

Bible Notes

Volume 4

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151. Anger With a Cause

To hate or be angry without a cause is plainly wrong:

Psalm 35:19

Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

Psalm 69:4

They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

Psalm 109:3

They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

Psalm 119:78

Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.

Psalm 119:161

Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

Proverbs 3:30

Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

Matthew 5:22

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

John 15:25

But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

But, to be angry or hate *with a cause*, is good and just and right:

Matthew 5:23,24

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Note: “*If he hath ought against thee*” (and therefore any anger against him would be without a cause), not “*if thou have ought against him*” (with just cause).

152. The Passover

The Passover was originally given in Exodus 12. Even here, at the original Passover, there were instructions to keep it as a memorial every year.

Exodus 12:5,6

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

Notice that on the fourteenth day of the first month the lamb is to be killed and eaten in the evening.

Exodus 12:14-20

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

Notice here that the Passover is meant to be kept every year. It is a seven-day festival where unleavened bread only is to be eaten. The first and the seventh days are to be “*holy convocations*” in which no manner of work except that which every man must eat is to be done.

In Leviticus 23 we also have instructions on the Passover.

Leviticus 23:5-8

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

Here we see that the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month is designated "*the Lord's Passover.*" And the fifteenth day of the month for seven days (i.e. from the evening of the fourteenth day onwards to the twenty-first day) is the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Notice that "*no manner of work*" "*save that which every man must eat*" is here designated as "*no servile work,*" which is different from "*no work.*" "*No servile work*" was for the festival days, "*no work*" was only for the weekly Sabbath and the Day of Atonement. So the first and seventh days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread were NOT special Sabbaths.

That is the background. Now let us look at the Gospel narratives.

Firstly the disciples prepared the Passover meal on:

Matthew 26:17

The first day of the feast of unleavened bread.

Mark 14:12

The first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover.

Luke 22:7

The day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

This was obviously the fourteenth day of the first month, as the passover was going to be eaten that evening.

Christ was tried overnight and crucified on the fifteenth day of the first month, the first full day of the feast of unleavened bread.

But we have some passages which talk of the "*day of preparation.*"

None of these are talking about the preparation of the Passover. That was the fourteenth of the month, when they killed the passover lamb. All these verses talk about the day after, the fifteenth, as being the "*day of preparation.*" What they must mean is that it was the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath, i.e. Friday.

Matthew 27:62

Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate.

The day that followed the day of preparation was the weekly Sabbath, when they went to Pilate to ask for a guard on the tomb. (The Pharisees were happy to break the Sabbath when it suited them!).

Mark 15:42

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.

This verse clearly states that the “*preparation*” was the preparation day before the Sabbath. This was the day Christ had just died and Joseph of Aramathea asked for the body to bury it.

Luke 23:54

And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

This also speaks of the burial of Christ on the Friday.

John 19:14

And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King.

This verse might be a little confusing as it talks about the “*preparation of the passover.*” But this was the next morning after the passover, at Christ’s trial. What is meant is that it was the Sabbath preparation day of passover week, i.e. the Friday.

John 19:31

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

They did not want the bodies to be on the cross on the Sabbath, so they broke the legs. Here the day is again called the “*preparation.*”

John 19:42

There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

They buried Jesus quickly before sundown, as it was the “*Jews’ preparation day*” for the weekly Sabbath.

John 18:28

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

This verse might be a little confusing, because it seems to say that the passover is still future. This was actually the early morning after the passover meal, as Christ is on trial here. What it means is that they did not want to defile themselves for the whole of the passover week.

153. The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

True believers in the Old Testament had the Holy Spirit within them, in just the same way as true believers in the New Testament, and indeed, today do.

David

Psalm 51:11

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Moses

Isaiah 63:10

But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?

154. Men referred to as “gods”

There are many references to “gods” in the Bible, which refer to man-made gods, or blocks of wood or stone which men bow down and worship. Of course, none of these are real. There is only one true living God. But in certain places, men themselves are referred to as “gods.”

To “know good and evil” is here described as being “as gods”:

Genesis 3:5

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Genesis 3:22

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.

An influential figure is referred to as being like “a god”:

Exodus 7:1

And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Exodus 22:28

Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

Psalm 82 begins by referring to judges as “gods,” but by v.6 it seems to widen its scope to refer to all men:

Psalm 82

A Psalm of Asaph. God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. 2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. 3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. 4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. 5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. 6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. 7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. 8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

Who are the “gods” in Psalm 138? Rulers? All men? All false gods? All of these?:

Psalm 138:1

I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

In the New Testament, Christ refers to the fact that the law says “Ye are gods.” This must refer to Genesis 3:

John 10:34-36

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

So, men are not actually “gods,” neither do they become “gods.” There can be no other gods than the one true God. The reference is either to some men who are influential figures being like gods, or, it refers to all men who have in one sense become “as gods” after the fall, because they now “know good and evil.”

Therefore John 1:1 cannot refer to the Word just being “a god” (as Jehovah’s Witnesses would say), Because there are no such things as other “gods” at all in reality. Men are only ever in a certain sense “like gods.” John 1:1 therefore must refer to the Word being God Himself:

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Similarly, 2 Peter 1:4 cannot mean that we become gods:

2 Peter 1:4

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

155. Carchemish

Carchemish is on the River Euphrates, north of Israel. In King Josiah's day, the two major powers were Egypt and Assyria. Pharaoh Necho of Egypt was on his way to Carchemish on the Euphrates to fight with Assyria, but Josiah stopped him and fought with him at Megiddo, in Israel, on the way. Josiah lost his life there.

2 Kings 23:29-30

In his days Pharaohnechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

2 Chronicles 35:20-24

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

But four years later, Assyria had been conquered by Babylon and Egypt was defeated in battle in Carchemish by the Babylonians. Jeremiah 46 prophesies the defeat of Pharaoh.

Jeremiah 46:1-2

The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; against Egypt, against the army of Pharaohnecho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah.

Whereas Jehoahaz, Josiah's heir, was taken into captivity by Pharaoh Necho, the rest of the kings of Judah were taken captive by the rising power, the king of Babylon, until he came and destroyed Jerusalem completely.

156. Weights and Measures

Dry Measures

Omer:

Exodus 16:16

This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents.

The omer is therefore defined here in the collection of the manna in the wilderness, as approximately what one man can eat in a day.

Exodus 16:36

Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.

We see here that an omer is a tenth of an ephah.

Leviticus 23:10

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest.

Here it is interesting to note that the word translated “sheaf” in the Authorised Version is the word “omer.”

Ephah:

Ezekiel 45:11

The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the homer.

The ephah in turn is a tenth of an homer. The bath is the equivalent liquid measure, as this also is a tenth of an homer.

Homer:

Leviticus 27:16

And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

An homer of barley seed is here valued at fifty shekels of silver.

Isaiah 5:10

Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.

It is interesting to note that in a famine it is said that ten acres yield only one bath of wine and the seed of an homer only yields an ephah. A tenth of what was expected.

Liquid measures

Bath:

Ezekiel 45:11

The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the homer.

As we have already seen, a bath is the liquid equivalent of an ephah, and is a tenth of an homer.

Ezekiel 45:14

Concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, ye shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, which is an homer of ten baths; for ten baths are an homer.

Again we see that a homer is ten baths.

Hin:

This liquid measurement occurs in a lot of places in the Bible, but nowhere is it actually stated what it is.

Firkin (Metretes):

John 2:6

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

The Authorised Version “firkin” refers to the Greek “*metretes*,” which is an unknown liquid measure for wine.

Weight

Talent:

This is a very large unit of weight mentioned in the Old Testament. It refers to the weight of metals, usually gold or silver, e.g.:

Exodus 25:39

Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.

Exodus 38:27

And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the veil; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket.

Exodus 38:29

And the brass of the offering was seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels.

2 Kings 23:33

...put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

A talent of silver was cheap enough to be used occasionally in ordinary transactions:

1 Kings 20:39

Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.

2 Kings 5:22

...give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.

And a talent of gold was the approximate weight of David's crown:

2 Samuel 12:30

And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head.

But a talent of lead seemed to be enough to keep a woman in a basket:

Zechariah 5:7,8

And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.

In the New Testament, there is only one reference to a talent as a weight:

Revelation 16:21

And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

All other references to a talent in the New Testament are in Matthew's gospel, and they don't refer to a weight - no metal is specified. It must have become a unit of currency, and indeed a large one. Matthew was a tax collector so would have been familiar with it, whereas other disciples wouldn't.

Matthew 18:24

And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

A ridiculously large sum to suit the parable.

Matthew 25:14-30

....And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey....

Shekel and Gerah:

Exodus 30:13

This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the

offering of the LORD.

Leviticus 27:25

And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.

Numbers 3:47

Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs).

Numbers 18:16

And those that are to be redeemed from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation, for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.

These four places in the Bible show that the usual unit of weight is the shekel, and this is divided into twenty gerahs.

Ezekiel 45:12

And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs: twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh.

This verse also gives us this information, but we also see that there is a further unit of weight called the “*maneh*,” but the verse is confusing as to what exactly it is.

The value of the shekel depends on what material is being used, gold, silver, brass etc.

Genesis 23:16

And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

Exodus 38:24

All the gold that was occupied for the work in all the work of the holy place, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

Is there a difference here between the shekel of the merchants and the shekel of the sanctuary??

Length

Furlong:

The Authorised Version’s “furlong” is the Greek “*stadion*.”

Luke 24:13

And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

Here we ascertain that Emmaus was 60 furlongs from Jerusalem.

John 11:18

Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.

Here we ascertain that Bethany was 15 furlongs from Jerusalem.

The “furlong” also occurs in:

John 6:19

So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

Revelation 14:20

And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Revelation 21:16

And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Mile:

Matthew 5:41

And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

This is the Greek (from Latin) “*milion*,” a distance of unknown length.

Cubit:

Genesis 6:16

A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

This is a very common measurement in the Bible, but nowhere do we find out what it actually is. It is assumed it is the distance between a man’s elbow and end of his middle finger. The phrase “*cubit of a man*” occurs once in Scripture:

Deuteronomy 3:11

For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

And we have the strange phrase in Ezekiel: “*The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth*”:

Ezekiel 43:13

And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span: and this shall be the higher place of the

altar.

Handbreadth and Span:

A different word is used for each, so these are two slightly different things. The Bible does not tell us exactly what they are, but the names suggest small measurements discernible by the hand.

“*Handbreadth*” occurs in:

Exodus 25:25

And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about.

Exodus 37:12

Also he made thereunto a border of an handbreadth round about; and made a crown of gold for the border thereof round about.

1 Kings 7:26

And it was an hand breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained two thousand baths.

2 Chronicles 4:5

And the thickness of it was an handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held three thousand baths.

Psalms 39:5

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

Ezekiel 40:5

And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

Ezekiel 43:13

And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span: and this shall be the higher place of the altar.

“*Span*” occurs in:

Exodus 28:16

Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof.

Exodus 39:9

It was foursquare; they made the breastplate double: a span was the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, being doubled.

1 Samuel 17:4

And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

Isaiah 40:12

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

Lamentations 2:20

Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, and children of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

Ezekiel 43:13

And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span: and this shall be the higher place of the altar.

157. Leviathan

“*Leviathan*” in the Bible is a great sea monster of unknown origin. The word occurs six times in the Old Testament.

Job 3:8

Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.

Here, the word “*Leviathan*” is translated “*their mourning*.”

Job 41:1

Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?

The whole of Job 41 is a description of this “*Leviathan*.” The most important point are the last two verses:

Job 41:33,34

Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.

This great sea monster is clearly shown to be a supernatural being, who is king over all the children of pride, i.e. all unbelievers.

Psalms 74:14

Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

God will break the heads of Leviathan. Note the plural, cf. Revelation 13:1 - the beast from the sea has seven heads, upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

Psalm 104:26

There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

In the Bible, the sea is always a type of the nations, the people, rising and falling like the sea.

Isaiah 27:1

In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Here, Leviathan is described as “*the dragon that is in the sea,*” a clear reference to the beast from the sea in Revelation 13.

158. Grind to Powder

Matthew 21:44, Luke 20:18

And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

This statement of Christ's is mentioned twice in the Bible, in parallel passages in Matthew and Luke's gospels. In both accounts it comes straight after the parable of the householder who plants a vineyard then goes away for a long time. Occasionally he would send a servant to check on the vineyard, but the husbandmen would always beat them and send them away. Finally he sends his son whom they put to death. This is a parable, of course, about the Jews' dealings with all the prophets throughout their history and then finally with Christ. After telling this parable, Christ quoted from Psalm 118:22,23:

Matthew 21:42,43

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

The Jews had so many privileges. They were miraculously saved from slavery in Egypt by Moses, taken through a parted Red Sea, and kept for forty years in the wilderness before being taken by Joshua into a fertile land on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea. On the way they were given the Law of God written on tables of stone. They were given the Scriptures. They were sent the prophets. And finally, the greatest privilege of all, through them the Saviour of the world was to be born in due time.

But they didn't recognise Him. And they despised the prophets and all the other means of God's intervention. Not only that, but throughout their history, they neglected to keep the very Law that God gave them. The Bible chronicles all of this.

All along they thought that their pedigree would be enough to save them. How proud!

John 8:39

They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

I am not getting at the Jews for this. If God had chosen any other nation to bestow upon them His special privileges, they would have done exactly the same thing. It is the pride of man that is the problem.

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And actually, the more we look into this subject, the more dominant a theme pride is found to be in Scripture.

Genesis 6:4

There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

In the very beginning of history, after the fall of Adam, and Cain murdering Abel, we come across this brief mention of believers marrying unbelievers. The children they produced became "*men of renown.*" i.e. men full of themselves and their own status in the world. God calls this "*wickedness*":

Genesis 6:5

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Later on, Job wanted to dispute with God as to why many unpleasant and painful things had come upon him, for what he thought was no reason. But when God finally answered, He challenged Job:

Job 40:11-14

Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret. Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

And even King Nebuchadnezzar discovered how the Lord was working:

Daniel 4:37

Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

God's primary work in the world is to abase all those that walk in pride. Only God can do that. Man is so proud, he is totally incapable of bringing himself down. Yet that is exactly what the Lord requires of him:

1 Samuel 2:3

Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

We don't know much about the fall of Satan, but we do know that he must have fallen before man fell, because it was an already fallen serpent that met Eve in the Garden of Eden to tempt her. There are two passages in Scripture that seem to give us some understanding of Satan's fall. The first is in Isaiah, and is primarily about the fall of the king of Babylon. The second is in Ezekiel, and is primarily about the fall of the king of Tyre:

Isaiah 14:13-15

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Ezekiel 28:13-15

Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

If we apply these passages to the fall of Satan, we see that pride was the first sin. Satan wanted to be greater than God. If we apply these passages to the fall of the relevant kings, we see that pride is the predominant sin in man, the sin from which all other sins proceed.

Given this fundamental problem with fallen human nature, we begin to see something of God's plan for the human race. It is to completely break the pride of man in all its shapes and forms.

Isaiah 2:11,12

The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.

This is what the Lord is doing with every one of us. His ultimate aim is to completely destroy our pride and to make sure that, in the end, God alone is exalted:

1 Corinthians 1:29

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

And how does He do this? God has provided a "stone." It's mentioned in Psalm 118:

Psalm 118:22

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

Notice here that the "stone" that is going to be rejected by some, is the very same "stone" that will be embraced by others as their head corner stone. Of course this refers to Jesus

Christ, who is at the same time a savour of life to those who are going to be saved, and a savour of death to those who reject Him:

2 Corinthians 2:15,16

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.

Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation:

Acts 4:12

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

To those who will be saved, He is precious, but to those who will reject Him, He is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence:

1 Peter 2:7,8

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Let's look at our text again:

Matthew 21:44, Luke 20:18

And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

When I first came across this statement, I thought that the ones who fall on the stone were true believers, because it is good for us to be broken. In contrast, the ones ground to powder are the unbelievers, because they will be destroyed. But I've now completely changed my mind. I now realise that exactly the opposite is the case.

I would suggest that when it says "*whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken,*" it is talking about all those who stumble at the "*rock of offence,*" the disobedient, those who do not come to the Saviour. They will live their lives full of their own importance, full of their own pride in themselves, but in the end they will fall on the stumbling stone of Christ and be broken by the Lord.

On the other hand, those who will have the stone fall on them, to be ground to powder, these are true believers. We should want Christ to fall on us. All right, put it another way – we should want the Holy Spirit to fall on us. Does that sound better? We should want an end of ourselves, our selfish desires and lusts. We, as true believers, should want our pride to be ground to powder. And this is exactly what Christ does in our sanctification.

When we come to the Lord, the rock of our pride is dealt a fatal blow. It has been cracked. No longer will it reign supreme. But there is still so much pride within us that needs to be dealt with. For the rest of our lives, we need to take the fragments of remaining pride and have them ground and ground and ground by Christ, until all that is left is powder.

Moses ground the golden calf to powder:

Exodus 32:20

And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

This is what we should do with all false idols and delusions of grandeur in our life.

King Josiah was the only king of Judah who actually managed to get rid of the idols in the land, and he ground them to powder so that absolutely nothing remained:

2 Kings 23:6

And he brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.

2 Kings 23:15

Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove.

2 Chronicles 34:7

And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

And Isaiah compared the iniquity of Judah to chalkstones, not granite. Stones that can be beaten down and crushed until there is only powder left:

Isaiah 27:9

By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up.

The Christian's calling is to renounce self, abase self, and be finished with self. Self must be ground to powder, so that eventually God alone will be exalted in our lives.

159. The Angel of the Lord

"The Angel of the Lord" appears several times in Scripture. Many people think it is Christ. But it can't be:

Matthew 28:2-4

And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

Luke 2:9-11

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

160. Peter Never Went to Rome

The Roman Catholic church believe that Peter was the first pope and is buried in St Peter's church in Rome. This is utter nonsense. Peter never went to Rome.

Peter was charged as the apostle mainly to the Jews (and Paul to the Gentiles):

Galatians 2:7-9

But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

The Jews were expelled from Rome by Claudius, so there was no real reason for Peter to ever go there:

Acts 18:2

And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

Peter wrote his first epistle from Babylon, where there would have been a remnant of Jews from the time of the exile:

1 Peter 5:13

The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.

Most commentaries say that "*Babylon*" here is a code word for Rome, but why? There is no need. That is just another piece of Roman Catholic propaganda.

161. First Last, and Last First

The phrase "*The first shall be last, and the last, first,*" occurs several times in Scripture. It can easily be misunderstood. It seems as though all, both first and last, get into heaven, the difference being that the order will be reversed from what it is on earth. That is not the way to interpret the phrase.

This is shown by the following passage, where this phrase is specifically defined in v.16 as being exactly the same as the phrase “*Many are called, but few chosen.*” In other words, Many (the “first” who shall be last) will be in the visible church, but only few (the “last” who shall be first) will be saved to eternal life and get to heaven. The “first” won’t get into heaven at all.

It also seems in this specific parable as though all the workers got their reward, but this isn’t talking about getting into heaven or not. It’s about our attitude in this world. Note in v. 15, of the workers who worked all day, it is said that their eye was evil, because they complained about their wages, and didn’t believe that God is good.

Matthew 20:1-16

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

We must keep this in mind whenever we come across the phrase “*The first shall be last, and the last, first*” elsewhere.

This phrase occurs in passages where we are told to forsake this world:

Matthew 19:27-30

Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

Mark 10:28-31

Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and

sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

Luke 18:28-30 is a parallel passage, but does not have this phrase in it.

This phrase also occurs in passages when the disciples ask who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven:

Mark 9:33-35

And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

And this phrase occurs in the Luke passage where the disciples ask Christ “Are there few that be saved?” The answer is “Yes,” only the “last” will be saved to eternal life and get to heaven:

Luke 13:23-30

Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

The phrase “*Many are called, but few chosen*” occurs in one other place apart from Matthew 20 mentioned above, namely the parable of the marriage supper. Here, someone gets into the marriage supper, but does not have a wedding garment. He is cast out:

Matthew 22:1-14

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend,

how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

162. Unprofitable Servant

Two parables seem to be teaching opposite things:

Luke 17:7-10

But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

Here, we are taught to never think of ourselves as anything more than unprofitable servants.

But what about this parable?:

Matthew 25:14-30

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer

darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Here, the unprofitable servant is cast into hell fire. But the point is that, in Luke 17, the servant is obeying his master's commands, and the call is not to boast how wonderful he's been, but to just consider himself an unprofitable servant. In Matthew 25, the servant with one talent really thinks he is all right, but he hasn't obeyed his master's commands, and so really is an unprofitable servant.

We need to learn from later on in Matthew 25. The righteous couldn't see where they had done good works:

Matthew 25:38-39

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

But the wicked couldn't see where they hadn't done good works:

Matthew 25:44

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

163. Christ showing Emotion

Weeping and groaning

John 11:33-38

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

Jesus was not weeping for the reason the Jews thought, i.e. because He loved Lazarus. He did love him, but knew He was going to raise him from the dead shortly. He wept for the same reason He groaned in spirit, i.e. because of their unbelief.

Weeping

Luke 19:41-44

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Again, He weeps over the city of Jerusalem because of their unbelief. Note on the other occasion when He addresses the city “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem....” (Matthew 23:37-39; Luke 13:34,35), there is no mention of His weeping.

Anger

Matthew 21:12,13

And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Mark 11:15-17

And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

John 2:15-17 (probably a different occasion)

And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Was this anger, or zeal for the house of God, or both?

Anger and grief

Mark 3:1-5

And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

This is anger and grief for their hardness of heart.

Sighing

Mark 8:10-13

And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why

doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

The parallel passage in Matthew says, “*there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.*”

Rejoicing

Luke 10:21

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

This is the only record we have of Jesus rejoicing. He was naturally “*a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,*” so much so that “*we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not*” (Isaiah 53:3).

Although we are also told that “*for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame*” (Hebrews 12:2).

Having Compassion

There are many occasions when we are told that Jesus had compassion:

Matthew 9:36-38

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Just before the feeding of the 5,000:

Matthew 14:14

And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

Mark 6:34

And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

Just before the feeding of the 4,000:

Matthew 15:32

Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

Mark 8:2,3

I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

Blind Bartemaus and his companion:

Matthew 20:34

So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

A leper:

Mark 1:40,41

And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

The demoniac in the land of the Gadarenes:

Mark 5:18,19

And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

The woman of Nain:

Luke 7:12,13

Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

164. Authorship of Hebrews

Hebrews was not written by Paul, because the authorship is unknown:

2 Thessalonians 3:17

The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

Hebrews was not written by any apostle, as they are spoken of in the third person:

Hebrews 2:3-4

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, **and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?***

165. Authorship of James and Jude

The traditional view is that these epistles were written by the half-brothers of our Lord. But there is no evidence to back this up. They are more likely to have been written by the Apostles James son of Alphaeus and his brother Judas (not Iscariot). Neither James or Jude introduces himself as an apostle, but neither does Paul in some of his epistles (e.g. Philippians and Thessalonians).

Luke 6:14-16

*Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, **James the son of Alphaeus**, and Simon called Zelotes, And **Judas the brother of James**, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.*

Acts 1:13

*And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, **James the son of Alphaeus**, and Simon Zelotes, and **Judas the brother of James**.*

Jude 1:1

***Jude**, the servant of Jesus Christ, and **brother of James**, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called....*

The only possible objection to this is that Jude speaks of the Apostles in the third person:

Jude 1:17-18

*But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of **the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ**; How that **they** told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.*

166. Satan's Power

Satan is primarily the accuser of the brethren:

Revelation 12:9-10

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Psalms 109:6

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

Zechariah 3:1-2

And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

But Satan also tempts with evil:

Matthew 4:1

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Luke 22:3

Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

Acts 5:3

But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

1 Corinthians 7:5

Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

God tests us, but never tempts us with evil:

James 1:13

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man....

Satan takes away the Word from people's hearts:

Mark 4:15

And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

Satan keeps unbelievers in darkness:

Acts 26:18

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Satan deceives:

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Revelation 20:7-8

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Satan forms churches:

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Revelation 2:9

I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 3:9

Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

Satan hinders movement:

1 Thessalonians 2:18

Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

It seems like Satan was given power to persuade David to number the people:

1 Chronicles 21:1

And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

But no, the Lord did it:

2 Samuel 24:1

And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

It seems like Satan was given power by God to afflict Job:

Job 1:12

And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

It seems like he was given power over the weather:

Job 1:16

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Job 1:19

And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

It seems like he was given power over illnesses:

Luke 13:16

And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

Job 2:7

So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

2 Corinthians 12:7

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

But no, the Lord did it:

Job 2:3

*And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although **thou movedst me against him**, to destroy him without cause.*

Job 2:10

*But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? **shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?** In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*

2 Corinthians 12:8-9

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

167. Job

The key to the book of Job lies in chapter 32:

Job 32:1-5

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job. Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he. When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

The problem with Job was that “he was righteous in his own eyes,” and that “he justified himself rather than God.”

The three friends were correct in that they “had condemned Job,” but we’re wrong in that “they had found no answer.”

The book of Job is not as simple as the idea that the three friends had the wrong theology. They had rightly condemned Job for justifying himself. All parties are good theologians. The real problem was in Job.

In Job’s speeches between chapters 3 and 31, he uses the word “I” 233 times, and the words “me,” “my,” “mine,” and “myself” a total of 456 times. He was indeed trying to justify himself rather than God.

Elihu comes onto the scene in chapter 32, and He starts with God, not Job.

Job 32:12-13

Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words: Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.

After this, and after God Himself intervenes, Job can only say:

Job 40:3-5

Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

Job 42:1-6

Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

168. Importunity

There are two parables in Luke's gospel that get confused. But they teach different things.

Luke 11:5-8

And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Many people confuse this with the parable of the unjust judge in chapter 18. But they are different. In this parable, the man calls on his friend at midnight, once. In the parable of the unjust judge, the woman kept on going to the judge time and time again. She did not give up.

This parable, where the man calls on his friend once at midnight, teaches us importunity, in other words, impertinence. This man strains the friendship by calling at an unearthly hour, but he feels bold enough to do so. This teaches us that, if we feel we can be impertinent with a friend, how much more can we come before God boldly:

Hebrews 4:16

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The parable of the unjust judge teaches us something completely different:

Luke 18:1-8

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

This parable tells us what it teaches: "That men ought always to pray and not to faint." If a widow doesn't give up on trying to get an unjust judge to hear her case, how much more should we not give up on God, the righteous judge of all the earth, in asking, even when He appears not to answer at first.

169. Preaching in the Synagogue

Isn't it odd that Christ, and some apostles, when they are visiting a place, are asked to speak in the synagogue? We wouldn't ask a visitor to speak if one turned up at our church. Unless he was very well known, and we knew he wasn't a heretic.

Christ

Christ was never a rabbi. In fact He didn't approve of the title, although He is our only Master:

Matthew 23:5-8

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

But He was called "Rabbi" on several occasions (all mentioned in John's gospel), but only because He was a teacher. He was actually a carpenter by trade. He had no education at any rabbinical school. He is called "Rabbi" by:

Andrew and (probably) John:

John 1:38

Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

Nathanael:

John 1:49

Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Nicodemus:

John 3:1-2

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

The people:

John 6:25

And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

Note that John the Baptist was also called “*Rabbi*” by some of His disciples, even though he had no formal training either:

John 3:26

And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

We are told generally that He taught in the synagogues:

Matthew 4:23

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Matthew 9:35

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Mark 1:39

And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

Luke 4:14-15

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

He became famous. He was glorified of all. Maybe that’s why He often got an invitation to speak in the synagogues.

Luke 4:44

And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

Now let’s look at the individual occasions in the Bible where Christ speaks in a synagogue:

Christ in Nazareth:

Matthew 13:54-55

And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

Mark 6:2-3

And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his

hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Luke 4:16-22

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

He had been brought up in Nazareth, it was His custom to go to the synagogue. They all knew who He was. But they thought He was just the carpenter's son. So why was He allowed to teach there? He got up to read the Scriptures. But He continued after the reading, and taught them. They all "*wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.*" Maybe He wasn't asked to teach, just to read. After the reading, He just taught anyway, and the people were astonished, and didn't stop Him.

Christ in Capernaum:

Mark 1:21-22

And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

Luke 6:6

And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

This is the occasion when Christ healed a man with a withered hand. Matthew 12:10-13 also records this, but it doesn't record there that He taught. But Mark and Luke state that He did teach. He was living in Capernaum by this time, and had taught in the open. He was invited to teach in the synagogue because He had become known and was popular, although the scribes and Pharisees didn't approve.

Christ in Capernaum again:

John 6:59

These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

This is a different occasion, when He speaks of Himself being the bread of life. This wasn't an official meeting. We don't even know if it was on the Sabbath or not. He just happened to be there when He taught.

Christ in Jerusalem:

John 18:20

Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

At His trial before the High Priest, He confesses He taught in the synagogue (presumably in Jerusalem) and in the Temple. He wouldn't need permission in the Temple grounds, He could just set up in a corner somewhere and start speaking. The apostles did this. But He had taught in the local synagogue as well.

The apostles

The apostles taught in the Temple grounds as much as they could:

Acts 4:1-2

And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

Acts 5:19-21

But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

Acts 5:42

And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

When the apostles went to a new city, they always went to the synagogue first of all, before going to the Gentiles. That was the order of things:

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Paul in Damascus:

Acts 9:19-20

And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus:

Acts 13:5

And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

Paul and Barnabas in Antioch in Pisidia:

Acts 13:14-15

But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

Here, they were invited to speak by the rulers of the synagogue. Paul was, after all, a well-known, respected Jewish scholar, so they may have heard of him. This is the only invitation we know about. On all the other occasions (mentioned below) when they speak in a synagogue, there is no mention of an invitation. They probably simply spoke in conversation after the meeting.

This is the earliest account, and only account, of an apostle being invited to speak in the synagogue. Maybe after this, the synagogues became more and more aware of the problem it could cause, so they weren't invited anywhere else.

Paul and Barnabas in Iconium:

Acts 14:1

And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

There is no invitation to speak mentioned here. Maybe they just spoke in conversation after the meeting.

Paul and Silas in Thessalonica:

Acts 17:1-2

Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.

They “reasoned”, which does not necessarily mean formal speaking. They could have just got into conversation afterwards.

Paul and Silas in Berea:

Acts 17:10-11

And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in

Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

There is no mention of being invited to speak, maybe this was in conversation afterwards.

Paul in Athens:

Acts 17:17

Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

Paul “disputes” in the synagogue, so this is probably in conversation afterwards.

Paul in Corinth:

Acts 18:4

And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

Paul “reasoned” with them for a number of sabbaths. Again, this was probably just in conversation afterwards.

Paul in Ephesus:

Acts 18:19

And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

Again, Paul “reasoned” with them, probably in conversation after the meeting.

Apollos in Ephesus, preaching only the baptism of John:

Acts 18:25-26

This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Apollos had incomplete doctrine (although not actually incorrect). He only knew the baptism of John at this point. Yet we are told he spoke boldly in the synagogue and taught. This was probably in conversation after the meeting.

Paul in Ephesus again:

Acts 19:8

And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

For three months, Paul spake boldly in the synagogue. Again, it was probably in conversation afterwards, rather than officially. But how can someone go to the synagogue for that length of time and be allowed to carry on teaching new things for so long? Well, they had to leave in the end:

Acts 19:9-10

But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

170. Son of Man

Most often, this phrase simply refers to men in general:

Numbers 23:19

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Job 25:6

How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?

Job 35:8

Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.

Psalms 8:4 (this is specifically referred to Christ in Hebrews 2:6)

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Psalms 144:3

Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

Psalms 146:3

Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

Isaiah 51:12

I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass....

Isaiah 56:2

Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Jeremiah 49:18

As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

Jeremiah 49:33

And Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, and a desolation for ever: there shall no man abide there, nor any son of man dwell in it.

Jeremiah 50:40

As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

Jeremiah 51:43

Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

In the book of Ezekiel, there are 93 references where Ezekiel is called “Son of man.”

Daniel 8:17

So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

There are two references to Christ as the “Son of man” in the Old Testament:

Psalms 80:17

Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.

Daniel 7:13

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

New Testament references. All specifically referred to Christ as the “Son of man”:

Matthew: Christ refers to Himself as the “Son of man” 30 times.

Mark: Christ refers to Himself as the “Son of man” 14 times.

Luke: Christ refers to Himself as the “Son of man” 25 times.

John: Christ refers to Himself as the “Son of man” 11 times.

Acts 7:56

And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Hebrews 2:6 (quoting Psalm 8:4, referring it specifically to Christ)

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Revelation 1:13

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Revelation 14:14

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

171. Sons of God

Son of God

There are many Messianic prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament, and some refer to Him as the “Son.” For example:

Psalms 2:12

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

But the actual phrase “Son of God” only occurs once in the Old Testament, and this is from Nebuchadnezzar, and could be rendered, “a son of a god”:

Daniel 3:25

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

It occurs many times in the New Testament, always of course referring to Christ.

Sons of God

The phrase “sons of God” always refers to believers, who are adopted into God’s family:

Romans 8:14

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Galatians 4:5-6

...that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

They never refer to angelic beings:

Hebrews 1:5,14

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?.... Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

In Genesis:

Genesis 6:2

That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

Genesis 6:4

There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

Here, the “sons of God” refer to believers, and the “daughters of men” refer to unbelievers. Just because “giants” are mentioned, this does not refer to fantastical beings created by the union of angels and men. That cannot be, because angels cannot reproduce:

Matthew 22:30

For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

In Job:

Job 1:6

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

Job 2:1

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.

Satan had been “going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it,” so the “sons of God” are not angels, but men. He is the accuser of the brethren. Satan cannot accuse elect angels, as they are without sin, and he wouldn’t accuse his own demons.

Job 38:7

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

In this verse, the “sons of God” does not refer to angels. In John 1:51 angels are called “angels of God,” in 2 Chronicles 18:18 they are called “hosts of heaven.” Nowhere else are angels referred to as “sons of God.”

In the New Testament:

John 1:12

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Romans 8:14

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Romans 8:19

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Philippians 2:15

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.

1 John 3:1,2

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Children of God

All verses mentioning this phrase clearly refer to elect men:

Matthew 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Luke 20:36

Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

John 11:52

And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

Romans 8:16

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

Romans 8:21

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Romans 9:8

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

Galatians 3:26

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

1 John 3:10

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

1 John 5:2

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

172. The Soul

We are made of soul and body:

Isaiah 10:18

And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

Matthew 10:28

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The soul departs from the body at death:

Genesis 35:18

And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.

1 Kings 17:21-22

And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

Psalms 30:3

O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

Luke 12:20

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

God has a soul (or is this an anthropomorphism, God accommodating Himself to our way of thinking, like saying He has "hands"?):

Leviticus 26:11,12

And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

Leviticus 26:30

And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.

Psalms 11:5

The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

Isaiah 1:14

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

Isaiah 42:1

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

Jeremiah 5:9

Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Jeremiah 5:29

Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Jeremiah 6:8

Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

Jeremiah 9:9

Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Jeremiah 32:41

Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

Matthew 12:18

Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

Hebrews 10:38

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Living Soul

A "living soul" is always a soul with a body:

Genesis 2:7

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Genesis 19:20

Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

Job 12:10

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

1 Corinthians 15:45

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

Revelation 16:3

And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

Revelation 20:4

*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the **souls** of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they **lived** and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

Difference between Soul and Spirit

1 Corinthians 15:45

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

173. Eternally Begotten

The phrase “eternally begotten” does not appear in the Bible, but does appear in several creeds:

Westminster Confession of Faith 2:3:

III. In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost¹. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding: the Son is eternally begotten of the Father²: the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son³.

¹ *I John 5:7; Matt. 3:16, 17; Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14.*

² *John 1:14, 18.*

³ *John 15:26; Gal. 4:6.*

The “proof text” from the Westminster Confession is:

John 1:14,18

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.... No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

This only calls Christ the “*only begotten*” and says nothing about His begetting being from eternity.

The Nicene Creed uses the phrase “*begotten of the Father before all worlds,*” and the Athanasian Creed uses a similar phrase, “*begotten before the worlds.*”

The Bible never uses the phrase “*eternally begotten.*” The Bible uses the phrase “*only begotten.*”

John 1:14

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:18

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:18

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

1 John 4:9

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

The word “*begotten*” also occurs three times in the New Testament in Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5, 5:5, as a quote from Psalm 2:

Psalm 2:7

Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Christ is also called the “*first begotten*”:

Hebrews 1:6

And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Revelation 1:5

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

However, this merely means that he is the:

Romans 8:29

...firstborn among many brethren....

Christ has “*many brethren*” in the sense that we are all adopted sons of God.

But the phrase “eternally begotten” is a creedal statement only, and not Scriptural.

I thoroughly understand that:

Galatians 4:4,5

...when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

and:

Luke 1:35

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Surely, this was the time when Christ was “*begotten,*” i.e. when:

John 1:12

....the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us....

Before this time, Christ did not have a human nature. From eternity, the decree was there that He should, in the fulness of time, come into the world as a man to redeem His people, but He did not actually take on a human nature until the time of His conception. There was one specific day on which He was begotten:

Psalms 2:7

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

The phrase “eternally begotten” is an oxymoron.

The Eternal Procession of the Spirit

I have a similar problem with the eternal procession of the Spirit. The Westminster Confession proof texts are as follows:

John 15:26

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

and:

Galatians 4:6

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

but these verses only talk about the procession from the Father and the Son, and nothing to do with eternity. In fact, Christ in John 15:26 says "*I will send unto you...*", i.e. future tense - the Spirit has not yet proceeded from Him, but will at a time in the future (although the Holy Spirit has always been working).

In eternity past, Christ and the Holy Spirit were in the Godhead. No subordination or confusion. Christ was always going to be begotten, and the Holy Spirit was always going to proceed from the Father and the Son, but these things occurred in time as and when they were decreed that they should happen by the Father.

174. Loathing Self

Only true believers, loathe themselves and truly mourn over their sins. This is a mark of grace, and it's what we all need to do.

Ezekiel 6:9

And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

Ezekiel 7:16

But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

Ezekiel 20:43

And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

Ezekiel 36:31

Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

Matthew 5:4

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

James 4:9-10

Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.