lazara and His Family

Meanwhile Lazara was having his own problems. When Joshua chose his 'special' twelve followers, he deliberately omitted Lazara from this group. Lazara was already familiar with Joshua's ideas and did not need a period of training in them. Nor did Joshua want Lazara to be part of his own public ministry. This was a mission towards marginalized Jews and it was with disciples who were fairly marginalized themselves. By contrast, Lazara was related to the highest echelons of Judaism. Also Joshua wanted to retain a connection to Temple worship through Lazara. And, he hoped that Bethany could continue to function as a home-base for himself during his public ministry and in the future as a home for his mother.

But it was not plain sailing for Lazara to 'keep the home fires burning'. As publicity about Joshua and his ideas increased, Lazara's standing within the heirarchy of priests was also affected. The hierarchy knew there was some sort of connection between himself and Joshua though they were unsure of how deep this relationship went. They did know however of Joshua's public hostility towards themselves and his prediction that the Temple and its system of worship would be destroyed. ⁶⁴ As for Lazara, his training was geared towards functioning at the highest levels of the Jewish priesthood. When he was ostracised by the Jewish leaders he felt it keenly. Joshua was aware this was happening, even while his own life was full of dramas.

He and his disciples were living from day to day. At times they were so busy there was not enough time to eat. ⁶⁵ His former "friends" considered he had lost his mind. His relationship with his extended family had become worse and his mother was constantly subjected to criticisms about him. At one stage the whole family arrived, even with his mother in tow, to take control of him. ⁶⁶ Later his extended family were telling him to show himself at a Jerusalem Feast even while people there were wanting to kill him. And, there was on-going frustration in his efforts to train his disciples. They constantly voiced an expectation of moving into some sort of geo-political kingdom. But at the same time they were urging him not to risk his life (and theirs). ⁶⁷

When Joshua came to Jerusalem he continued to stay at Bethany. ⁶⁸ He also continued to rely on the support of his friends and to be concerned about them. Amongst the stories he told in his preaching, there was a parable about a poor man called Lazara. The Lazara in this story was covered in sores and longed for some crumbs from a rich man's table. ⁶⁹ But he was ignored. Joshua did not say that the story was about his friend in Bethany. But in the parable, there was a request that Lazara should return from the dead in order to warn the rich man's family about what was ahead of them. This part of the story did in fact have parallels with what was to come.

Lazara had more to contend with than just the Temple establishment. Over the years, an increasingly wide range of people were attracted to his compound/house in Bethany. ⁷⁰ Amongst such people were non-Jews including soldiers who had already approached Johan the Baptist. ⁷¹ Unable to

enter a Jewish home, they gathered outside in the garden. However in the course of time something fairly likely but unplanned had taken place. Maria, the sister of Lazara, had fallen in love with one of their non-Jewish visitors. For the family of Lazara this was a disaster.

For the Jews of the day (and even for many at the present time) any hopes that such a couple could marry were out of the question. Maria was a Jewess and there was a strict expectation that she would marry another Jew. This imperative about a Jewish marriage had (and still has) a wider context. On the one hand a male child becomes a Jew with the ceremony of circumcision while he is still a baby.⁷² But this is not so for a female. She is born a Jewess. In turn, her female children are also born as Jews. Thus if a Jewish woman marries an outsider, then the Jewish identity of her female children is compromised. By definition these females are Jewish children. But they are not being raised within their culture or law. In terms of Jewish theology, these girls have been chosen by God as Jews but they are ignoring the law that God has given them.

In the case of Maria, sister of Lazara, she belonged to a high-caste family of priests who were part of the governing body of Judaism.⁷³ With such connections she herself was a public figure. If she had a liaison with a so-called Gentile then whatever she did in relation to this would be broadcast amongst other Jews. Her break with a Jewish taboo would not only reflect badly upon her immediate family but on the aristocracy of priestly families as well. In a word they would be seething about any such liaison. They would also be scathing about any ideas they considered could have led her into thinking that this liaison was acceptable.

Unable to go through a formalised marriage, Maria eloped and went to live in Jerusalem. ⁷⁴ In doing this, she technically became an adulteress. Shock waves about the elopement extended to the forums of the Sanhedrin and priests. There was public derision there about anyone from Galilee knowing the law. ⁷⁵ (Recall the 1960's musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. The one action that was unforgivable in this story was the elopement of the main character's daughter with a non-Jew.)

Maria's elopement not only caused a scandal amongst the leadership and the Jewish community in general. It also caused a scandal amongst the close followers of Joshua and their wider following as well. These people felt that because of Maria's action, their own credibility had been seriously compromised. By now Joshua's immediate followers knew that the family of Lazara, which included Maria, was also his own adopted family.

While Joshua was in Jerusalem, some people went to the house where Maria was staying. They dragged her out and into Joshua's presence claiming that she had been caught in the act of adultery. After all, living in a Gentile man's house meant the same thing. They angrily pointed out that the law required she be stoned to death. Their challenge to start the stoning was all the more intense because they knew that Maria was Joshua's adopted sister. A custom, still observed in the Near East, requires that a brother should uphold the honour of his family by presiding over the execution of his wayward sister. But Joshua responded to the situation by saying that it should be the person who was without sin who threw the first stone. ⁷⁶ In this sense he

threw open the definition of adultery and sexual sin and put it into a wider context of all sorts of sin.

The circle of Maria's accusers gradually went away until it was only herself and Joshua who remained. But while she escaped death by stoning, she did not escape his criticism. He told her to go and sin no more. Thus in the presence of his disciples on the fringe of the drama, he reprimanded her for following through with a relationship that had such a negative impact on the people around her. She had brought her whole family into disrepute. By breaking a taboo which in the context of a whole social system did provide some stability, she aroused further hostility amongst his enemies. She had put the safety of other people, indirectly linked with her family members, into an even more precarious situation.

Maria returned to Bethany and her sister Marthar and her brother Lazara. Then Lazara became ill. The sisters sent word to Joshua to come and cure him saying "the one whom you love is ill". However Joshua deliberately delayed his return. He was planning to do his greatest miracle yet by calling his friend back from the dead. By the time Joshua arrived, Lazara had been dead and buried for four days. Joshua waited at the outskirts of Bethany and sent word to Maria to come out and meet him there.⁷⁷ Given that she had just lost both her lover and her brother, Maria was emotionally in a very fragile condition. When the Jews present saw her get up and leave they and Marthar followed. When they linked up with Joshua they all went to the tomb together. Joshua himself was extremely upset and was weeping so much that people commented "See how he loved him." One reason for his upset was that

Lazara had been the one person who had never wavered in support of him.

A Kingdom For Ever

Consider the theological background of the events that were taking place. God promised David he would give his descendants a Kingdom that would last for ever. Joshua realised that this Kingdom would not be in the sense of land control and secular power (despite the ideas of his disciples). Rather, it was to be a Kingdom of ideas - "the kingdom of God lies within you".⁷⁸ This kingdom would last forever because it would be based on the very structural crux of the universe - the nexus of time and place - ultimate authority and universal patterns of order. A lifestyle based upon such a nexus would extend from the present, material life into the next one. It would also reach backwards, into the very beginnings of the cosmos.

Joshua was determined to show that Lazara had in fact lived on beyond death. He stood outside the grave and told the other people there to roll back the stone. Then he shouted "Lazara come out". To the amazement of all, Lazara emerged with the burial bandages still wrapped around him.⁷⁹

Danger increases

After this miracle, instead of the enemies of Joshua being confounded and silenced, they were more desperate than ever to have him killed. They felt their control over Judaism was more threatened than ever. Now people were

not only flocking to see Joshua, but they were also going to see Lazara who had been raised from the dead.⁸⁰

The Jewish leaders were afraid of arresting Joshua in public in case there was a revolt amongst the people. In any case, they had already tried to do this. But the soldiers they sent came back empty handed because they were so impressed with his teaching.⁸¹

The priests were devising another plan. They could undercut the position of Joshua by eliminating his key followers.⁸² Herod had already beheaded Johan the Baptist, who was his cousin and a firm supporter. Herod would be capable of killing again and could be manipulated to please the Jewish leadership. The key followers of Joshua were well aware of this possible line of attack. They were wondering if and when they would be next.

Following Lazara's return from the dead, there was a celebratory dinner held in his honour at Bethany.⁸³ Joshua and his key followers were there. Marthar was serving at table. But tensions were high and there was an air of betrayal around. Even Simon the host showed hostility towards Joshua by failing to provide water to wash his feet.

In contrast to the others, Maria was at home. She reflected on the situation. Like other people she felt something terrible was about to happen. She herself had been nearly stoned to death. Then, when her brother died and was brought back to life, people who claimed to be supporting her reported back to the Pharisees.⁸⁴ Maria knew that Joshua's disciples were still angry and critical of her.⁸⁵ Yet she also realised how important these key followers were.

If they were killed off, as was possible, then the whole of Joshua's cause would be lost.

She realised that if his movement was to survive at all, it would have to be Joshua himself who was sacrificed. It would only be after his death that people could re-group and mould his movement into a different and more secure form. Maria determined that she would signal to him that his time had come. On an impulse she picked up a jar of expensive perfumed ointment that had been left over from her brother's burial. She took it to Simon's house and entered the banquet area. Then she tipped the ointment over Joshua's head and feet. The perfume from the ointment filled the whole house. With an out-pouring of emotion ⁸⁶ she washed Joshua's feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁸⁷ His acceptance of what she was doing showed his forgiveness of her. But as far as the disciples were concerned, it was the last straw. ⁸⁸ Judase, who was in charge of the common purse but actually pilfering from it, protested most loudly. He complained that the expensive ointment could have been sold and the money given to the poor. ⁸⁹ But Joshua defended Maria's action. He said "She has loved greatly" ⁹⁰. He went on to say she was preparing him for his own burial. ⁹¹ He then confronted the people around pointing out how they had been taking him for granted. In particular he chided his host Simon.

The priests, who heard about Joshua's forgiveness of Maria, decided to completely break with Lazara's branch of the family and kill him. But at the same time something unexpected happened. Judase left the banquet early, in disgust and soon went to the chief priests himself. He had

reflected that if he offered help to the enemies of Joshua he could possibly avoid being their target. Joshua had just publicly admitted that the anointing was for his own burial. So Judase reasoned that what he was about to do was only bringing about the inevitable anyway. He told the chief priests he could deliver Joshua to them without the outcry or bloodshed that might result from a public arrest. They paid him thirty pieces of silver.⁹²

Within a few days Joshua was crucified, dead and buried.



Part Two

Life After the Crucifixion

A Re-Grouping of Friends

While Joshua was alive, he had preached that a life based on an idealistic approach to the key commandments of Judaism, would lead to a fuller life in the here and now and would extend into a life beyond this one.⁹³ But his approach was also "alive", that is, it had a flexibility that relied on personal judgment. He had put up his own life as a model for this and had said "I am the Way."⁹⁴ He promised that the way of life he taught would result in the eternal Kingdom that had been promised to King David centuries before.⁹⁵

After his crucifixion, Joshua again demonstrated that life exists beyond the grave. This time he returned in the flesh himself.

While he was on the cross Joshua put his mother Miriam into the care of Lazara. From that day on Lazara took her back to live with his family in Bethany.⁹⁶

Lazara was in fact very much part of the drama that took place around the time of the crucifixion. He not only stood at the foot of the cross with Joshua's mother Miriam, Mary Magdalen and some other women.⁹⁷ After Joshua was arrested, he and Peta, leader of the disciples, followed from a distance. When Joshua was taken into the High Priest's inner courtyard Lazara went in as well. Then he told the gate-keeper to admit Peta.⁹⁸ Later on, after the crucifixion,

some women went to complete the anointing of Joshua's body. But the tomb was empty. ⁹⁹ In the confusion to follow, Peta and Lazara ran there to find out what had happened. They also found it to be empty. ¹⁰⁰ After this, for about 40 days, Joshua continued to appear to his disciples. His final appearance was at Bethany ¹⁰¹ in the presence of his mother Miriam, Lazara and his sisters and also Joshua's Apostles and disciples. It was from there that he went beyond this life and into the next one.

The Apostles and disciples continued to assemble in Jerusalem where Joshua had spent the Passover supper with them just before he died. Ten days after he had finally gone to 'heaven', the disciples together with Miriam, were gathered in prayer. Suddenly there was a wind rushing around their building. A flame appeared above the head of each person. ¹⁰² Then the Apostles, as they were now called, went outside and began speaking to the crowd that had gathered there, wondering what was going on. Despite the language differences amongst these people everyone understood what was being said. That day about three thousand people were immediately 'converted' to a following of Joshua. ¹⁰³

Sudden Growth and Appointment of James

The idea amongst Jewish leaders that they could stop Joshua and his movement with the humiliating death of a crucifixion, had not worked. So again they were thinking about picking off his key followers. Already Judase the disciple who had betrayed Joshua had killed himself. Then King Herod killed James, brother of John. ¹⁰⁴ Herod found

that this pleased the Jews. So he then had Peta arrested, and planned to kill him as well. ¹⁰⁵

With the arrest of Peta the followers of Joshua were devastated. They had just lost their Number Two leader in James, brother of John. It now looked like they would lose their Number One leader as well. They were aware of how, when Joshua was with them he had assigned different roles to his twelve disciples. Peta was appointed leader and James and John, the two brothers, were given a second and third ranking. All three of these leaders were invited to share in some of Joshua's most significant experiences.¹⁰⁶ At the time, the two brothers still had political leanings and Joshua had nicknamed them "sons of thunder". They also appeared impetuous. For instance when a village rejected the group the two asked Joshua to rain fire and brimstone upon the village as punishment. ¹⁰⁷ Later on the two also prompted their mother to ask Joshua to promise that when he came into his kingdom one of them would be placed on his left hand and the other on his right. ¹⁰⁸ This request of course angered the other disciples.¹⁰⁹ In response to the request Joshua said the two would indeed drink from the same cup (of experience) as himself. In fact the death of James was soon to follow his own. ¹¹⁰

Soon after the slaying of James, brother of John his position as Number Two was filled by another. The apostles had already selected Matthias to replace Judase the betrayer.¹¹¹ Then they elected James, son of Alphaeus, already one of the twelve, to take on the rank of Number Two. ¹¹² The second James brought his own credentials to this position. Also this selection sent out a message to the Jewish leaders. That is, when one of the Apostles was killed off, in this

case James brother of John, then there would be another 'James' to quickly take his place.

As it turned out when Herod arrested Peta, and the frightened disciples were bracing themselves for yet another loss, an angel appeared to Peta. His chains fell off and the doors came open. Then Peta returned to the building where his friends had assembled and knocked on the door. The woman who came to answer the knock recognized Peta's voice in the porch way. However she was so amazed she left him standing there to rush off and tell the others.¹¹³

The Apostles continued to preach and the Jewish leadership continued to speculate on how to stop them. But as it turned out, the greatest Jewish scholar of the time Gamaliel, warned the Jewish Council that this movement could be from God. If such was the case, the Council would be working against God in trying to stop the preaching.¹¹⁴ Gamaliel said if the movement was only from people it would die out of its own accord. So from then on the Jewish leadership officially left the newly formed community alone. It would be mainly one of the Chief Priests Ananias, who continued to carry a grudge against them.

A New Apostle - Paulus

Meanwhile amongst the followers of Joshua who were spreading his message, there was another significant change. This was the emergence of a brilliant Jewish scholar called Saul. Saul had actually been taught by Gamaliel.¹¹⁵ He had been born a Roman citizen and was

also, a Pharisee and as such a meticulous practitioner of the law. At first Saul was fiercely opposed to Joshua's message and he helped others who opposed it. When people were stoning Stephen, a follower of Joshua, to death Saul stood by and looked after their clothing. ¹¹⁶ He then set about arresting as many of Joshua's disciples as he could. He even travelled in pursuit of people who fled and took them back to Jerusalem for trial. ¹¹⁷ But as it turned out, when he was going to Damascus for this purpose, carrying letters of authorisation from the Jewish priests, he was suddenly struck by a light. He heard Joshua's voice calling out, "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?" ¹¹⁸ He was immediately converted. Gradually his name was changed to Paulus. But, instead of returning to Jerusalem, he went instead beyond the boundaries of Israel and he began preaching to the Gentiles. It would be largely through the ministry of Paulus that new communities following "the way" of Joshua, became established in major cities of the day. ¹¹⁹

It was when Paulus was involved with a community in Antioch, that the people in this new movement were given the name of Christianas. ¹²⁰

The Barrier of Circumcision

At the time around the Roman Empire, there were already a number of Gentile people who attended a local synagogue and were thinking about becoming Jews. These people were called proselytes. They could see that there was a moral security in Judaism because people here based their lives on the moral edicts of their one, moral God. Generally

speaking, by keeping to their Law Jews could live with dignity and in harmony with each other.

Non-Jews or Gentiles or pagans or 'the nations' as they were variously called, could on the one hand also see advantages in the rationalism of Greek philosophy which formed the basis of the Roman Empire around them. But too often they found this philosophy and its approach was inadequate in helping people to sustain a moral life. When for instance the Roman army was under pressure it would exert intolerable cruelty. Everyone was also aware of institutionalised forms of cruelty and injustice in the Empire. These included blood sports, slavery and dispossession. On top of that many people were disgusted with the decadence and excesses of the Roman court. So for such people, the moral law of the Jews set a standard.

A downside of Gentile attraction to the morality of Jewish law, was that its details were so cumbersome. And, the Jews themselves tended to be exclusive. Jews were conscious that it was they (and not others) who were God's Chosen People. They would not eat with Gentiles or go into a Gentile home. They would not allow Gentiles into their homes. They avoided much of the Gentile food. However the major stumbling block to outsiders joining Judaism was its rite of male circumcision. For adult males, this operation could prove fatal. Also, as far as Gentile women were concerned, even though they would be considered secondary anyway, they would not be fully accepted as being Jewish, unless they were born of a Jewish mother. As a result of such external barriers especially male circumcision, many non-Jews felt effectively shut out.

As the Christiana Church grew its leader Peta, had a vision in which God told him to eat Gentile food. He was also told to go to Caesaria. It was here Peta met with Gentiles and he recalled Joshua's command after he had risen from the dead that his message was to be taken to everyone, not just Jews. While Peta was still addressing his mixed audience at Caesaria, the Spirit (in the form of fire) could be seen to descend on all who were present. Peta then went on to state that just as the Spirit had descended on all, so also baptism and its forgiveness should be available to all.

¹²¹

When he returned to Jerusalem, Peta was challenged about his statement by a group calling themselves "ones of the circumcision". But he recalled what happened at Caesaria and insisted that non-Jewish people were equal to Jews in their right to receive baptism. For the present the "circumcision group" was quietened. In contrast to the burdens of Judaism as many saw them, the Christiana Church offered an approach to moral law that was more open and flexible. After the stoning of Stephen many Christianas fled Jerusalem. At first they preached to Jews. But then they found that a large number of Greeks were wanting to hear their message as well, for example in Antioch. The Church therefore sent Barnabas to Antioch and he in turn asked Saul (to be renamed Paulus) to go with him. ¹²² Soon an agreement was made that Peta would preach to the Jews while Paulus could concentrate on preaching to the Gentiles. ¹²³ As a follow-on from Peta's authoritative statement on baptism, ¹²⁴ Paulus taught that circumcision was unnecessary, even for children. ¹²⁵ Also, because emphasis was now placed on baptism as the being rite of initiation, ¹²⁶ differences between male and female

membership were to some extent put aside and the status of females was improved.

As the years slipped by the size and numbers of the Christiana communities in the far-flung Provinces of the Empire grew. But many Jewish converts, especially back in Jerusalem, remained unhappy that foreigners were not being obliged to become Jews first of all. A key sticking point here related to the Jewish identity of being God's chosen people. This "sticking point" went right back to the time when Joshua was thrown out of the Nazara synagogue after he pointed out how God had chosen various non-Jews for his favours.

In the early church Jewish converts continued to wonder that if Gentile converts were equal to themselves in terms of initiation, then what was the distinguishing mark to show that they as Jews, were still God's chosen people. It appeared their own distinct Jewish identity and the law about it that they believed God gave them, was now being dissolved. This was especially so if their own children were not being circumcised. A way out of this dilemma for such people was to consider themselves as being part of a sect, that is, a Jewish sect that followed Joshua. Thus they could be "converts" and Jews at the same time.

It was relatively easy to think this way. Around Jerusalem, most of the Christianas had come from a Jewish background. Many if not most of them still considered themselves to be Jews and they were still bound by Jewish law. At the time there were many sects of Judaism that were all different and in varying degrees of conflict with

each other. But there was also some overlap and movement between them.

Some "converts" were now thinking of themselves as being members of "the Nazarene Sect" (c/f Joshua of Nazara). They were already aware of a connection between Joshua and the Essene Sect. They easily saw similarities between the Christianas community and the Essenes - similarities that did not exist between the Christianas and mainstream Judaism. There was for instance the practice of gathering for prayer around a meal where a priest blessed the bread and wine. There was the rite of baptism. Some of the language was similar for example use of the word "righteousness".¹²⁷

People were also conscious of how Jewish sects could subdivide, with one group giving rise to another, with some parallels and some differences. The Essenes at Qumran for instance had both parallels and differences with an offshoot group living in the rock fortress of Masada to the south. It was a relatively easy step for Jewish converts to Christianas to see themselves as being an off-shoot of the Essenes. This "off-shoot" was called "the Nazarene sect." Sect members could follow Joshua and much of his teaching yet remain part of Judaism and God's chosen people. They could also pick up Jewish people by the rite of baptism after they had been marginalized by various breaches of the Law. They could also continue on the Essene emphasis of an idealization of the law and personal lifestyle in a way similar to the Essene *Book of Rules*.¹²⁸

Perhaps one key thing the Sectarian members did not realize however was the extent to which the spirit of a sect

can change. It may start out with moderate goals. But over time these goals can develop into extremes. Thus Sectarian members could start out looking much the same as other Christiana members. There was no official difference between them. But a divergence could grow. Sect members could become zealots for externals of the Jewish law while other church members became more open and flexible.

In the case of Paulus, around the start of his ministry there was a confrontation between himself and Ananias the High Priest. In the hearing of Felix the Governor a spokesman for Ananias, described Paulus as being "one of the ringleaders of the Nazarene Sect".¹²⁹ In Jewish circles Paulus was well-known as a Pharisee and a meticulous practitioner of the law. Now it appeared that he was a follower of Joshua and a convert to a sect that idealized the law. Ananias knew Paulus had been helping out the Jerusalem priests in their opposition to the movement that Joshua had started. Then, he suddenly went to "the other side".

But Ananias was now finding that "the other side" was more complex than it first appeared. Paulus corrected the statement about his leadership and membership of "the Nazarene Sect". He claimed that Christianas was not a Sect at all but something called the "Way".

The answer of Paulus in this situation about the Way, however did not totally clarify how all the Christianas saw themselves. People, including Christiana converts, found it difficult to understand what the Way actually was. Indeed Paulus himself admitted it was not easy to teach about it.

He complained to the Apostles and elders "We have had no end of trouble with the Way." ¹³⁰ So a mistaken impression continued, especially amongst Jewish converts. In fact it was the Gentiles who appeared to have a better realization that 'the Way' was something distinct from Judaism. When Felix the Governor heard Paulus talking about it he asked him to provide an on-going explanation. ¹³¹

Confusion amongst Jewish "converts" continued. Some of these continued going out to the Provinces when they could, trying to get Gentile converts to undertake circumcision ¹³² and there were Jews already there who were pushing the same line. The "converts" were contradicting Paulus' message ¹³² despite his endorsement by the Apostles. ¹³³

Back in Jerusalem Peta, leader of the Apostles, tried to control the tide of opinion that was mounting against Paulus. He pointed out that the Apostles, like so many other Jews, had found it impossible to keep the details of the law. So why should they be imposing these details upon newcomers? ¹³⁴ Paulus took a somewhat different position on this issue. He had been brought up as a Pharisee and had been a meticulous observer of the law. But it was because of his background that he realised how cumbersome the law actually was. ¹³⁵ He was by now, the key figure in insisting that so many details of law observance should be dropped.

As far as members of the Nazarene Sect were concerned he had gone in an opposite direction to themselves with regard to the Law.

The Nazarene Sect Goes to Extremes

As membership of the Christianas increased, back in Jerusalem the emphasis by Nazarene Sect members on detailed law observance also increased. These people could now be described as "zealots". They in turn had also increased in numbers, so much so that the Apostle James and the elders referred to them as "Ten thousand believing Jews, now Zealots of the law".¹³⁶

The influence of these "believing Jews" who were zealots was also being felt further afield. They helped to cause such a disruption amongst mainstream Jews in Rome that the Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from the city.¹³⁷ Two of Paulus' close friends Aquila and Priscilla, fellow tent-makers, had also been expelled and gave Paulus first hand accounts of the trouble Sect members were causing. It was around this time that Paulus himself went to Rome as a "Christiana" (and not a Jew). He then had enough peace and quiet there to complete the summary statement of his doctrine, called "Letter to the Romans".

In the Christiana Church tension about law observance eased up at times, for instance when Paulus reported back on the growth of the distant communities, and when Peta told of a vision in which he had been told to eat Gentile food.¹³⁸ There was also a period when Paulus collected money from the distant communities to help famine-affected people in Jerusalem.¹³⁹

But an under-current of opposition to Paulus' message continued to mount. From amongst Sect members a group emerged called "Jews against Paulus".¹⁴⁰ This group even

had its own leadership and this leadership began to liaise with Ananias. By now Ananias had discovered that Paulus was not indeed on the same "side" as the "Nazarene Sect". Indeed these people had become so opposed to Paulus that they were ready to start plotting with the chief priests on how to destroy him. Ananias and the others had continued hostility towards the Apostles and movement of Joshua. Even though the Jewish Council had resolved to leave the Christianas alone, the chief priests were ready to help along any possibility of re-directing Joshua's movement back into Judaism. They saw that the elimination of Paulus was a key to this. They were ready to help the "Jews against Paulus" in their plans to undermine and then usurp Apostle authority within the general Christiana community.

The hostility against Paulus was such that it was intimidating the Apostles and elders. James and the elders allowed some influential leaders to travel to Peta and suggest he should stop eating with the Gentiles - despite the vision he had, telling him to do so. They felt this practice was causing them more trouble than they could handle. Peta did stop this practice and then the messengers were telling Paulus' converts they had to become Jews and be circumcised. This time Paulus intervened. He firstly challenged Peta about refraining from eating with the Gentiles, including Gentile converts. Then he pointed out that these messengers were leaders in the Christiana community. But they were over-riding an agreement already made between himself and Peta, an agreement that was supposed to be the official policy of the Church. ¹⁴¹

But, despite Paulus' protest, pressure from the "believing Jews" continued. In fact Paulus found he was giving way

to this himself. For instance his friend and fellow-leader was Timothy the son of a Greek. People knew Timothy would not have been circumcised and to avoid conflict Paulus asked him to have the operation.¹⁴²

As time passed Peta's public presence at the helm the Christianas church, faded to some extent. This was partly because there were other tasks to take on, such as recording the life of Joshua in such a way as to counter the conflict that was tearing the community apart. At the same time the leadership of James and the Elders became more prominent.¹⁴³ Peta had already shown his reliance on these leaders when he sent a message to them as soon as he was freed from prison.¹⁴⁴ He came to rely on them more.

There was a political astuteness in Peta's decision to take a less obvious role. He was Joshua's designated leader and it was expected that he would be obeyed.¹⁴⁵ But there was on-going and open disobedience towards himself and the Apostles.¹⁴⁶ Open disobedience towards James and the elders did not look so bad. In some ways James himself appeared to be on the same side as those calling themselves zealots and members of "the Nazarene Sect". This was especially so after he told Peta to stop eating with the Gentiles. Also, according to tradition, James continued to practice the harsher aspects of the Law. It was said he had the knees of a camel because of the hours he spent kneeling in prayer on the stone floor of the Temple.

But despite the confrontations and tension he had been involved in, James, more than anyone was actually trying to accommodate Paulus' position. Like Paulus he realized the underlying problem of conflict within the Church was

related to difficulty in understanding “the Way”. He was also coming to the realization that as far as many of the Jewish converts were concerned, if "the way" meant the forfeiture of their unique status as "God's Chosen People" then these people did not want to understand it. ¹⁴⁷

A Possible Group of "Believing Jews"

Consider one group of people likely to have this kind of fear. Back at the start of Peta's preaching there were many Jewish priests who were converted. ¹⁴⁸ Some aspects of a so-called "Nazarene sect" would appeal to them. As with the Essenes, in the Christiana communities, prayer revolved around a religious meal at which bread and wine were blessed by a priest. ¹⁴⁹ This meant priests could build up communities around a 'house' church. They could obtain a steady income from that without having to rely on taking their turn at the Temple and receiving sacrifice dues from there. They could also continue their livelihood of teaching, health care and leading people in the rituals of Judaism. Again, they could also add to their community numbers by "cleansing" people through the Christiana baptism of initiation.

In terms of distinguishing themselves from "Gentile" branches of the Church such people could point out that Joshua's own emphasis had been on gathering up marginalised Jews. They could claim they were continuing to carry on his real mission. They could also recall occasions when Joshua himself appeared loath to spend time on people who were "outside" the boundaries of Judaism. ¹⁵⁰

People (of whatever background) who thought of themselves as being part of the "Nazarene Sect", or its fellow travelers, realized they had a bad reputation with the Jewish establishment. In part this was because they were no longer reliant on the Temple establishment. But they also thought their reputation was due to the leniency of Paulus' position rather than their own over-stress on zeal. Ananias already referred to Christiana leaders as "ringleaders." People thinking of themselves as Sect members considered Paulus was making their reputation worse. On the one hand he said Christianas was a fulfillment of the Jewish law. But in their view he was dropping what they considered to be crucial parts of it. As far as they were concerned there was a need for a 'clamping down'.¹⁵¹

Disquiet about Paulus not only existed in Judea. It was further abroad as well. Elsewhere Jews were cultivating proselytes (converts to Judaism). But when Paulus came along, the proselytes and Greeks gathered in bigger numbers. When he told them they did not need to adopt the minutiae of Jewish rules the Jews there saw this as a threat to their own position and they attacked and stoned him.¹⁵² In one place they even attacked their own synagogue leader because he agreed with Paulus. Then in this case, as at other times, the civil authority had to intervene.¹⁵³

As hostilities continued, Paulus realised there was not only a misconception about Christianas being a sub-division of Judaism. There was also a misconception about the identity of Joshua himself. Paulus had been teaching that Joshua was the Christ, the one who had inaugurated a new Kingdom. But "the Jews" would not accept this. After a

particularly nasty confrontation with them in one place, he said that from now on he would only address 'the nations'¹⁵⁴ and for the next couple of years he taught in a building beside the Synagogue rather than inside of it.¹⁵⁵

Clarification About "the Way"

Despite the criticisms, the new movement or the "Way" as Paulus insisted it should be called, was in fact based on the essentials of the "law", that is, the Ten Commandments. The key difference between the position of the Apostles and members of the sect was that the Apostles approached the Commandments with a sense of perspective. Rather than idealising the whole of the law and setting up an 'idealised lifestyle' they focused instead on the three key social Commandments and tried to "raise the bar" of them. These Commandments are respect for life, family grouping and territory (c/f Commandments 5, 6 and 7). In fact these three laws are respected by all animal species. Birds of the same species for instance will respect each other's life, family grouping and nest area.

In taking a narrower focus, the Apostles, including Paulus, followed the line of Joshua. They recalled how, when someone asked Joshua how to gain eternal life, he told them not to kill, commit adultery or steal.¹⁵⁶ When the person said he had observed these Commandments from his youth, Joshua then "raised the bar" of their observance. He said "Go, sell what you have and give to the poor and come follow me."¹⁵⁷ A teasing out of what he was saying here shows he not only called this person to an avoidance of stealing but also to a 'giving away' of the possessions they had or could have. They were not only asked to avoid

adultery, but to follow Joshua with such a personal commitment they would be forfeiting family life altogether. They were not only warned against killing other people, but to make such a commitment to mission that their whole life would be dedicated to the well being of others (c/f Commandments 7, 6 and 5).

There was a degree of hyperbole in Joshua's three-fold exhortation. Not many people could literally give up all their property, family life and self-interest. Indeed if every body did this an overall society could not function. But in his exhortation, Joshua changed the nature of the Commandments themselves. He changed the Commandments from the prescription of "thou shalt not" to a sense of direction, that is, to the pursuit of "the Way". He applied this challenge to everyone.

A focus on the 5th (c/f kill), 6th (c/f adultery) and 7th (c/f stealing) Commandments would also cover the 8th Commandment (c/f killing the reputation of one's neighbour), the 9th (c/f coveting a neighbour's wife) and also 10th Commandment (c/f coveting a neighbour's goods) as well. When Joshua gave this exhortation he also included a summary statement to pick up the first three Commandments as well, about worship of the one God, c/f "only God is Good".

It was mainly in terms of "raising the bar" of the three key social Commandments that claims about fulfillment of the law of Moses were justified.¹⁵⁸

James' Formula for the Distant Churches

How did Joshua's approach apply to the new Christiana converts in the far-flung parts of the Empire? James presented the Apostles and Church elders with a "formula" to deal with an immediate crisis in pagan cities. Here people had to obtain their meat from the local markets and often this came from pagan sacrifices. James presented a proposal and a consensus was obtained from the whole Church in Jerusalem that people should "avoid blood, fornication and things strangled. This was enough." Also, converts were to be told that people who had been unsettling them with other requirements (about circumcision) did not have the permission to do this.¹⁵⁹ In obtaining such a consensus, the Apostles managed a breakthrough, at least on the surface. Some people would have thought that this edict mainly related to the meat obtained from pagan sacrifices and rituals. But for the Apostles, there was a underlying "code" in the statement so that it meant literally, that this was all the converts had to do!

How was there a code? At another level James's proposal set out a formula for a Christianas approach to the Commandments. It involved a "raising of the bar" for the observance of the 5th, 6th and 7th Commandments. Thus people were told to not only avoid killing but also to avoid 'blood', that is, hurting others even animals, e.g. in the blood sports common to Roman culture. People were told to not only to avoid adultery (c/f married persons), but also fornication (c/f unmarried / uncommitted persons). People were told to avoid "things strangled". This not only referred to strangled meat which Jews in general avoid but

also unjust business practices. Phrases similar to "strangling" are found in Scripture to refer to such unfairness.¹⁶⁰

James' formula also indirectly included the first three of Moses Ten Commandments. People were told to avoid pagan sacrifices. This implied that they needed instead, to respect and regularly worship the one Judaic God.

The context in which James presented his suggestion emphasised in particular the "strangling" factor. He referred to Simeon who headed one of the original twelve tribes of Israel which was largely carved out of non-Hebrew people. Then he referred to "the prophet" who promised a re-building of David's tent or kingdom. This prophet was actually Amos who had warned that the whole kingdom of Israel would collapse because people were "oppressing the needy (and) crushing the poor"¹⁶¹ He recalled how the prophet Amos condemned those who "trampled on the poor man extorting levies on his wheat"¹⁶² Strictly speaking, extracting levies may not be stealing. But as far as the prophet Amos was concerned, if the Kingdom of David was to be re-built, then people had to work on their attitude. They had to develop compassion for the underdog.

In his presentation of the "formula", James focused on the need for an attitude of compassion. It was this "attitude" that was basic to the "way."

James went on to suggest that the most appropriate people for taking this proposed 'formula' to out-lying areas would be men who had already "given up their lives on behalf of the name of Joshua."¹⁶³ That is, they had already committed

their lives to the literal challenge of Joshua to, "sell what you have, give to the poor and come follow me." Because of their extreme commitment to "the Way" these people were in a better position to understand and teach the spirit of the "formula".

As far as James, the elders and at least some people in the Jerusalem church were concerned, it was hoped that a rift with the far-flung communities had been avoided. They could now focus on the threat of a take-over by both the Nazarene Sect and its "fellow travellers".

The Apostles reflected how, in Jerusalem, an early distinction between "Hebrews" and "Hellenists" was evident when the Apostles started preaching and Gentile widows were left to go hungry. ¹⁶⁴ In this case the Apostles had to intervene. When the unifying word of "Christianas" had been coined, a division between the two groups had been somewhat blurred. ¹⁶⁵ But the rift was still there. And now it was increasing much more.

A Revolt of "believing Jews" in Jerusalem

As time passed Paulus knew that eventually he would have to return to Jerusalem and face his critics. ¹⁶⁶ Hostilities were reaching such a fever pitch there was a danger that the Church abroad would be cut off, both from its Jerusalem base and from the people further afield who followed the sectarian line. Paulus knew antagonism towards him was such that his return would finally result in his own death. His friends also realized this and gave him a tearful farewell. ¹⁶⁷ When he arrived back in Jerusalem, James greeted him warmly. But with exasperation James stated

that there were "tens of thousands of having believed Jews who were also zealots of the law." These people were extremely hostile at Paulus. ¹⁶⁸ In other words, things were well out of hand.

Soon after Paulus' arrival there were four men preparing to take a vow at the Temple. By such a vow these people would be taking on a literal following of Joshua's challenge. James thought it would help the position of Paulus' if he joined the men going through the ritual purification that led to the commitment of taking the vow in the Temple. ¹⁶⁹ Paulus had already taken a similar vow. ¹⁷⁰ But his participation here would show his affirmation of the Church's approach to the Commandments.

Unfortunately for James' plan, the Temple event turned out to be a disaster. Prior to the ceremony, some people recognised that a man out on the street with Paulus was a Gentile Greek. ¹⁷¹ They then assumed that Paulus had taken the man into the holy precincts of the Temple. For them, whether or not the man was a convert to the Christiana Church was irrelevant. They then accused Paulus publicly in front of the assembled crowd. The crowd, which included people invited to the ceremony, became so stirred up with indignation there was a riot and Paulus was in danger of being killed. A cohort of soldiers had to intervene and rescue him. ¹⁷² But Paulus, rather than back down, wanted to use the occasion to confront his critics. He asked the Chillarch to allow him to address the crowd and he spoke to them in Hebrew. The people listened up to the point where Paulus told them that God had called him to take Joshua's message to "the nations". At this statement another riot erupted. The people present (both mainstream

Jews and so-called "believing" Jews) refused to accept that others apart from themselves were meant to be God's chosen people.¹⁷³

The Chillarch took Paulus into custody for his own protection. Then the nephew of Paulus, his sister's son, picked up information that some people had taken a vow themselves, to abstain from both food and drink until they had killed him.¹⁷⁴ To avoid attack, the Chillarch assembled two hundred soldiers and took Paulus in the middle of the night to Governor Felix at Caesaria. He was to remain here for the next two years until Felix was succeeded by Governor Festus.

With the arrival of the new governor another attempt was made to kill Paulus. This time the leaders of the "Jews Against Paulus" colluded with the chief priests who asked that Paulus be returned to Jerusalem to face charges about offences he was supposed to have committed against Judaism. In fact it was intended to kill Paulus on the journey. But Festus realized something was going on and kept Paulus in Caesaria. Finally Paulus asserted his right as a Roman citizen and asked to take his case to the Emperor.¹⁷⁵

After a near-death sea-journey he arrived at Rome and was put under loose house arrest.¹⁷⁶ On his arrival Paulus arranged a meeting with Jews who had returned to Rome when the ban against them had been lifted. He wanted to point out to these Jews that he had not done any harm to them as a nation. But when they came to Paulus' house they said they had not received any criticisms about him at all from the Jerusalem Jews. They said that a Jew called

Jason would have informed them if there were any grievances against him there.

The meeting with the Roman Jews clarified a number of things for Paulus and the Apostles back in Jerusalem. Paulus had been given the impression that mainstream Jerusalem Jews thought he had done them harm. He thought Ananias and the chief priests had been speaking on their behalf. But it was not the case. The Jerusalem Jews had had plenty of opportunity to complain about him during the two years he had been at Caesaria. They knew that as a Roman citizen he could bring his case to the Emperor in Rome. But they had said nothing at all about him.

On the one hand it had appeared the Chief Priests, had headed efforts to have Paulus returned to Jerusalem.¹⁷⁷ But they were not the prime movers here at all. Paulus realized it was another group again who were doing the most to have him killed, that is, the "Jews Against Paulus" and these were not mainstream Jews. They were in fact numbered amongst the "believing Jews" that James had told him about when he had returned to Jerusalem and before the Temple riot.

Other pieces of a puzzle were also falling into place. As regards the Temple riot. How was it that the Asian Jews knew that the man out in the street with Paulus was a Gentile and they also knew where he had come from? Apparently it was because these people belonged to the same Christianas community as Paulus himself and they knew the man from there. It was these people who started the riot. Following that, Paulus' nephew picked up information about a group of forty Jews taking a vow to

neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paulus.¹⁷⁸ It seemed this "vow" was taken to parody both the vow ceremony at the Temple and the Church's official approach to the Law that it represented. The reason his nephew picked up information about this was because it was community members themselves who were involved. No wonder his nephew labeled the vow as treachery.¹⁷⁹

There was another key piece of information again that was provided at the meeting between Paulus and the Roman Jews. The Jews told Paulus that "everywhere" there was talk against "the Sect", apparently the Nazarene Sect. If such was the case there must have been a lot of people around, even beyond Jerusalem, who claimed to belong to this Sect. Paulus and the Apostles had insisted that the Nazarene Sect did not exist. But obviously it did. And, it had taken on such a life of its own that the Roman Jews assumed Paulus knew all about it and they wanted his opinion. The meeting finished with them asking the questions!

The irony was not lost on Paulus that the group called "Jews against Paulus" who were demanding his return to Jerusalem to face charges, were not representative of mainstream Judaism at all. Nor were the chief priests talking on behalf of mainstream Judaism. Rather these "Jews against Paulus" were aligned with a large group of "believing Jews" who were also zealots of the law who were also supposed to be Jewish converts to Christianas and members of the same community as Paulus. As far as mainstream Jews were concerned, it was these people (and not Paulus) who were the cause of Jewish upset "everywhere".

Time to Move

It had now become obvious to Paulus and the Christiana leadership, that membership of the Nazarene Sect/ zealots/ Jews Against Paulus etc over-lapped with the Christianas community itself. This Sect had its own leaders and prime movers.¹⁸⁰ But instead of making a formal break with the Christianas community they had continued to remain under cover. In the meantime they were attempting to eliminate opposition and take control of the church themselves. It was clearer than ever to the official church leadership that the biggest problem the Church was facing was within. It was dealing with this that the next major action had to be taken.

According to tradition Paulus never got to put his case before the Emperor and after about two years he was beheaded.

However his move to Rome helped to persuade other Church leaders to leave Jerusalem and head towards Rome themselves. A base in Rome would have ready access to the whole Empire and it would be easier for them here, to shift the structure of the church away from Jewish domination. The people trying to keep the church within Jewish boundaries would, to a large extent, be left behind in Judea. Other people, with similar ideas to the Sectarrians but living further afield, would hark back to Jerusalem for sympathy. But the official Christiana leadership would no longer be there.

By their move to Rome the leadership was also showing that instead of rejecting Roman influence and structures,

they intended to embrace these. Also as far as the Rulers of the Roman Empire were concerned it would not be easy to ban Christians from Rome in the way that the Jews had been banned. Christian worship was centered around house churches rather than the local synagogue and house churches could go underground. In the case of Rome, they could do this literally as there were catacomb caves under the city and the Romans were afraid to go there. Another reason for a move to Rome was that people realized the "clock was ticking" towards a final confrontation between Judaism and the Roman Empire. As it turned out, in 70 C.E. the Roman army came and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, the Temple and all of the Temple's social frameworks.¹⁸¹

What happened to the Essene sect? In 68 C.E. they heard of the army's advance and fled. They hid their scrolls in the caves of the Dead Sea cliffs but nobody returned to reclaim them. History virtually forgot about the Essenes until their scrolls were found in the 1940's. And even then, full publication of the scrolls was delayed until the 1990's.¹⁸²

The group at Masada fortress (who were similar to the Essenes) all committed suicide in 73 C.E. What happened to the Nazarene Sect? Apparently, with a crossing over between groups, some of the Zealots connected with this sect were also connected with those who pressured moderate Jews to take the defiant stand against Rome that led to the destruction of Jerusalem.¹⁸³ What of those who remained connected to the Christians? Eventually Gamaliel II¹⁸⁴ persuaded the dispersed Jewish leadership to introduce a prayer into the local synagogues that cursed Christians. People now had to make a choice. If they

wanted to be Jews they could stay on in the Synagogue. But if they wanted to be Christianas they had to leave. Some people did break with the Synagogue and came into the Church as Jewish Christianas. Yet they still retained a distinction from the Gentile Christianas. The relationship between these two groups still had to be worked through.



Part Three

The Plan to Write it all Down

While Paulus was making his journey towards Rome a huge storm gathered and continued on and on. ¹⁸⁵ In some ways this storm reflected the dilemma of the early Church leadership as they tried to design a 'master plan' for a definitive text about Joshua and his teaching. And, they would have to do this. They needed to exercise their authority here because their recent experience showed how easily their authority, given to them by Joshua, could be eroded and usurped.

The architects of the canonical material reflected on how Joshua had started out in an attempt to pick up marginalised Jews. ¹⁸⁶ But even in his own lifetime, he was attracting people from outside Judaism. ¹⁸⁷ He was amazed at their faith. ¹⁸⁸ Finally he told his disciples to go out, not only into all the nations of the world, but also to creation itself ¹⁸⁹ Such an outward movement of his message continued with the mission of Paulus, despite the efforts of "10,000 believing Jews, all zealots of the law" to confine this to Judaism.

In the midst of internal strife with the Nazarene Sect and its fellow travelers, people realised there was need to show that Christianas was not simply a Sect within Judaism. In one sense it was based on the Judaic law and its tradition. But in another sense it was incorporating and was derived from a quite different world view, that is, the philosophy of the Greeks and the impetus this gains from its idealism. In any attempt to provide a canonical presentation of the life

of Joshua and his teaching, the two world views of Judaism and Greek philosophy needed to be placed side by side.

On reflection, there was a growing realization amongst Church leadership that "the way" of Joshua was not simply a "raising of the bar" for the key social commandments. "The way" actually entailed the on-going achievement of a delicate balance between two quite differing world views. A "Raising the bar" of the key social commandments was a means towards this end. It gave people both a sense of responsibility and a freeing flexibility to move between the advantages of one society and the other.

But how, the leadership wondered, could the authoritative laws of Judaism and the rationalistic, philosophical ideas of the Greeks be combined? The question about whether the two approaches could be fused together needed to be clarified first. The architects of a master plan realised the innate differences between the two approaches were such that they could never really fuse. Perhaps people may think this had happened. But it would be an illusion. One view would be over-riding the other. Law (c/f Judaism) is understood in terms of cause and effect which is observed in frameworks of time. On the other hand Order (c/f the Greeks) is based upon place. (A kitchen can be in a state of chaos or order, but it is the same place.) Just as time and place do not fuse, neither do law and order.

So, instead of trying to fuse the two world views, the Architects decided to present descriptive models of each of the two world views. On teasing out such an approach they reflected that the "way" of Joshua not only enables two contrasting societies to be brought into a dialectical balance

with each other. It enables each society to develop into the best model of its type and also act as a critique of the excesses of the other. It was decided to present the two views side by side and in a dialectical tension with each other. Mention of law/time would always precede order/place.

The two descriptions would provide lists of the values needed to cultivate the society being described. Each description also needed warnings about what excesses to avoid. Thus Judaism (c/f a Law/Time based society) tended towards narrowness. This needed to be challenged by the cultivation of an on-going outreach. On the other hand an order and place focused society (c/f the Greeks) tended to cave in to "the loud voice". This needed to be countered by the sense of a "Living Word".

There would be a line of logic that moved from one Section of a text to the next to show how to ultimately set up the hybrid Christiana society. This line of logic would also include a demonstration to show such a "setting up" is possible because historically, this has already been done.

Five Canonical Book

Who was to present the structure and detailed teaching of Christianas? On the one hand it appeared that the Apostles consisted of 'ignorant fisherman' who had made their living from manual labour. But some people in the early church combined a manual job with the sophistications of learning. Paulus for instance, had studied "at the feet of the Gamaliel"¹⁹⁰ and had such a reputation for learning that a monarch exclaimed "Your great learning has made you

mad." ¹⁹¹ But Paulus was a tent maker by trade and to avoid being a burden on others he had continued with this even while he was setting up and monitoring Church communities.¹⁹²

In the early years of Joshua's movement there were enough resources and initiative and authority at the disposal of the Christiana leadership to work out an overall plan for recording his message. It would be irresponsible of them to rely on a haphazard collection of writings. As it was there were enough mistaken ideas circulating to result in misleading biographies.

Instead of writing the one canonical book on the life of Joshua there would be several. There could be an introductory book, then a book setting out how to form the best type of Judaic community, then another setting out how to build the best type of Greek-based community. A book could follow on from this to describe efforts of the early Church to break out of a Jewish mould and establish the hybrid Christiana community. Decades on there could be another book again to sum up the whole experience of Joshua's life and provide for a direction into the future.

The books would be **written in Greek** and set out in Greek structural patterns such as to be found in Greek buildings and mosaics. In accord with the **underlying line of logic** each text with its five or so Sections would logically move to a certain stage. Then the next text and its Sections would pick up and continue on from the points that went before it.

In some senses writers would have teaching advantages, even over Joshua himself. They could select out incidents

in his life as well as what he said to illustrate points made in his teaching. These writers did not have the same tight time constraints that Joshua had. He was trying to achieve as much as possible before an inevitable death. The writers on the other hand could take years to reflect on the significance of what happened. They also had the benefit of hindsight. They realized that some points needed to be stressed in order to avoid future fiascos, such as had occurred with the "believing Jews" in Jerusalem. They could try to anticipate every type of future problem. Within the communities of the church there were also back-up resources so that a writer could be helped by his own community when sorting out material and moulding it to his own purpose.

For at least one writer, Luka, there was a situation of relative peace and prosperity. The final writer had a longer time still in reflecting on what "it all meant".

A number of points were agreed upon. For instance, instead of trying to follow an accurate time sequence of events, the writers could **select out** stories and teaching and rearrange these according to the underlying points they were wanting to make. Writers could build up lists of points, through their paragraphing, and these lists would fill out their Section headings. For instance a Section headed "Developing an Environment of Internalised Law", implies the contents of this Section shows how this sort of environment can be cultivated. It implies such cultivation is possible and it has relevance to the value system of the whole Christiana Church.

A System of Paragraphing

In terms of structural technique, most paragraphs could center around a **"hook word"** which in some cases could be used as a paragraph heading. The paragraphs with the same type of "hook" word, for example a place, could be gathered into a Section. The "hook words" could also pair paragraphs and set these out into concentric circles or parallel lines. In such case there could be the one obvious point common to each paragraph in the pair. For instance if one paragraph stressed the need to respect authority and its paired paragraph made the same point, even if it was in a different part of the book, then the point being stressed here is the need to respect authority etc. When other paragraph pairs with the same type of "hook" word present similar points, these can be gathered together as a list that falls under their comprehensive Section heading. For instance if the point about respect for authority is followed by other points about the need for compassionate power, bodily care, prayer, forgiveness, nurturing, a solid foundation etc. then all these points can be summarized under the heading "Acquire Qualities for Ordered Community". Paragraphs could also be set out into a continuum line.

Early Ministers of the Word could memorise a set of hooks, for example with a sentence. Then they could recall gospel stories and teaching according to their position in the gospel independently of whether such Ministers of the Word could read or not or whether or not they had a text at hand.

In the case of the preacher Apollo for instance, who was preaching in places parallel to Paul. He had been orally instructed in "the way" ¹⁹³ (A similar use of "paragraph

hooks" is continued to the present day by students trying to memorise material before an exam).

A structure of paragraph patterning also provides a **three-dimensional approach** to the text. Particular points can be stressed according to the position of their paragraph(s) in the overall pattern. For instance a paragraph pattern of points a,b,c,d,**E**,d,c,b,a, structurally highlights the point made in the center.¹⁹⁴ In paralleled lines, emphasis can be placed on the first and last points¹⁹⁵ In a continuum line for instance, points made about democracy at one end can move towards points about totalitarianism at the other end.¹⁹⁶

As far as the original planners were concerned, as well as overall decisions to be made about techniques used in the canonical texts, there was also need for decisions about what **subject matter** would be **included** in the texts and what subject matter would be **left out**.¹⁹⁷

What to be left out?

It was decided that an assessment of both the Judaic and the Greek-based societies needed to be embedded into the structure of any planned texts. But the underlying Judaism // Greek **structure** of the texts would **not be mentioned directly**. There was little to be gained in further alienating "believing Jews" as they called themselves who were still trying to take over the Church. The surface of the texts would be confined to the life and teaching of Joshua.

Writers would also **avoid mention of the Essenes**. If the Essenes were mentioned, then members of the so-called

Nazarene Sect would assume this endorsed their claim that Joshua had set up his own branch of the Essenes and this was intended for Jews only. The writers were already aware of things that were common to Essenes and Christianas and not to be found in mainstream Judaism. These included:

- A sharing of language such as "sons of God" and "righteousness" and "the way"
- A religious meal before which the bread and wine was blessed by a priest.¹⁹⁸
- Encouragement of celibacy.¹⁹⁹
- The sharing of communal goods rather than having personal property.²⁰⁰
- Focus on the emergence of both a general leader and for some a priestly leader as well.²⁰¹
- Criticism of Jerusalem priests and the Temple system.²⁰²
- The use of Baptism.

There were so many sects around in first century Judaism it could almost be assumed that Joshua's background was linked with one of them. But family involvement with the Essenes would be difficult to mention in passing. This was especially so, given that much of the Essene writing was about their anticipation of a "Teacher of Righteousness" and there had been prophecies about Joshua even when he was a baby. The writers considered if there were any mention at all about Essenes, people would become bogged down in the internal issues of Joshua's life instead of moving beyond these to consider his message and his more significant identity. Yet the very omission of mentioning

Essenes was an indication in the texts of tensions and conflict in the early Church about them.

The First Book

Who to write the first, introductory book? There was one young character well known to the key figures of the emerging church. This was Marko. Peta went to the house of Marko's mother when he was released from Herod's prison.²⁰³ Later on Peta referred to him as "my son Marko".²⁰⁴ The two could work together on recalling and writing down the major events and teachings of Joshua. They could set these out onto pieces of paper and sort them out into mosaic patterns according to an introductory structure of the life and teachings of Joshua. Neither Peta nor Marko spoke Greek fluently so the Greek writing in this text was "rustic".

Also the background situation in which this gospel as it came to be called, was unstable. A confrontation between Jerusalem and Rome was looming. Church leadership had just moved from Jerusalem to Rome partly because of an on-going attempted takeover by the "believing Jews". Then persecution started in Rome. The Emperor Nero had wanted to re-build the city. So he burned down sections of it and blamed the Christians. The Christians had to seek refuge in the graveyard catacombs underneath the city. Even as this first gospel was being finalised, there were defections from the community and a pervading sense of fear. Thus the text reflected not only what was going on in the life of Joshua, but in the life of the writers as well.

To some extent the sense of fear could also have been due to Marko's own disposition. In his gospel he tells of a young man who was grabbed by the soldiers and this young man fled naked. People thought this is what happened to himself. Marko also was a controversial figure in his own right. He had started out with Paulus and Barnabas on a missionary journey. But then he opted to leave this and return home, much to the disgust of Paulus. Later on, when Barnabas wanted to take Marko on another trip, Paulus refused to have him. Barnabas and Paulus argued about him and split up. Barnabas took Marko in one direction and Paulus took Silas in another.²⁰⁵ However in the years to follow Paulus and Marko made up. Paulus wrote in one of his letters about how useful Marko was in his ministry.²⁰⁶

So Marko spent time with both Peta and Paulus. This put him in a prime position to learn about the perspective each of these leaders had on the basic message of Joshua.²⁰⁷

Marko structured his introductory book into four Sections. The first of these defined what "authority" (and Judaism) is based upon. It highlights a key necessity for the viability of authority. This is forgiveness.²⁰⁸ Marko's second Section showed a realisation that when dealing with "order" (c/f Greek philosophy) there is a tendency for people to think in the "now". To add in a dimension of time here, a sense of direction is needed. Marko set out the qualities needed to cultivate this. He warned in particular against hardness of heart.²⁰⁹ Marko's third Section picked up on Joshua's teaching about pushing beyond a minimum observance of the three key social commandments, "thou shalt not kill, commit adultery or steal"²¹⁰ In the text Marko recalled how Joshua had pointed out it is the child who is the model for

the new kingdom. A child has the flexibility to move between both types of societies. In a sense people are challenged here to take on the identity of an "adult child". Marko's fourth Section summarised things that an individual has to deal with in any sort of society. The key, central figure here is Maria, sister of Lazara. Marko's shows her exercising initiative by anointing Joshua's feet with ointment and asking pardon for the damage she had caused him and others. Joshua's forgiveness of her however resulted in his own death.²¹¹

The Second and Third Book

The structure of Marko's introductory book or 'gospel' presented Joshua's teaching against a balanced background of both Judaism and Greek philosophy. The next two writers, Matt and Luka, used Marko's text as the basis for their own. They copied stories and teachings from Marko yet adjusted these according to their own approach. Matt took a Jewish perspective and Luka a Greek one. The two also shared in extra material not used by Marko.

The second writer was reputedly Matt, one of the Apostles. By adopting the approach of Judaism, he showed readers how to grow into the spirit of the law. Thus he presented the early life of Joshua to show him as a child born of Judaism.²¹² Matt went on to point out the need for people to move beyond the bare moral necessities such as avoidance of sin²¹³ and the need to cultivate virtues for a more positive and mature attitude.²¹⁴ He listed characteristics to be found in an environment of internalised law²¹⁵ and warned against over-stress on external law.²¹⁶ He

showed that ultimately, a law-based society relies on the sense of forgiveness.²¹⁷

Matt himself had been a tax collector²¹⁸ and because of this he was despised by mainstream Jews. But at least the choice of his job showed he realized there is need to co-operate with authority that exists beyond the boundaries of one's family and tribal grouping.

The third book was written by Luka from the context of a fairly comfortable, Gentile-based community. His opening Section presented Joshua in his early life as a child of the world.²¹⁹ Luka's gospel outlined the individual and corporate qualities needed for an urban-type, multi-cultural community.²²⁰ It set out the foundations for the development of democracy.²²¹ It warned against overstress on idealism.²²² It gave examples of people who would stand up for their rights against populist thinking.²²³ Finally Luka's book pointed out how an innate flaw is to be found in both of the social systems that he, Matt and Marko had presented. That is, the Jewish system tends towards narrowness. The Greek system tends to cave into the "loud voice".²²⁴

Matt and Luka embedded something else into their gospel structures. Within both the Jewish and Greek-based societies of the day there was a bias against women. Yet Matt stressed the role of Wisdom, a feminine figure. Luka endorsed a family friendly, village-type community. Both writers also warned against the under-valuing of children.

Luka went on to write a second book about the history of the early church and the teaching of Paulus. He addressed

both of these books to a 'corporate' person who was Greek.²²⁵ Luka showed his familiarity with the life and teaching of Paulus and on occasions he used the pronoun of "we".²²⁶

The extent to which there was personal contact between Luka, Marko and Paulus was reflected in a letter to Timothy. In this Paulus says that at present only Luka was with him and he asked Timothy to bring Marko.²²⁷

In the first of his two books Luka gave an outline of how to set up a society based upon a Greek-philosophical model. In his second book he showed efforts of the early Church to bring together both types of society but also to break away from a Jewish mould in order to do this.

Luka dealt with the crisis caused by the so-called Nazarene Sect. This Sect over-lapped with the "10,000 believing Jews" that he records James spoke about. Because of confusion about whether these people were Christianas or Jews Luka opted to call them Jews. After all, the major reason for the conflict these people were causing was because they wanted to retain their identity as Jews. However a problem with this description was that a reader could associate these "believing Jews" with mainstream Jews which, as the Roman Jews pointed out to Paulus, were in fact complaining about members of the Sect "everywhere". So, on the one hand calling these people "Jews", clarified how the Church leadership saw them and how they saw themselves. But it also obscured the extent to which these same people were holding sway over the early Church.

On the other hand perhaps to some extent Luka was deliberately obscuring what was happening. For instance if he said the "Jews against Paulus" were also members of the Christiana church then it would appear that the Apostles had either lost their authority altogether or they had indirectly endorsed the attacks on Paulus. In fact as implied in Paulus' discovery when talking with the Roman Jews, it appears the Leadership did not realize to what extent plots against them had been organized.

As with the end of *Acts*, Luka the writer attempted to make a positive point about mainstream Jews at the end of his gospel as well. Here, he said that the body of the Jewish Council was recalled by Pilate and apparently these people made up much of the noisy crowd demanding Joshua's crucifixion. On the other hand a big crowd of ordinary and very upset people followed the procession to the crucifixion.²²⁸

The "Authorised, Living Word"

As well as recording history, Luca developed themes that included an understanding of Living Authority. He also developed the theme of the Living Word,²²⁹ for instance by presenting a wide range of autonomous people with multiple voices.²³⁰ He realized that a sense of "Living Authority" and the "Living Word" would help people to exercise their own judgment without caving in to narrowness or populist pressure. It would help them, in terms of their own life situation, to "raise the bar" of the key social Commandments. As Joshua said, "In my Father's house there are many mansions."²³¹

Early in his second book, Luka described the coming of the "Living Spirit" on an assembly of apostles and disciples (including Miriam, Joshua's mother)²³² He developed the theme of the 'Living Word' through imagery such as an egg²³³ and a seed²³⁴ which could be given and received. He devoted the fourth Section of his second book to the subject of the "Living Word".²³⁵

By developing an understanding of "the authorised, living Word" he prepared for the fourth and final gospel of the life and teaching of Joshua. This was to be written by someone called "John".

What Happened to Lazara?

One could wonder what happened in the overall story of Joshua and the Apostles, to Joshua's dear friend Lazara? After the crucifixion, Lazara returned with Miriam the mother of Joshua, to live with his sisters in Bethany. Lazara, by birthright and by training was a Jewish priest. But after the siege of Jerusalem and its destruction by the Roman army in 70 C.E. the Jewish priesthood was finished. Not so with the Christianas. As the new community evolved, there was a continuation of the priesthood. Jewish ideas about sacrifice and unity etc, were incorporated into the Christiana meal of the Eucharist. Lazara as a priest, continued to play a key role in the emerging community. He did not have the responsibilities of administration or wider preaching that the Apostles had. Nor was he involved with debates that readily tipped over into violence. But he still remained a touch stone for the community. He had been educated in the theology of priesthood which from the time of Moses to the destruction of the Temple had been

central to Jewish worship. Priesthood would now take on a similar, central position in the worship of the Christianas. It was up to Lazara to pass on the richness of this heritage.

People around Lazara continued to reflect as well on the significance of his friendship with Joshua. They read in Marko's gospel how the 'way' of life introduced by Joshua was a fulfillment of the kingdom of David.²³⁶ They reflected on parallels between the life of David and the life of Joshua. They saw that the friendship between David and Jonathan, son of King Saul²³⁷ was on the same lines as the friendship between Joshua and Lazara. In David's story, Jonathan was the rightful heir to the kingdom of Saul. But he opted instead to support the Kingdom of David. In the story of Joshua, Lazara was an heir to the glories of Temple worship. But he, like Jonathan had opted for another Kingdom, in Lazara's case the one proclaimed by Joshua. After the fall of Jerusalem, the parallels between the two friendships became even more obvious because just as the Kingdom of David finally emerged, so did the Kingdom of Joshua. Over time the name of Jonathan (abbreviated to John) was gradually given to Lazara.

As tensions between Jerusalem and Rome mounted the Christianas, including the family at Bethany knew they had to move. Church leaders went to Rome. But according to tradition Lazara, now called John, took Miriam to the safer destination of Ephesus. Eventually Joshua's mother Miriam died. What happened to Maria, sister of Lazara or John as he was now called? Did she ever link up again with her Gentile friend? As time passed, there was an influx of Gentiles into the emerging community and marriages between people of Jewish and Gentile backgrounds became

more acceptable. One could only assume that Maria and her friend did link up again. But there would still be murmurings about this. Luka the writer, hinted at such a reunion. Like other writers, especially John, he sometimes addressed his present readers through his gospel text. Luka wrote of how Marthar, sister of both Lazara and Maria, was complaining about Maria not helping with the house-work. But Joshua answered "Leave her be, she has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her."²³⁸ This could be understood as a later comment on Maria as well.

As for John, formerly Lazara, he continued to live throughout the early decades of the emerging group. He heard from afar about the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple and worship. He heard how the Jewish leadership had re-grouped and in a dilemma wondered how Judaism could continue. Lazara/John was especially concerned as some of these people were his relatives. He heard about the Jewish decision to rely on adherence to the *Torah*, the Sabbath and the local synagogue. More than ever the Jews would be the "People of the Book".

The Final Book by John

Parallel to the Jewish dilemma, the Christiana Church had its own questions. Into the future the Jews would indeed have their *Torah* to cling to for a sense of security. But what would the Christians have? John determined to write a gospel that would give people a sense of the on-going presence of Joshua amongst them, especially as celebrated through the meal of the Eucharist. This would help them feel secure in the belief that he was still alive and still there.

Over the years John had been crafting his own story of Joshua. He did not attempt to give an overview of the many incidents filling the years of Joshua's ministry. Such an outline had already been given by Marko, Matt and Luka. Rather, John selected out a few significant stories and 'signs' and he dealt with these at length. He developed an exploration of who Joshua was or is and how his presence continues.

In his first Section John introduced his belief about Joshua's identity.²³⁹ His second Section showed Joshua as "the Living Authority"²⁴⁰ His third Section, showed him as "the Living Word".²⁴¹ The fourth Section shows the nucleus of Joshua's followers coming together to recognise him as the "Authorised, Living Word", and focusing upon his presence amongst them.²⁴² Then the fifth Section of the gospel provides the picture of a society that can be created through the on-going influence of the "Authorised, Living Word."²⁴³

John's gospel showed that when the Church, and any society for that matter, takes the life-view of Joshua on board, then it will find its way forward. To demonstrate this he set out a concentric circle of water images that stretch from one end of the gospel to the other. The key, central image of this circle shows Joshua walking on water. When the Apostles take him into their boat "they immediately arrive at where they are going."²⁴⁴

John's book was written as the most complex of the gospels, partly because he was urgently addressing sections of his own community as well as presenting the life and teachings of Joshua. In the text, when he talked of Joshua as the "Living Authority" he had Gentile readers in mind. He

knew that accepting moral authority was hard for the Gentiles and in this Section he mentioned the need for belief at the end of each of his paragraph pairs. In the next Section when he presented Joshua as the "Living Word" he was mindful of Jewish Christianas in the community. They were still clinging to their rituals and Jewish identity. He showed here how Joshua has both fulfilled and outshone the law-giver Moses. With strong language he urged the Jewish Christianas to rely instead on the on-going, personal presence of Joshua.

In his gospel John also added comments and stories to clarify some of the misconceptions that had arisen in the years between Joshua's life and the writing of his gospel. He dealt with the Ointment woman and showed that she was not just a woman off the street (c/f Marko), ²⁴⁵ or someone who had riled all the disciples (c/f Matt), ²⁴⁶ or a sinner from the city (c/f Luka), ²⁴⁷ or, as people were assuming, Mary Magdalen. Rather this woman was Maria the sister of Lazara. ²⁴⁸ John also wanted to clarify that Josua did not condone Maria's elopement as his critics thought. He therefore inserted the story of an adulterous woman being dragged before Joshua for stoning and he told her to "go and sin no more". ²⁴⁹

At the end of his gospel John (formerly called Lazara) identified himself as being both the beloved disciple of Joshua and the writer of this text. ²⁵⁰

Historically, it was fitting that Lazara, re-named John and the beloved disciple, should be the final one to tell Joshua's story. He knew that into the future, people would continue trying to merge the morality of the Jews with the universal

order of the Greeks. He had witnessed the first, historical attempt to do so. His legacy would be to warn people that in a sense this cannot be done! Law and Order, like time and place, do not fuse. The most a society can and should hope for, is a dialectical tension between the two. This would require self-sacrifice and forgiveness from both sides.

In terms of the proposed underlying structure of the gospels the very cross on which Joshua died, would be a summary symbol of his message, whether the church leaders intended this or not. The down-beam of the cross founded in the earth, represented the Jewish origins and base of his message. The cross-beam reaching out to both sides represented the philosophy of the Greeks. The first beam on its own is too narrow. The second beam on its own would collapse. Each beam exists in its own right but relies on the other beam to become what is essentially, a construct. An independent position for both beams is sacrificed. Thus the **symbol of the cross is in itself a code** for the gospel's underlying structure, which is about a social construct. John wrote of Joshua "If I am lifted up (on the cross) I will draw all people to myself." ²⁵¹



END NOTES

- 1 Yearly Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Luke 2:41 (Sect A)
 2 Feast of Atonement J McKenzie *Dictionary Bible* London 1968
 3 Purification after child birth, Luke 2:22, (Sect A)
 4 Thousands of Jews to Festivals, Acts 2:41, (Sect. A/3)
 5 Priests taking turns, Luke 1:8, (Sect. A)
 6 Pharisees and law, Mtt 23:26, (Sect.E/17)
 7 Zealots, J McKenzie Op.cit
 8 Zealots Acts 21:18, (Sect.E/3)
 9 Sadducees, Mark 12:18, (Sect.D/9)
 10 Sanhedrin McKenzie Op.cit p152
 11 Herodians Mark 12:13 (Sect D/8)
 12 Essenes, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2003, Vols 4,11
 13 Nazarites Amos 2:12
 14 Qumran and 5th, 6th,7th commandments,NC ~~????~~ibid.
 15 Varying degrees of Essenes, Ibid.
 16 Herod the Great, Mtt 2:7, (Sect. A)
 17 David and Kingdom forever, Mark 12:35-7,16 (Sect.D/10)
 18 Escape of family Mtt 2:14 (Sect A)
 19 High Priest's court yard, John 18:16, (Sect.E/3)
 20 Priests c/f teaching & health care Mtt 8:3 (Sect C/1)
 21 Festival lasting a week, John 7:14, (Sect.C/6)
 22 Caravan groups, Luke 2:44, (Sect A)
 23 Communal fire, John 18:16, (Sect.E/3)
 24 Finding in Temple, Luke 2:46, (Sect. A)
 25 Early caution about publicity, Matthew 2:12, (Sect A)
 26 "Herod seeks to kill you", Luke 13:31, (Sect.D/2)
 27 Pharisee avoiding care of parents Mark 7:11, (Sect B/8)
 28, Crucifixions around countryside, M.Grant
 The Jews in the Roman World 1973 p.227
 29 Jesus goes to Lost children of Israel, Mark 7:27-28,(Sect.B/6)
 30 Galileans "ignorant of the law", John 7:52, (Sect.C/6)
 31 Herodians 'too worldly' c/f Mtt 22:16 (Sect E/13)
 32 Predictions re Jesus, Luke 2:28vv, (Sect. A)
 33 Mary a virgin, Mtt 1:23, (Sect. A)
 34 "philosopher ruler" Plato *The Republic* Penguin 1974, Part 7
 35 "teacher of righteousness", *N.C. Encyclopedia*, Op.cit
 36 Rigidity of Essenes *Catholic Encyclopedia* Nashville 1975
 37 John Baptist's father a priest, Elizabeth, Mary's cousin,
 Luke 1:8, (Sect. A)
 38 John the Baptist in the desert, Luke 1:80, (Sect. A)
 39 Baptist also concerned about Jews falling away,
 John 1:23, (Sect.B/1)

End Notes

- 40 Baptist's message of repentance, Mtt 3:2, (Sect. A)
 41 Baptist at Jordan near Bethany John 1:28 (Sect B/1)
 42 Baptism New Catholic Encyclopedia OpCit
 43 Martha worker, Mary listener, Luke 10:38-42, (Sect.C/10)
 44 "who are my brothers and sisters?", Mark 3:33, (Sect.A/1)
 45 Jesus' dysfunctional family John 7:5-8 (Sect C/5)
 46 "you brood of vipers", Mtt 3:7, (Sect. A)
 47 Jesus, Lamb of God, John 1:29, (Sect.B/1)
 48 John Baptist uncertain about Jesus, Mtt 11:03, Sect.D/1
 49 Baptist felt unworthy to untie sandal of Jesus,
 John 1:27, (Sect. A)
 50 John's disciples approached Jesus,
 John 1:38, (Sect.B/2)
 51 John beheaded, Mark 6:24, (Sect.B/17)
 52 Jesus thrown out of Nazareth, Luke 4:28-29, (Sect. A)
 53 "any good come out of Nazareth?", John 1:46, (Sect.B/2)
 54 Former friend say out of his mind Mark 3:21 (Sect A/1)
 55 Miracle at Cana, John 2:1vv, (Sect B/3)
 56 Addresses God as Father Luke 11:2 (Sect C/8)
 57 People brought sick, Mark 3:10, (Sect.A/3)
 58 People with range of deformities Mark 3:1 (Sect A/4)
 59 Demons trying to frighten people Mark 1:24 (Sect A/4)
 60 Word about miracles reach Jerusalem, Mtt 12:23, (Sect.D/5)
 61 Curing on a Sabbath, Mark 3:1-6, (Sect.A/4)
 62 Plotting against Jesus, John 11:53, (Sect.C/5)
 63 Herod looking for Jesus, Luke 13:31, (Sect.D/2)
 64 Jesus critical of the Temple, Mtt 24:2, (Sect.E/18)
 65 Not enough time to eat Mark 6:31, (Sect B/8)
 66 Family came with Jesus' mother Mark 3:31 (Sect A/1)
 67 "Get behind me Satan" Mark 8:33 (Sect B/1)
 68 Jesus continued to stay at Bethany, Mark 11:12, (Sect.D/6)
 69 Story of Lazarus and sores, Luke 16:20 vv, (Sect.D/9)
 70 c/f Greeks looking for Jesus John 12:20,21, (Sect.C/8)
 71 Soldiers approach Baptist Luke 3:14 (Sect A/2)
 72 Jesus circumcised, Luke 2:24,39, (Sect. A)
 73 Ruling families in Jerusalem Acts 4:6 (Sect A/5)
 74 Mary, in city, Luke 7:37, (Sect.B/3)
 75 Anyone from Galilee know law?, John 7:48, (Sect.C/6)
 76 Throw the first stone, John 8:7, (Sect.C/7)a
 77 Jesus waiting outskirts of Bethany, John 11:28-30, (Sect.C/3)
 78 "Kingdom of God within you", Luke 17:21, (Sect.D/12)
 79 "Lazarus come out", John 11:43, (Sect.C/4)
 80 People flock to see Lazarus, John 12:9, (Sect.C/6)
 81 Soldiers return empty handed, John 7:46, (Sect.C/6)
 82 Talk of killing Lazarus, John 12:10, (Sect.C/6)

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83	Meal to honour Lazarus,	John 12:2, (Sect.C/6)
84	People reported back to Pharisees	John 11:46 (Sect C/4)
85	Disciples all hostile at ointment woman	Mtt 26:8 (Sect F/2)
86	Out-pouring of emotion	Luke 7:45 (Sect B/3)
87	Ointment over head,	Mark 14:3, (Sect.D/14)
88	"last straw",	Mtt 26:8, (Sect.F/2)
89	One spoke against her,	John 12:4, (Sect.C/6)
90	"she has loved greatly",	Luke 7:47, (Sect.B/3)
91	Preparing Jesus for burial,	John 12:7, (Sect.D/6)
92	30 pieces of silver,	Mtt 15:26, (Sect.F/2)
93	Life to extend beyond this one	John 11:11 (Sect C/3)
94	"I am the way",	John 14:6, (Sect.D/4)
95	Kingdom promised to David,	Mark 11:10, (Sect.D/6)
96	Jesus' mother to Bethany,	John 19:27, (Sect.E/8)
97	Beloved disciple at foot of cross,	John 19:26, (Sect.E/7)
98	'Other disciple' told gate keeper,	John 18:16, (Sect.E/3)
99	Empty grave & confusion,	Mark 16:8, (Sect.D/1)
100	and "other disciple" rushed to tomb	John 20:4, (Sect.E/10)
101	Jesus left from Bethany,	Luke 24:50, (Sect.F/9)
102	Pentecost,	Acts 2:2, (Sect. A/3)
103	3,000 converted,	Acts 4:4, (Sect.A/4)
104	Herod killed James,	Acts 12:2, (Sect.C/1)
105	Peter arrested,	Acts 12:3, (Sect.C/1)
106	Peter, James and John,	Mark 5:37, (Sect.B/6)
107	James and John "Punish village",	Mark 3:17, (Sect.A/2)
108	"places in Kingdom",	Mark 10:37, (Sect.D/2)
109	Disciples angry,	Mtt 26:8, (Sect.F/2)
110	James martyred,	Acts 12:2, (Sect.C/1)
111	":Lot fell on Matthias",	Acts 1:26, (Sect.A/2)
112	James, son of Alphaeus,	Mtt 10:3, (Sect.C/21)
113	Peter left standing in porch,	Acts 12:14, (Sect.C/1)
114	Gamaliel, what if of God?,	Acts 5:34, (Sect.A/9)
115	Saul taught by Gamaliel,	Acts 22:3, (Sect.E/5)
116	Saul watched cloaks in stoning	(Acts 7:58 Sect B/1)
117	Saul arresting Christians,	Acts 8:3, (Sect.B/1)
118	"Why persecute me?",	Acts 9:4, (Sect.B/4)
119	Many converts of Paul,	Acts 11:26 and 15:4, (Sect.B/9), (Sect.C/7)
120	Antioch, name of "Christian"	Acts 11:26 (Sect B/9)
121	Non-Jews had received Holy Spirit	Acts 11:15 (Sect B/8)
122	Paul has support of Apostles	Galatians 2:7
123	Peter to Jews and Paul to Gentiles	Galatians 2:9
124	Baptism open to all	Acts 10:47 (Sect B/7)
125	Circumcision unnecessary,	Acts 21:21 (Sect E/3)
126	All made equal by baptism	I Cor 12:13

End Notes

127	Christian, Essene terms similar	<i>New Cath Ency</i> Op.Cit
128	Essene <i>Book of Rules</i>	Ibid.
129	Nazarene sect	Acts 24:5 (Sect E/9)
130	"no end of trouble with the Way"	Acts 19:23 (Sect 10/11)
131	Governor asks explanation of Way	Acts 24:22 (Sect E/9)
132	Contradicting Paul's message	Galatians 2:14
133	Contradicting Apostles' endorsement	Galatians 1:9
134	Even Apostles could not keep laws,	Acts 15:10, (Sect.C/7)
135	Paul had been a Pharisee,	Acts 23:6, (Sect.E/7)
136	10,000 Believing Jews, also Zealots	Acts 21:20 (Sect E/3)
137	Jews were expelled from Rome	Acts 18:2 (Sect D/7)
138	Peter's vision re eating with Gentiles	Acts 10:13 (Sect B/7)
139	Collection for Jerusalem	Acts 11:29 (Sect B/9)
140	Leaders of "Jews Against Paul"	Acts 25:2 (Sect E/10)
141	Paul confronted Peter,	Galatians 2:14
142	Timothy circumcised,	Acts 16:3, (Sect.D/3)
143	James' leadership on return of Paul	Acts 21:18 (Sect E/3)
144	Peter - message to James & elders,	Acts 1:17, (Sect.C/1)
145	Peter designated leader	Acts 10:48 (Sect B/7)
146	c/f "disobeying" Jews,	Acts 14:2, (Sect.C/4)
147	Jews alone God's Chosen People	Acts 22:22 (Sect E/5)
148	Many Jewish priests converted,	Acts 6:7, (Sect.A/9)
149	Bread and wine blessed by priest,	<i>N.C.Encyclopedia, Op.Cit.</i>
150	Jesus' focus on Jews	Mark 7:24-30 (Sect B/6)
151	Paul making 'Nazarene sect' look worse	Acts 24:5 (Sect E/9)
152	Paul stoned	Acts 14:19, (Sect.C/6)
153	Jews attacked synagogue leader,	Acts 18:7, (Sect.D/8)
154	Paul finished with any Jews,	Acts 18:6, (Sect.D/7)
155	Paul moves into house,	Acts 18:7, (Sect.D/8)
156	Jesus - avoid killing, adultery and stealing	Mark 10:19 (Sect C)
157	"give to the poor and come follow me"	Mark 10:21, (Sect.C/3)
158	fulfillment law of Moses,	Acts 15:11, (Sect.C/7)
159	avoid blood, fornication,& things strangled,	Acts 15:29, (Sect.C/7)
160	Parallel in Isaiah the prophet, avoid gain from oppression, bribes, hearing bloodshed, looking at evil" in	Isaiah 33:13-6,
161	Oppressing the needy,	Amos 4:1
162	Extorting levies,	Amos 4:11
163	People - full commitment to Way	Acts 15:26 (Sect C/7)
164	Gentile widows go hungry,	Acts 6:1, (Sect.A/9)
165	Word "Christian" coined	Acts 11:26 (Sect B/9)
166	Paul needs to return	Acts 21:13 (Sect E/2)
167	Tearful farewell to Paul,	Acts 20:37, (Sect.D/12)
168	10'000's 'believing Jews' after Paul,	Acts 21:20, (Sect.E/3)
169	Paul to join four men taking a vow,	Acts 21:23, Acts (Sect.E/3)

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170	Paul had already taken a vow	Acts 18:18 (SectD/8)
171	Paul in street with a Greek	Acts 21:29 (Sect E/4)
172	Cohort of soldiers,	Acts 21:35, (Sect.E/14)
173	Paul called to address "the nations",	Acts 22:21, (Sect.E/5)
174	Vow - abstain until Paul killed,	Acts 23:12, (Sect.E/8)
175	Paul's case to go to the Emperor,	Acts 26:32, (Sect.E/12)
176	Paul in Rome,	Acts 28:30, (Sect.F/4)
177	Complaints everywhere re Nazarene Sect	Acts 28:22 (Sect F/4)
178	Plan to kill Paul on journey	Acts 23:16 (SectE/8)
179	Treachery	Ibid.
180	Leaders in Nazarene Sect	Acts 21:29 (Sect E/4)
181	Destruction of Temple, 70 AD	<i>New Cath Ency Opcit</i>
182	Dead Sea Scrolls	Ibid.
183	Zealots pressure moderate Jews J McKenzie <i>Dictionary Bible</i> Bruce	Publishine USA 1965
184	Gamaliel II and curse re Christians	<i>N C Encyclopedia Op.Cit</i>
185	Storm on way to Rome,	Acts 27:14vv, (Sect.F/2)
186	Jesus goes to marginalised Jews,	Mark 7:2, (Sect.B/6)
187	Greeks seek Jesus in the Temple,	John 12:20, (Sect.C/8)
188	Jesus amazed at faith of Gentiles,	Luke 7:9, (Sect.B/1)
189	"Go out to ...creation",	Mtt 28:20, (Sect.F/13)
190	Paul taught by Gamaliel,	Acts 21:31, (Sect.E/5)
191	Paul's reputation for learning,	Acts 26:24, (Sect.E/12)
192	Paul a tent maker,	Acts 18:3, (Sect.D/7)
193	Apollo, instructed in the Way	Acts 18:25 (Sect D/9)
194	Concentric circle paragraphs,	Mark's Sections A,B,D
195	Priority to first & last,	Matthew's Sections
196	Continuum line of paragraphs,	Luke's Sections C, D
197	Omission of Essenes,	<i>N C Encyclopedia, Op.cit.</i>
198	Last supper	John 13:1-16:32 (Sect D)
199	Celibacy encouraged	Mark 10:21 (Sect B)
200	Communal goods	Acts 5:1-11 (Sect A)
201	Essenes waiting Priest & Teacher	<i>N C Encyclopedia Op.cit</i>
202	Criticism of Temple system	John 2:15 (Sect B/5)
203	Peter to house of Mark's mother,	Acts 11:12, (Sect.C/1)
204	"my son Mark"	! Peter 5:13
205	Paul and Barnabas split over Mark	Acts 15:39 (Sect D/2)
206	Paul and Mark make up	2 Tim 4:11
207	Peter to Jews, Paul to Gentiles	Galatians 2:9
208	Mark - Section A,	Mark 1:903:35,
209	Mark - Section B,	Mark 4:1-9:1
210	Mark - Section C,	Mark 9:2-10:32
211	Mark - Section D,	Mark 10:31-16:8
212	Jesus, a child of Judaism	Mtt 1:1 - 4:25 (Sect A)

End Notes

213	Move beyond bare outline of law	Mtt 5:1 - 7:23 (Sect B)
214	Cultivate virtue	Mtt 8:1 - 10:42 (Sect C)
215	Environment of Internalised law	Mtt 11:2 - 18:35 (Sect D)
216	Matthew warns re external law,	Mtt 19:3-25:46, (Sect. E)
217	Forgiveness in Matthew's gospel,	Mtt 26:1-28:20, (Sect. F)
218	Matthew a tax collector	Mtt 9:9-13 (Sect C/12)
219	Jesus, a child of the world,	Luke Sect.A
220	Luke - Section B,	Luke 4:31-9:50
221	Luke - Section C,	Luke 9:52-13:22
222	Luke - Section D,	Luke 13:24-18:31
223	Luke - Section E,	Luke 18:35-21:37
224	Luke - F -Narrowness & loud voice,	Luke 21:38-24:52
225	Luke addresses a Greek,	Acts 1:1
226	"we"	Acts 20:15 (Sect D/10)
227	"Only Luke is with me"	2 Tim 4:11
228	Upset crowd followed cross	Luke 23:27 (Sect F/6)
229	Living Word,	Acts 12:24, (Sect.C/2)
230	Multiple voices and Living Word,	Acts 15:30-20:32, (Sect. D)
231	Many mansions,	John 14:2 (Sect. D/Step 1/4)
232	Guidance by the Spirit,	Acts 2:4, (Sect.A/3)
233	Imagery of an egg	Luke 11:12 (Sect C/8)
234	Imagery of a seed	Acts 13:23 (Sect C/3)
235	Section on Living Word	Acts 15:30-20-32 (Sect D)
236	Mark shows Jesus c/f King David,	Mark 8:26, (Sect.A/5)
237	Jonathan, son of King Saul,	1 Samuel Chapter 20
238	"it shall not be taken from her"	Luke 10:38-42 (Sect C/4)
239	John - Section A,	John 1:1-18
240	John - Section B,	John 1:19-5:47
241	John - Section C,	John 6:1-12:50
242	John - Section D,	John 13:1-17:26
243	John - Section E,	John 18:1-20:30
244	Center of concentric circle	John 6:19-21 (Sect C/3)
245	Mark's ointment woman,	Mark 14:3-9, (Sect.D/14)
246	Matthew's ointment woman,	Mtt 26:6-16, (Sect.F/2)
247	Luke's ointment woman,	Luke 7:36-8:2, (Sect.B/3)
248	Mary anointed feet,	John 11:1, (Sect.C/2)
249	"sin no more"	John 8:11 (SectC7)
250	John identifies himself,	John 20:20,24, (Sect. F)
251	"and I , if I am lifted up...	John 12:32 (Sect C/9)

Part Four

Secrets Buried Through Omission

Above references for the novelette *Bethany* show the extent to which this story fits with the gospel texts and their background. The story may conflict with some tradition but this does not mean it is wrong. Indeed a look at the texts and tradition show that some established and time-worn ideas have flimsy textual evidence to support them. In fact at times the textual evidence contradicts them. With a reversion to the correct gospel names, some of these conflicts between the text and tradition are shown below.

The *Reality Search* Analysis is being used in this expose. The analysis sets out an overall plan-sketch for the gospels. The very fact such an underlying structure can be shown suggests a general outline for the gospels was drawn up by Church leadership before the texts were written. The analysis and recent discoveries show some things were deliberately left out, probably to avoid a bigger internal rift in the Church and to avoid greater persecution from outside of it. However a problem with "burying" facts fairly crucial to the story of Jesus has been that these facts would not necessarily be uncovered for a long time afterwards. Interpretations and presentations of Jesus' story and teaching over the centuries would be affected by a lack of background information. Consider:

1. An Overall Structure

Given the political insecurity and instability of the emerging group it would have been unwise to advertise that

the canonical books of the Church provided an underlying critique of both Judaism and the philosophy of the Roman Empire. People over the years have assumed that there must be some sort of internal gospel structure. But this, and therefore the intent of the writers, has remained obscure. Some attempts to clarify a structure have been made, e.g. the Jerusalem Bible, from the 1960's has provided paragraph headings. But the headings here do not give any explanation as to why the paragraphs are placed in their final order. Also there is **no demonstration of connection between paragraphs** within a gospel or across the gospels. In other cases there have been presentations that connect paragraphs together in terms of content, for example under a heading of "discourses". But such a heading does not explain the content of the "discourses". Nor does this heading show a connection with an underlying line of logic reaching across a single gospel and across all the gospels and the book *Acts of the Apostles*.

Early in the history of the Church, but after the texts were written, these were broken up into tiny fragments of **chapters and verses**, effectively sentence by sentence. But these divisions have little if any connection to the intent of the writers or to the content of the text. A Chapter/verse structure for the gospels presents a two-dimensional rather than a three-dimensional view of the life and teaching of Jesus. Why? All verses are 'equal' so there is little if any scope for prioritisation of points made.

Even the presentation of the Gospels in **Church liturgies cut up the texts** so that readings can fit into five or so minutes. In the late C20th, liturgical changes were made so most of the texts could be covered sequentially. This has

helped Scriptural understanding. But in the first years of the gospel, with an original structure, groups of people could listen to a whole Gospel Section as they sat around doing manual tasks. This was before the underlying structure of the gospels was submerged. At the time the shorter passages were grouped together under larger, comprehensive headings which themselves built from one heading to the next.

How was it the original structure was lost? According to *Reality Search* it wasn't. The structure was embedded into the text so it would not be lost. But references to this structure could have been deliberately destroyed or hidden. Over centuries, because an overall structure for the gospels was not available, text interpretation has been difficult. Some people have relied on ecclesiastical authorities to supervise interpretations. Others have relied on the controls of scholarship with its advantages, limitations and fashions. Others again have relied on the ideas of smaller groups and individual readers. Unfortunately for other people again, the texts have been ignored as being out of date, irrelevant or incomprehensible.

The lack of an overall structure has also obscured the extent to which writers set up a deliberate bias towards the feminine. There is a structural stress on the female figure of Wisdom in Matthew. There is a structural stress on family-friendly community in Luke.

2. Mention of the Essene Sect

Luke's book of *Acts* shows that members of a so-called "Nazarene sect" were trying to take over the mainstream of the early Church.²⁵² They claimed Christianity was only

meant for people who had been initiated into Judaism and who practised Jewish law ²⁵³ They exercised an "idealised" version of this. ²⁵⁴ People at the time knew that some of the language and rituals of Christianity could be traced back to the Essene Sect rather than to mainstream Judaism. Church leaders knew that mention of a possible connection between Jesus and the Essenes would only **reinforce the claim that Christianity was an off-shoot of the Essenes** and only destined for the Jews. So they left such references out.

While it is understandable why gospel writers deliberately made this omission, ²⁵⁵ it is doubtful that they realised that the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. would virtually eliminate these people from history altogether. Essene writings were not recovered and fully published until the 1990's. ²⁵⁶

The loss of this relevant part of 1st Jewish history has weakened Church claims that Jesus Christ was a human being who came from a human, historical background and it was against this background that his ideas evolved.

3. Causes and results of a Family Rift

The rift within Jesus' family, is mentioned several times in the gospel texts ²⁵⁷ and also shows up in the *Reality Search* analysis, for example in its paragraph pairing. ²⁵⁸ Tradition tends to gloss over this rift, especially because of devotion to Mary, Jesus' mother. But information about a possible **Essene background throws light on such family tension**. For instance Jesus' statements on his return to Nazareth about his intention to pick up people who had been cursed and excluded (from such a sect) are given an historical context. So also are the reactions against him. ²⁵⁹

Over the centuries a clearer knowledge of a family rift background and its causes could have made the figure of Mary, mother of Jesus, more realistic, less romanticized and more acceptable to all.

In the 1st century C.E. there were many sects with constant critiques and assessments between them. Comparison between the teachings and practices of Essenes and the teachings of Jesus shows an apparent influence from this Sect. For instance he refers to an apparently established custom of people choosing to be eunuchs.²⁶⁰ Comparisons on these lines would also show why he was likely to be moving away both from such a sect and his extended family. It explains why he would be **looking for an alternative family base** both for himself and for his mother. This in turn shows his reliance on a beloved disciple.

4. Clarification about the Nazarene Sect

Mention of the Nazarene Sect in two references appears to be only touched upon in the book of *Acts*.²⁶¹ Yet much of this book is taken up with a conflict between people called Jews and the new Apostle Paul. It is likely that Luke the writer was referring to members of the Nazarene Sect (or people of the same ilk) when he says "Jews". In the view of the real leadership and these people themselves they were still Jews, even if they claimed to be Christian converts and part of the community. In the *Reality Search* analysis Jesus apparently walks away from such "Jews" in Section C of John's gospel. Historically, mainstream Jews have been blamed for such conflict.

5. Two Incompatible Communities

The structure of the gospels and the central theme of the book of *Acts* presents an effort to blend a Judaic, law-based society with the Greek model of a society based upon order. But arguably no direct mention is made of this central subject. The first society leans heavily on the sense of time. The second leans heavily on the sense of place. In this sense the two societies are radically different. The main players in the book of *Acts* find out that these two societies are arguably incompatible.

The letters of Paul talk of making "the Jews and Gentiles one people."²⁶² But even he appears to admit that a complete fusion of the two societies could never really happen. In his own personal experience he gave up on the Jews and focused on the Gentiles.²⁶³

The gospels aim to bring the two societies into a complementary dialogue with each other. But in the two millennia of the Christian Church there has been little mention of a gospel aim to bring two different societies into a complementary dialogue rather than a fusion.

6. Knowledge of Greek Philosophy

The gospels and *Acts* show Greeks coming to hear the message of Jesus.²⁶⁴ Later they came in great numbers to the Apostles.²⁶⁵ But there is no direct admission that Apostles, writers and early Christian communities, were themselves interested in Greek philosophy. In fact these people were incorporating this into the structure of the church and into its theology. Despite the lack of a text reference, one can assume that Paul the famous scholar,

would have studied Greek philosophy at some depth - out of curiosity if nothing else. Luke, a man of the Gentile world, would also have been familiar with this philosophy. The fact that the gospel texts are written in Greek, rather than Aramaic, Hebrew or Latin show that the writers had studied the **Greek language and must have been familiar with Greek ideas.**

The *Reality Search* structure shows that in Luke's gospel there is a continuum line that stretches from points about democracy (c/f Aristotle) into paragraphs about totalitarianism (c/f Plato). Yet there is little recognition that these two Greek social systems are two sides of the same coin. They are both based on a sense of dualism between spirit and matter. Luke realised this.

In the book of *Acts* Paul showed that he knew about Plato's "Philosopher Ruler". This Ruler assessed the purity of a society and he moulded it according to the blue print of Plato's *Republic*. Such a ruler in fact re-occurs in history, insofar as any individual achieves the same kind of influence over the same kind of society. Plato's ruler has a pervading presence in his society which is "like an individual writ large".

In the book of *Acts* when Paul visited Athens he drew parallels between the Greek "Philosopher Ruler" and the Essene "Teacher of Righteousness" (a term not found in mainstream Judaism). He said there was a universal need for repentance because someone had been chosen by God to judge the world according to its "righteousness:²⁶⁶ This person had an on-going and pervading presence, in a way like Plato's Philosopher Ruler, - "In him we live, and move

and have our being" In the case of this person his presence was on-going because God had raised him from the dead.

When Paul made mention of a resurrection the Greeks scoffed.²⁶⁷ But in his comparison he demonstrated in Athens an eagerness to understand Greek thinking that went beyond learning and using the Greek language. He was trying to incorporate Greek philosophical ideas about social construction into his own theology.

The Greeks in Athens demonstrated their realization that he was trying to do this. They gave Paul surely one of the greatest of ironic epithets to be found in Scripture because they called him an "Ignorant Plagiarist"!²⁶⁸

Omission in traditional church teaching about Greek influence obscures the extent to which Luke used Aristotle's key concepts. These involved the potentiality of 'matter' as such. Such an approach contradicted the position of Plato who thought of matter (and art) as being removed from 'Truth' and something to be despised.²⁶⁹ Like Aristotle, Luke in his gospel uses the image of an egg²⁷⁰ as potentially life-giving. He also develops the image of potential life in a seed.²⁷¹ Again he images persons as a receptacle, such as a container or a house.²⁷² In the book of *Acts* Luke develops the concept of the living "Word" which can be given and received.²⁷³

His evolution of imagery provides a crucial lead-up to the claims that are made in the gospel of John when Jesus Christ is identified with Living Authority²⁷⁴ and the Living Word.²⁷⁵ There is a step-by-step progression in John's gospel towards the sense of a 'cosmic Christ'. A better understanding of this over centuries would have helped

people understand how their own destiny is tied up with that of the planet.

7. **Greek Philosophy as Integral to the Gospel**

A look at Essene idealism in their practice of Law, shows a **link between the morality of the Jews and the idealism of the Greeks.** The Christian message inherited such a link. But as Western civilization developed scholars were unable to trace the link back to its origins. Besides being cut off from knowledge about the Essenes, the Church was for centuries cut off from knowledge of the Greeks. How so?

The early Church considered it was so removed from the paganism of the Greeks, that it destroyed Greek manuscripts. After Christianity became the Roman Empire's State religion it had the power to do this. Centuries of the Middle Ages went by. Eventually at the time of the crusades, Greek manuscripts were re-discovered in the Islamic world. Then Aquinas, a Dominican monk, wrote a philosophical structure for the church based upon the writings of Aristotle. At first, some Church authorities objected to Aquinas' reliance upon a "pagan" framework. But Aquinas pointed out to them that St Augustine, the great architect of the Church in the Middle Ages, had in fact based his writings upon Plato. The re-discovery of Greek manuscripts helped to trigger the end of the Middle Ages and the start of the Renaissance period round C13th.

One might say "and the rest is history." But the extent to which Greek philosophy constitutes the very structure of Luke's gospel for instance, is still scarcely considered. Further, Luke's book of *Acts* shows how the early Church

was trying to break out of a Judaic mould for the Church and take on a Greek one.

The role of the book of *Acts* in developing concepts into themes for John's gospel is also under-rated.

8. The Scandal of a Family Elopement

If **Mary, sister of Lazarus**, eloped with a non-Jew then the scandal of this would have continued into the years of the early Church and beyond. Some cultures would still be scandalised by it. The first three gospel writers recognised the key role of "the ointment woman", because it was Jesus' forgiveness of her that led to the crucifixion. But the writers did not mention who the woman was. According to Luke she was a "sinner from the city"²⁷⁶ After talking about her, Luke goes on to refer to Mary Magdalen "who had had seven devils".²⁷⁷ The two figures tended to become merged and for some people, a 'consort' tradition developed to the extent of claiming that it was Mary Magdalen who was the "beloved disciple".

John the writer of the fourth gospel, tried to set the facts straight by showing that Jesus' connection to the ointment woman was that of an 'adoptive' brother.²⁷⁸ John later added in the story of a woman taken in adultery.²⁷⁹ There could be two main reasons for this addition. Firstly it reinforces Jesus' connection here as an adoptive brother. Even today in Middle Eastern countries, a brother is required to stone his wayward sister. Secondly in the scene, Jesus tells the woman to go and "sin no more". In other words John is letting the reader know Jesus did not condone the woman's behaviour. Some people may have thought that he did, given that he forgave her. John (and Lazarus) omits to say

that the woman taken in adultery was Mary, sister of Lazarus. But a reason for this could be that he is addressing readers in the present who knew of the connection and John, as Mary's brother, would not want to shame her for perpetuity.

John also adds in the story about the encounter between Mary Magdalen and Jesus after he came back from the dead.²⁸⁰ Here Mary Magdalen is presented as someone who is desperately grateful to Jesus for putting her life back on track, rather than someone who was his life partner.²⁸¹ As compared with modern times, the relationship presented is more like that of psychologist and client.

However despite the efforts of John, tradition has continued to contradict his testimony that it was Mary, sister of Lazarus who was the woman who washed Jesus feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. The scandal of an elopement has remained hidden. Therefore the "cutting edge" of Jesus' endorsement of a woman's right of self-determination (and anyone's) so long as this is not at the expense of others, is largely lost.

9. Family Connections of Lazarus

If, as is possible "the other disciple" who brought Peter into the court yard of the High Priest was Lazarus and Lazarus belonged to one of the ruling families in Judaism, then any elopement by his sister would outrage the High Priests. It seems that Ananias had particular resentment against Jesus and his followers. The Jewish Council had decided to leave off persecution of the Christians and, when Paul arrived at Rome under loose house arrest, he discovered that the Jews in Jerusalem had not sent on any messages of complaint

about him. Yet Ananias and the other chief priests continued to conspire with the leaders of "Jews against Paul" to have him eliminated. It seems there was a personal grudge here, that could have been connected with Mary's (fits with the text) elopement. Such connections could have put some people off owning the connection between Lazarus and Jesus.

10. The Code of: "abstain from blood, fornication and strangling"

The Apostles and Paul claimed that the Christian message is a fulfillment of the law of Moses. This is especially an underlying theme in John's gospel.²⁸² But one could wonder exactly **how did the "way" of the Christians fulfil the Mosaic law?** When an ideological approach is taken to the Commandments, one can view these in terms of direction rather than prescription. When Mark wrote Section C of his gospel, he showed how Jesus "honed in" on the three social Commandments about killing, adultery and stealing.²⁸³ Then Jesus "raised the bar" of their practice by saying, "Go sell what you have and give to the poor and come follow me." When the Apostles, Church elders and "all the Church" came together to pronounce an edict for the far-flung Churches, a similar approach was taken.

With the help of the *Reality Search* analysis, it can be seen the formula they adopted in the book of *Acts*, from James (son of Alphaeus, second in command), was parallel to the end of Mark's Section C. The leaders recalled here the same three Commandments that Jesus used, and in a modest way they 'raised the bar' of their practice. But they did this in the form of a code. How so? Christians in

distant lands were challenged to avoid blood (c/f not just killing but blood sports) fornication (c/f not just adultery but sex without commitment) and strangling (c/f not just stealing but unfair business practices). And, that was all they had to do. ²⁸⁴

To some people the statement would have appeared to be about avoiding pagan sacrifices. They probably wondered why the statement was made with such formality by the Church leaders and then written up and repeated in the book of *Acts* in the same way. But historically it seems the "whole church" endorsed what was said without fully realising how much was said. Otherwise it is hard to believe "the whole church" would have accepted that "this was all they had to do."

Recall that a large number Church members, invited to a vow ceremony, were later involved in a Temple riot that erupted when Paul told them he had been sent by God to people outside of Judaism. Also, there was constant criticism of Paul by people both within and beyond Jerusalem because he did not require converts to become Jews first of all. It is hard to believe how **all** these people (as claimed in the text) would have endorsed the bare requirements set out by the Apostles. Rather they must have thought it only applied to pagan sacrifices.

Over history, most of the readers of *Acts* would have assumed the same thing. Without an overall structure for *Acts* and because in the text there was no obvious deciphering of James' formula, its significance has been largely lost.

An off-shoot of this has been a failure to directly link the three key social Commandments with the essence of Christianity. For instance people who take the three vows of 'Poverty, Chastity and Obedience' in Religious Life can themselves, fail to see a connection between these vows and the 5th, 6th and 7th Commandments. Even so, their vows do entail an avoidance of stealing (through the vow of poverty), avoidance of adultery (through the vow of chastity) and an avoidance of destroying the self-determination of others (through the vow of obedience). Failure to see such a connection can result in failure to see people with these religious vows as being at the very "heart" of the church, (as the Church claims). Rather, they can be side-lined as being both irrelevant and out-of-date.

11. A Comprehensive Picture

It may be claimed that it is unlikely two billion Christians and centuries of study could show ignorance of:

- an overall structure and underlying line of logic for the gospels and *Acts*
- links between the Essene Sect and Christian origins
- the causes of Jesus' family dysfunction
- the existence of two incompatible world views within Christianity
- a Sect of Jews that nearly took control of the early Church
- the reliance of Christianity on the Greek concept of potentiality
- the reliance of Christianity on a Greek social structure
- the scandal of an elopement in Jesus' adopted family
- the essence of Christianity and "raising the bar" of the 5th, 6th and 7th Commandments

- the extent to which Christianity has promoted and still promotes the spread of Greek philosophy, with its two sides of democracy and totalitarianism.

"Holes" in Christian tradition however, become more apparent when one takes a closer look at the identity of the "Beloved Disciple".

12. The Beloved Disciple and Tradition

Tradition has assumed that the "beloved disciple" was the Apostle John. In fact a major Church Feast Day on 27 December commemorates John as Apostle and Evangelist.

- An early tradition claims that the writer of the fourth gospel was called John. In the text this writer in turn claims to be the beloved disciple, hence the connection.
- The fourth gospel was obviously written by someone who knew Jesus well. John, brother of James, was ranked by Jesus as number three amongst the chosen twelve and his brother James was number two. Peter, James and John were invited to key events in the life of Jesus ²⁸⁵ and some teaching was specifically for them. ²⁸⁶ As an apparently younger brother, it has been thought that John the Apostle was unmarried like Jesus. Therefore it was more natural for him to lean his head back onto the breast of Jesus at the last supper to ask, as the beloved disciple and at the behest of Peter, who the betrayer was. ²⁸⁷

- It has also been assumed that John brother of James was young enough to live on and write the fourth gospel, which was meant as a summary overview of the Church's direction into the future.
- When Jesus rose from the dead it could be assumed that 'the other disciple' who ran to the tomb with Peter would be Jesus' best friend. In terms of the text, it has been assumed that the younger person, his best friend, reached the tomb first and stood back for Peter the senior, to enter.
- In the early Church and later as far as some people were concerned, including Church leaders, having the Apostle John as both the beloved disciple and writer of the fourth gospel also meant that other possible claimants to the title of beloved disciple could be crossed off. As far as Mary Magdalen was concerned, any claim to the title of 'beloved disciple' would always be rejected by scholars. For a start, given the social milieu etc of the time, it was unlikely that the Magdalen as a woman, was also a gospel writer. In any case there are specific statements about this disciple being a "him"²⁸⁸ and after the resurrection John shows her in a conversation with "the one whom Jesus loved". Again it would be an unbelievable journey for the Magdalen to go from someone having "seven devils"²⁸⁹ to being the writer of such a sophisticated work of theology and literature. On the other hand another contender for the title could be Lazarus. Over the centuries the idea of Lazarus being the beloved disciple has been "fobbed off" with

questions such as "When did Jesus get the chance to become a close friend of someone who lived at Bethany, a considerable distance from Nazareth?" True, there are indications of a special bond between Jesus and Lazarus c/f "the one whom you love is ill." ²⁹⁰ But Jesus, it could be asserted, loved everyone.

- Another question could be "If Lazarus was so special why was he not invited to be an Apostle?"
- There are further, more likely reason(s) for the idea of Lazarus as beloved disciple, to be dismissed. John's gospel says the woman (and there was only one) who poured ointment over Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair, was Mary the sister of Lazarus. Yet Luke says this same ointment woman was a "sinner from the city". ²⁹¹ An obvious question is "How could someone with a sister described as "a sinner from the city" also be the beloved disciple?"
- Also, as is possible, Lazarus was "the other disciple" who admitted Peter to the inner court yard of the High Priest, then it was also likely he had family connections to the High Priest. Yet Caiaphas, the High Priest at the time, was the prime mover in putting Jesus to death. Furthermore Ananias, a later High Priest with similar family connections, appeared to be on a personal vendetta. He and other high priests colluded with "the leaders of the Jews against Paul" who in turn were connected with the "believing Jews who were also zealots" (and against Paul). They thereby played an active role in

attempts to undermine the authority of the Apostles and to kill Paul. Historically, as the decades passed and people fell into a "them and us" way of thinking, Lazarus was too closely associated with "them" to be considered as being at the heart of "us".

- The tradition about John the Apostle also being the beloved disciple and fourth gospel writer is well established. No doubt. But tradition has by-passed a whole range of **textual difficulties** with this claim. On the other hand, the same texts fit with any such claim being made on behalf of Lazarus!

Textual Difficulties

1. The texts of the gospels show that the **best friend of John the Apostle was his brother James**.²⁹² Jesus shows recognition of this when he fondly calls the two men "sons of thunder".²⁹³

2. Regarding the question "When did Jesus get the chance to become close friends with Lazarus?" A closer look at the gospel shows this possibility. Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem each year and over time they could have found that lodgings at **Bethany**, near Jerusalem, were quite suitable. They could continue the custom of staying there. During Jesus' public life he stayed there on visits to Jerusalem, apparently as the **follow-through of an established custom**.²⁹⁴ In the fourth gospel Jesus was walking along at Bethany, near where his cousin John the Baptist was preaching. Jesus then invited people to "come and see" where he was living. In other words he was living

in the same village of Bethany as Lazarus²⁹⁵ though not to the extent of having his own house there. Otherwise his mother would be living there as well.

3. **John the Apostle** lived by the sea of Galilee, also a distance from Nazareth. He would have been preoccupied with his brother James, their father Zebedee and their **fishing business**.²⁹⁶ The gospel says Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem each year. It does not mention they regularly went to the sea of Galilee. So the question about time to become the beloved disciple actually applies to John the Apostle, brother of James.

4. Jesus as a boy stayed on in the Jerusalem Temple to ask the scholars there questions that amazed them.²⁹⁷ The picture is given of a boy who is keen to learn and people ready to help him. It hardly makes sense for such an incident to be recorded as a one-off event. Rather Jesus was establishing contacts in the Temple where he would return each year. If he stayed **with a Bethany family he could keep up this kind of education**, while retaining a low profile and continuing to live in Nazareth. There is an ancient tradition that Mary, Jesus' mother, received a Temple education herself. A Feast Day on 21 November commemorates this. If such was the case she would probably appreciate an arrangement in which Jesus was given a similar grounding.

5. The temperament of the two brothers, James and John, may have been effective in terms of enthusiasm and the leadership of others. But **one would wonder** whether either of them were **qualified to earn the title of "beloved disciple."** For instance when a village rejected Jesus and

the disciples, the two brothers asked Jesus to rain down fire and brimstone down upon it as punishment. ²⁹⁸ Later on, after all the efforts Jesus had made teaching his disciples about the Kingdom, the two brothers asked their mother to approach him and ask if one could be put on his right and the other on his left hand when he came into his Kingdom (c/f a political state). The other disciples were rightly angry about this. Jesus then contrasted the disposition of these two brothers with that of a child "Unless you become as this little child" ²⁹⁹ In other words neither of them qualified as yet, as a Christian 'type' and, one can only assume, as the 'beloved disciple.' Arguing went on right up to the time of the crucifixion. ³⁰⁰ So again, when did the apostle John have time to become the 'beloved disciple'?

6 In the gospel story, after Jesus is arrested, Peter and 'another disciple' follow. Again one could assume the second person was Jesus' best friend. The other disciple asks the woman at the gate of the High Priest's court yard to allow Peter to come in. ³⁰¹ In the court yard Peter is recognised as someone involved in the public ministry of Jesus. ³⁰² Also his accent is also recognised as Galilean. ³⁰³ But the **disciple with him is part of the High Priest's circle.** If this 'other disciple' was the Apostle John he could not have brought a friend into the inner courtyard. He would also have been recognised as publicly involved in Jesus' ministry and with the accent of a Galilean. On the other hand given that the Jewish priesthood was family based, it fits that the 'other disciple' being referred to was a relative of the High Priest, and a member of a ruling family. ³⁰⁴ As such he would himself have been a Jewish priest. The location of Lazarus' home at Bethany would suit such a person.

7. When Jesus rose from the dead, Peter and 'the other' disciple ran to the grave to see what had happened.³⁰⁵ Again one would expect Jesus' best friend to run to the grave with Peter. But if the other person was John the Apostle then why didn't the writer simply say so? John the Apostle was a leader, chosen by Jesus, and his leadership role here, as elsewhere, would surely be recognized. On the other hand why would John the Apostle be going to the grave without James, given that in the gospels the two are practically inseparable? The story says the 'other disciple' reached Jesus' empty grave first but then waited for Peter to enter it first. If this person was John the Apostle why record such a gesture between two men who had been living and camping out together for the past two or three years? On the other hand if Jesus' best friend and 'beloved disciple' was from somewhere else (such as Bethany), and of high social standing, and if the followers of Jesus did not know him very well, then it would be important to record a **sign of his deference to Peter's authority**. This was especially so after Peter's denial of Jesus.

8. The gospel of Matthew records that when Jesus was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane all of his disciples fled.³⁰⁶ Peter followed, then out of fear claimed he did not know Jesus. In contrast to others, the **beloved disciple stood at the foot of the cross** the next day and he took on the responsibility of caring for Jesus' mother. It seems there was something about his persona that would make both soldiers and a hostile crowd baulk at touching him, which would be the case if he had recently come back from the dead. The Jewish leadership, on the other hand, who had been talking about killing Lazarus because of his new status as a person risen from the dead, would have

been glad to have him share in the humiliation of a crucifixion.³⁰⁷

9. It seems that the **beloved disciple** at the foot of the cross was **not readily identifiable** as being part of the mission of Jesus. Some people may have recognised this person as Lazarus. But this did not mean he was a public disciple. There were many people who had been cured by Jesus and this did not automatically make them public disciples.

10. As mentioned above the text says the **disciples** (at least the public ones) **all fled**. This would be another reason why it was unlikely that John the Apostle was standing at the foot of the cross.

11. If the beloved disciple was a priest, he would realise the significance of the sacrifice of crucifixion and would want to take part in it. To the extent that he and others realised that Jesus had triggered his own betrayal and crucifixion to **pre-empt the killing of** his followers, for a start **Lazarus**, then the "sacrifice" dimension of the crucifixion would be all the more underlined. It would be carried over into the theology of the Church. c/f "greater love no one has than to lay down his life for his friend."³⁰⁸

12. John's Ch 21 tells of an encounter between Jesus and his inner circle of disciples by the sea. The sons of Zebedee are mentioned. Also present are two other disciples. Then **a disciple**, (the beloved disciple, and apparently not a son of Zebedee) recognizes Jesus.

13. Luke the writer says that Jesus' **final place of farewell was at Bethany**.³⁰⁹ Why here? Apparently it was

because it was his favourite place, his home. It was, arguably, where his mother and his adopted family were living. Also this place would now be central to the emerging community.

14. Jesus foretold that the brothers **James and John would suffer his own fate** (of a premature death?). James the brother of John was killed off soon after Jesus.³¹⁰ In such case it was likely that the prediction of Jesus³¹¹ was recorded because both gospel writers and readers knew that the two brothers did indeed suffer the same fate of Jesus.

15. Is there direct textual evidence that John the Apostle died early? Within the story of *Acts* there is mention of Peter and John. Further along in the story there is only Peter. There is mention of James (not the brother of John) and the elders in Council but no mention of John. But if John (the Apostle) had been killed off then why didn't *Acts* record this? An answer is that it might have confused a complex situation further. As the story in *Acts* moves on, James is leading the effort to prevent a schism between Jewish converts (c/f the Nazarene Sect) and Gentile converts. If Peter is presented as being isolated from Jesus' number three disciple as well as his number two, then **it could be thought that Peter had been nudged out** of the leadership position altogether. Such an impression could be supported by his readiness to follow a warning from James not to eat with the Gentiles. In following this suggestion he went against:

- a vision he had had about eating with Gentiles³¹²
- his own public pronouncement - baptism (and equality) should be available to all³¹³
- an agreement made about Paul's mission³¹⁴

In the midst of Jerusalem tension it may have been preferable to give the impression that James was leader. But this was not meant for perpetuity. In any case, in the far-flung communities Peter was still considered leader. Otherwise Paul would not have bothered to confront him. The result of a complex situation could be that John the Apostle did have an early death but Luke omitted the death from the story. It might be said that John fled towards a missionary life along with others when there was persecution in Jerusalem. But the text says the Apostles remained in Jerusalem (at this stage in the story).³¹⁵

16. In *Acts* Peter clearly states the Apostles are too busy preaching the Word to be looking after widows.³¹⁶ So **why would Jesus be asking an Apostle** such as John to provide a secure home for his mother Mary? Lazarus on the other hand now had a stable family and a secure home at Bethany. He also retained some family status amongst Jews in general and therefore some protection from them. When the Jewish leadership took Gamaliel's advice to leave the early Church alone, Lazarus' position became relatively safe. Also, if as it seems Mary, mother of Jesus, was familiar with Bethany then she was more likely to settle in where people knew what she had been through.

17. If John, brother of James and a fisherman from Galilee did write the fourth gospel, how did he acquire such a sophisticated **understanding of Jewish festivals** and the Temple system of worship as shown in this gospel?³¹⁷ On the other hand such themes and details fit with the extended training of a high-ranking priest which can fit with Lazarus.

18. One could also wonder, where John the Apostle who failed to have an even basic understanding of the Kingdom of Jesus, could develop the depth of understanding and **knowledge of crafted Greek** to be able to write the fourth gospel. True, after Pentecost people asked where did the Apostles, obviously unlettered men, acquire such an ability to speak out in public. They even claimed they were drunk in doing so. ³¹⁸ But giving a one-off, inspired, public address was not the same as writing one of the most complex and greatest literary works of all time.

19 The fourth gospel mentions a **rumour** that the **apostle John would never die?** ³¹⁹ If the writer of this gospel had in fact been raised from the dead, such a rumour would understandably persist. If it happened at the present time there would still be people around to spread such a rumour.

20. The writer of the fourth gospel claims to have been the "beloved disciple" and his text explores the identity of Jesus. It is appropriate for such a person to have been involved with Jesus and his message from early in life. Also, for someone to measure up to the status of being the "beloved disciple", one could expect this person was a unique type of thinker and scholar in their own right. In the case of Lazarus, he and Jesus shared such a bond of friendship that Jesus **could call him back from the dead** four days after he was dead and buried.

21 Given the key role of "the Beloved Disciple", one could expect the gospel text to clearly state that Jesus loved this person. There is no such statement about this sort of

love between Jesus and John the Apostle. On the other hand the sisters of Lazarus send Jesus the message "The **one whom you love is ill**".³²⁰ After his death Jesus weeps openly and the bystanders say "See how he loved him."³²¹ Again there is the statement "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and her brother Lazarus."³²² Also Luke presents a domestic scene in Bethany. Martha, like an older sister and apparently familiar with Jesus being present, is tactfully chiding him for distracting Mary from the house work.³²³

22. Given all the textual evidence to support the possibility that Lazarus was the beloved disciple, then the traditional omission of his name from discussion on this subject, in itself suggests a cover-up. There are **issues**, also suggested in the text, that **would have to be confronted** if Lazarus were to be accepted as beloved disciple. People have instead veered off towards the more comfortable alternative of John the Apostle being this person and some have even proposed Mary Magdalen.

23. Tradition claims that John the Apostle must have been the 'beloved disciple' because he had the traditional name of the fourth gospel writer. But things could be the other way round. Lazarus could have been called John because his friendship with Jesus reminded people of the friendship that existed between King David and Jonathan, son of King Saul.³²⁴ Later on, if people wanted to know about the friendship that existed between Jesus and Lazarus then they could read up on the story of **King David and Jonathan**.

The name of John was meant to be in itself, a clarification.

END NOTES

252	Complaints 'everywhere' re "sect"	Acts 28:22 (Sect F/4)
253	Riot in Temple re outreach to Gentiles	Acts 22:21 (Sect E/5)
254	10,000 'believers'/ Zealots after Paul	Acts 21:20 (Sect E/3)
255	References to Essenes omitted	
	<i>New Catholic Encyclopedia</i> <u>Op.Cit.</u>	
256	Essene writings published 1990's	<u>Ibid.</u>
257	Rift within family of Jesus	John 7:3 (Sect C/5)
258	Rift shown within gospel structure	John 2:12 & 4:53 (Sect B/4)
259	Jesus thrown out of Nazareth	Luke 4:29 (Sect A/4)
260	Eunuchs for sake of kingdom	Mtt 19:12 (Sect E/1)
261	Nazarene Sect reference	Acts 24:5 (Sect E/9)
262	Jews and gentiles one people	! Cor 12:13
263	Paul gave up on the Jews	Acts 18:6, (Sect D/7)
264	Greeks to hear Jesus	John 12:21 (Sect C/8)
265	Greater numbers to Apostles	Acts 11:20-21 (Sect B/9)
266	"righteousness" c/f Paul	Acts 17:31 (Sect D/6)
267	Greeks scoffed	Acts 17:32 (Sect D/6)
268	"Ignorant plagiarist"	Acts 17:18 (Sect D/6)
269	Art removed from truth	Plato <i>The Republic</i> Penguin, Part X
270	Image of egg - Luke	Luke 11:12 (Sect C/8)
271	Image of a seed	Luke 8:11 (Sect B/4)
272	Martha received him into her house	Luke 10:38 (Sect C/7)
273	Noble people received Word	Acts 17:11 (Sect D/5)
274	Jesus living authority	John 1:19-5:47 (Sect B)
275	Jesus living word	John 6:1-12:50 (Sect C)
276	Luke - "sinner from the city"	Luke 7:37 (Sect B/3)
277	Mary Magdalen, seven devils	Luke 8:2 (Sect B/4)
278	Jesus "brother" to ointment woman?	John 11:6 (Sect C/2)
279	Jesus "brother" to woman taken in adultery?	John 8:4-11 (Sect C/7)
280	Post-resurrection encounter	John 20:16 (Sect E/10)
281	The Magdalen desperately grateful	John 20:17 (Sect E/10)
282	Fulfillment of law of Moses	c/f John 7:23 (Sect C/6)
283	Killing, adultery, stealing	Mark 10:19 (Sect C/19)
284	This is all they have to do	Acts 15:28 (Sect C/7)
285	Peter, James and John invited	Mark 13:3 (Sect D/12)
286	Message for Peter, James and John	Mark 14:34 (Sect D/12)
287	Who is the betrayer?	John 13:25 (Sect D/1,ii)
288	Beloved disciple a "him"	John 13:24 (Sect D/1,ii)
289	Mary Magdalen had seven devils	Luke 8:2 (Sect B/4)

End Notes

- 290 "the one whom you love is ill" Luke 11:3 (Sect C/2)
- 291 Ointment woman a sinner from city Luke 7:37 (Sect B/3)
- 292 John's best friend was James Mark 3:17 (Sect A/2)
- 293 "sons of thunder" Ibid.
- 294 Jesus' custom to stay at Bethany John 12:1 (Sect C/6)
- 295 Jesus living at Bethany John 1:38-9 (Sect B/2)
- 296 Apostle John from fishing business Mtt 4:21 (Sect A)
- 297 Jesus in Temple asking questions Luke 1:47 (Sect A/1)
- 298 Request for fire on village Luke 9:54 (Sect C/1)
- 299 Request for places on right & left Mark 10:37 (Sect D/2)
- 300 Immaturity up to crucifixion Mark 10:32,35 (Sect D/1,2)
- 301 Request to bring Peter into court yard John 18:16 (Sect E/3)
- 302 Peter from public ministry of Jesus John 18:26 (Sect E/3)
- 303 Peter with Galilean accent Luke 22:59 (Sect F/4)
- 304 Other disciple part of ruling family Acts 4:6 (Sect A/5)
- 305 Peter and 'other disciple run to grave John 20:4 (Sect E/10)
- 306 All the disciples fled Mtt 26:56 (Sect F/10)
- 307 Humiliation of a crucifixion Luke 23:23 (Sect F/5)
- 308 "Greater love no man has" John 15:13 (Sect D/2/3)
- 309 Bethany, final place of farewell Luke 24:50 (Sect F/9)
- 310 James, brother of John, killed Acts 12:2 (Sect C/1)
- 311 "You will drink from the same cup" Mark 10:39 (Sect D/2)
- 312 Peter's vision eating with Gentiles Acts 10:11 (Sect B/7)
- 313 Baptism to be available to all Acts 10:48 (Sect B/7)
- 314 Peter preach to Jews, Paul to Gentiles Galatians 2:7
- 315 Apostles stay on in Jerusalem Acts 8:1 (Sect B/1)
- 316 Apostles too busy for widows Acts 5:2 (Sect A/9)
- 317 Understanding of Jewish festivals John 3:14 (Sect B/6)
- 318 unlettered men Acts 2:13 (Sect A/3)
- 319 Rumour re never to die John 21:23 (Sect F)
- 320 "The one whom you love.." John 11:3 (Sect C/2)
- 321 "See how he loved him" John 11:36 (Sect C/3)
- 322 "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus"
John 11:5 (Sect C/2)
- 323 Jesus distracted Mary from the house work John 10:40 (Sect C/41)
- 324 Friendship between King David and Jonathan 1Samuel 23

Bethany

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