

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

April 5, 2020

“Triumphal”

8:30 Zoom Sunday school, 9:15 ~ Sermon Online

NEWS

Never fear - we know Who sits on the Throne. Please, continue to pray for each other - call, text, email, Zoom - stay connected. Love others enough to help them, and love others enough to allow them to help you.

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ www.myaetheia.com

Like us on Facebook (aletheiachristianfellowship)

Emails: pastor@myaetheia.com, stacey.sundt@myaetheia.com

MATTHEW 17:9-13 ~ ^{9NASB}As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.” ¹⁰And His disciples asked Him, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” ¹¹And He answered and said, “Elijah is coming and will restore all things; ¹²but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” ¹³Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

Peter expected following Jesus to be _____ in every way. Why should anyone on God’s team have any problems or be in want for anything? Health, wealth and unbridled happiness.

So many Christians today think like _____ once thought.

Just like Peter, we must be _____ to the full and correct revelation. Romans 8:31-39, ^{31bNIV}If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? The Father willingly and actually sacrificed the Word of God made flesh for us -

After that, is there anything that He wouldn't give us? Is there any tiny bit of suffering that He wouldn't move heaven and earth to immediately _____?

Paul continues... ^{33NIV}Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ^{35a}Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Okay, well we see that Paul is mostly talking about justification and our eternal reward, but still, if God loves us enough to hand Jesus over to the executioner for our salvation surely He will also ensure that we never endure any pain or discomfort either...

He goes on... ^{35bNIV}Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is through the _____ of hardship that we experience the faithfulness of God and are conformed to Him. It is our faith in Him built, not by mountain-top experiences, but when we are stretched beyond human capability.

It enables a _____ change. Suffering creates a change from an entitlement mentality to a humbly grateful mentality.

One of the biggest _____ factors to the Fall of mankind was an entitlement attitude in Adam and Eve.

Widespread knowledge of His divinity would only serve to _____ his journey to what awaited Him in Jerusalem.

There cannot be a Resurrection without a preceding _____.

That leads us to the question in verse 10 and helps us make sense of it... After witnessing what they did, and remembering that Jesus told them that John the Baptist was Elijah (Matthew 11:14), coupled with Jesus' continued negativity - they were _____.

Malachi 4:4-6, ⁴NIV“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. ⁵“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. ⁶He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

The bit about the hearts of parents and children actually means that whole families will be of one accord in their _____ to God.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

After _____ the Scribe's understanding of Elijah's role, Jesus showed them, in verse 12, the disconnect. Yes, Elijah must come first. Yes, he came to straighten the way for the Lord and to turn the hearts of the people back to God so that they would be receptive to the Lord... And that's precisely what he already did.

John the Baptizer came and preached _____.

On Palm Sunday 20 centuries ago, Jerusalem was full of pilgrims who were themselves full of hope. They were _____ that God's Anointed would bless them beyond comprehension while He would curse their enemies likewise beyond comprehension.

What never occurred to them was that they were themselves God's enemies. Their reliance on religion, which is to say their _____ upon their own efforts, goodness and performance, instead of on God's mercy made them people who were repulsed by God's prophet John and by His Anointed One Jesus.

Are we in that same danger?

victorious, Peter, open, alleviate, valley, perspective, contributing, hinder, death, confused, devotion, confirming, repentance, convinced, reliance.

Check all that apply – detach and place in the offering or the prayer box

_____ I want to talk with the pastor about _____

_____ I want prayer for _____

_____ I want to volunteer to _____

_____ I want more information about _____

_____ Other _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Alêtheia



HOME ALETHEIANS ABOUT SERVICES LEADERS SERMONS KING'S KIDS EVENTS CONTACT US GIVE

MARCH 19 2020

Effective immediately, all Alêtheia sanctioned events, to include Wednesday classes, Sunday school, & Sunday services, are suspended indefinitely due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Please check back for updates and future plans of action. Contact us if you need anything.

In the meantime... Click the Sermon tab and watch until your heart's content - Bless you.

Alêtheia, pronounced, "ah-LAY-thay-uh," means Truth in the original language of the New Testament. It expresses our desire to teach the Alêtheia without compromise in the love that's at the very heart of God's message.

Alêtheia ~ Matthew 17a ~ 040520

"TRIUMPHAL"



If someone wants your toilet rolls, give to them your hand gel also.



Video Conferencing Web Conferencing

zoom.us

zoom

SOLUTIONS PLANS & PRICING CONTACT SALES

JOIN A MEETING HOST A MEETING MY ACCOUNT

We have developed resources to help you through this challenging time. [Click here to learn more.](#)

In this together.
Keeping you connected
wherever you are.

[Sign up for Free](#) [Helpful Resources](#)

See, it's free

Help is here

And help is here

One Consistent Enterprise Experience.

- Meetings**
Online Meetings, Training & Technical Support
[Watch Video](#) | [Learn More](#)
- Video Webinar**
Marketing Events & Town Hall Meetings
[Watch Video](#) | [Learn More](#)
- Conference Rooms**
Build Collaboration-Enabled Conference Rooms
[Watch Video](#) | [Learn More](#)
- Phone System**
The next generation enterprise phone system
[Learn More](#)
- Chat**
Cross-Platform Messaging & File Sharing
[Watch Video](#) | [Learn More](#)

Video tutorials

More help

Zoom is Ranked #1 in Customer Reviews

Help

Zoom Sunday school. Go to... Zoom.us on any phone, tablet or computer and get the Zoom app - it's free.

Then when you get a link as an email or text and it's time for the meeting... click the link. You can adjust your video and audio within the app. On their website they have all kinds of help including a bunch of "how to" videos.

Please reach out to us if you need anything. Let us know if you want to be invited to the live Sunday school at 8:30 next week. Let us know if you don't want the Elders to call you and let us know if you haven't already received a call from an Elder, but would like to be on that list.

Next week is Resurrection Sunday. It grieves me to say that we will be doing this again on that day.

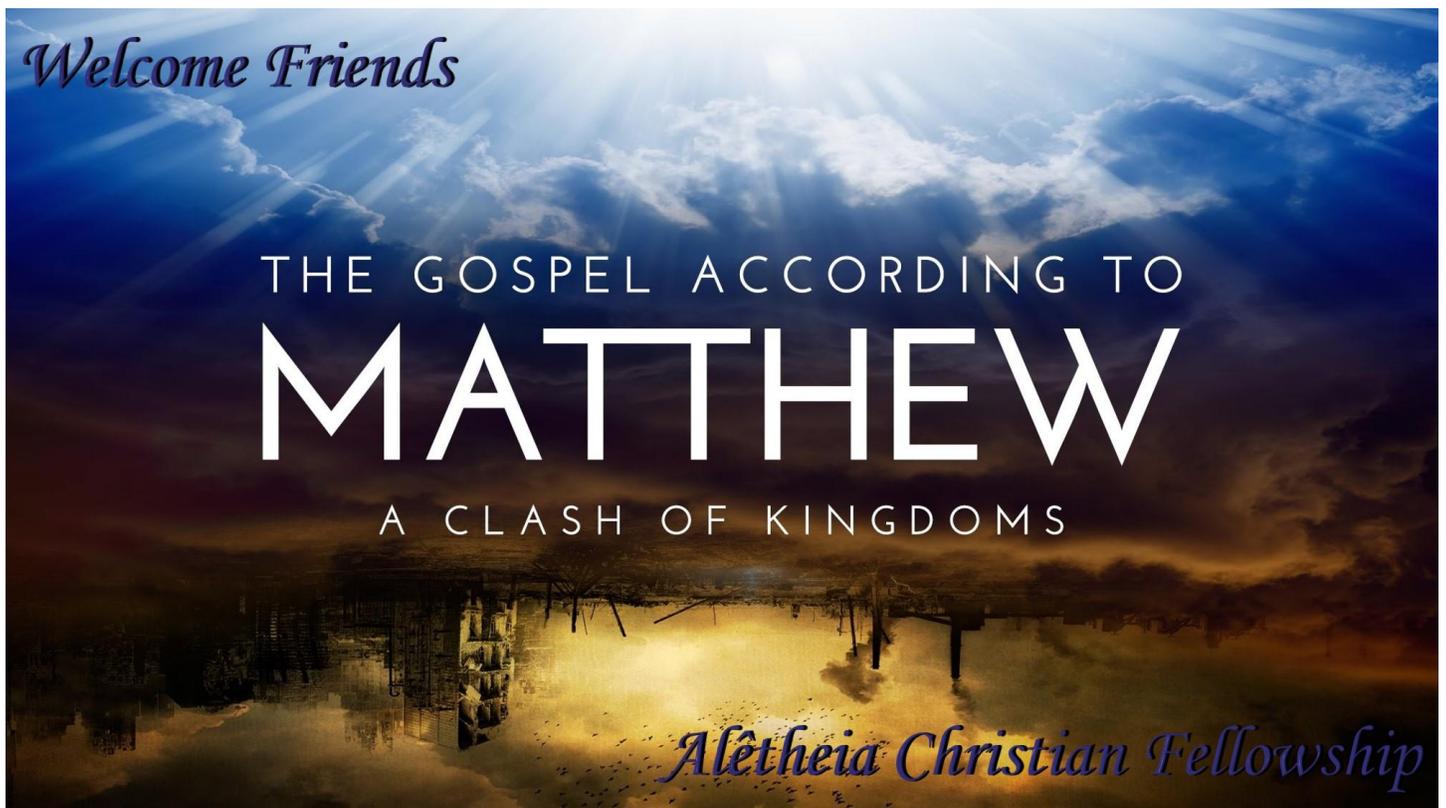


What that all means is that today is Palm Sunday! I'm going to try to weave that story together with where we're at in Matthew's Gospel... I would say, "Wish me luck," but some people get weird about that, and since I know you're all already praying for me. I'll just ask for your patience instead.

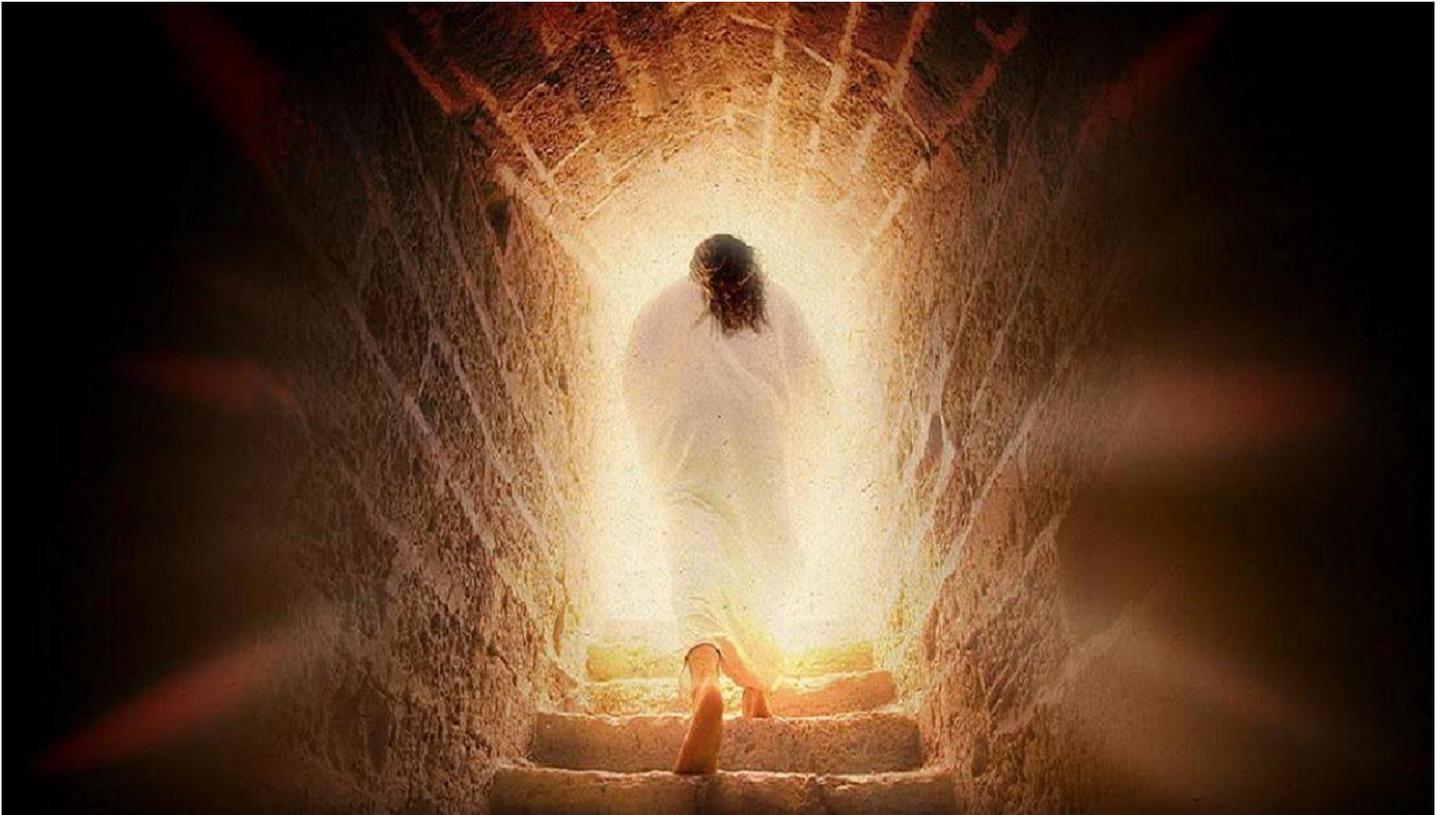


Last week we saw Jesus allow a bit of His inner self be manifested externally. More than 16 centuries ago, John Chrysostom put it this way, Jesus “Opened a little of his deity and showed them the divinity within.” Chrysostom went on to say that “On the mountain the entire Trinity appears; Christ the Son in glorious form, the Father in the voice, the Holy Spirit in the cloud of light that overshadowed them.” And, of course, we know from last week, that the cloud of brilliant light couldn’t really “Overshadow” them... It more accurately, shone brightly down upon them. They were enveloped in light.

I spent a little time last week setting the stage with what went before, and I want to refresh your memory a bit... From the events of the last chapter and a half we have seen 1) the expansion of the ministry to include Gentiles, 2) Peter's declaration concerning Jesus' mission and deity, 3) Jesus' clearer revelation about His future to them along with Peter's rebuke of Jesus and then 4) Jesus' rebuke of Peter...



Matthew 17:9-13 ~ 9NASBAs they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead."



10 And His disciples asked Him, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” 11 And He answered and said, “Elijah is coming and will restore all things;



12but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” 13Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

Last week I said that you can't stay on the mountain because the work is in the valleys. Peter desperately wanted to stay on the mountain - who wouldn't? He was adamantly opposed to any rejection, disrespect or certainly any harm coming to Jesus. Peter expected that following Jesus, the Messiah, the One and Only Son of God, would be victorious in every way.

Why should anyone on the Almighty God team have any problems or be in want for anything? Health, wealth and unbridled happiness. Something doesn't go your way... Ask the Father. Want a new car... Ask Jesus. Stub your toe... Ask the Holy Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth must be where "Everything keeps coming up daisies." That's what Peter asserted when he rebuked Jesus like He was some wet-behind-the-ears schoolboy.

At the Transfiguration, Peter must have thought, "Okay, I may have jumped the gun last week, but surely this is it!" Even after Jesus sternly rebuked him, Peter couldn't wrap his brain around the idea that the way to glory... The way to staying on the mountain forever, went through the deepest, darkest, valley imaginable - the way to the Resurrection, went through the Cross.

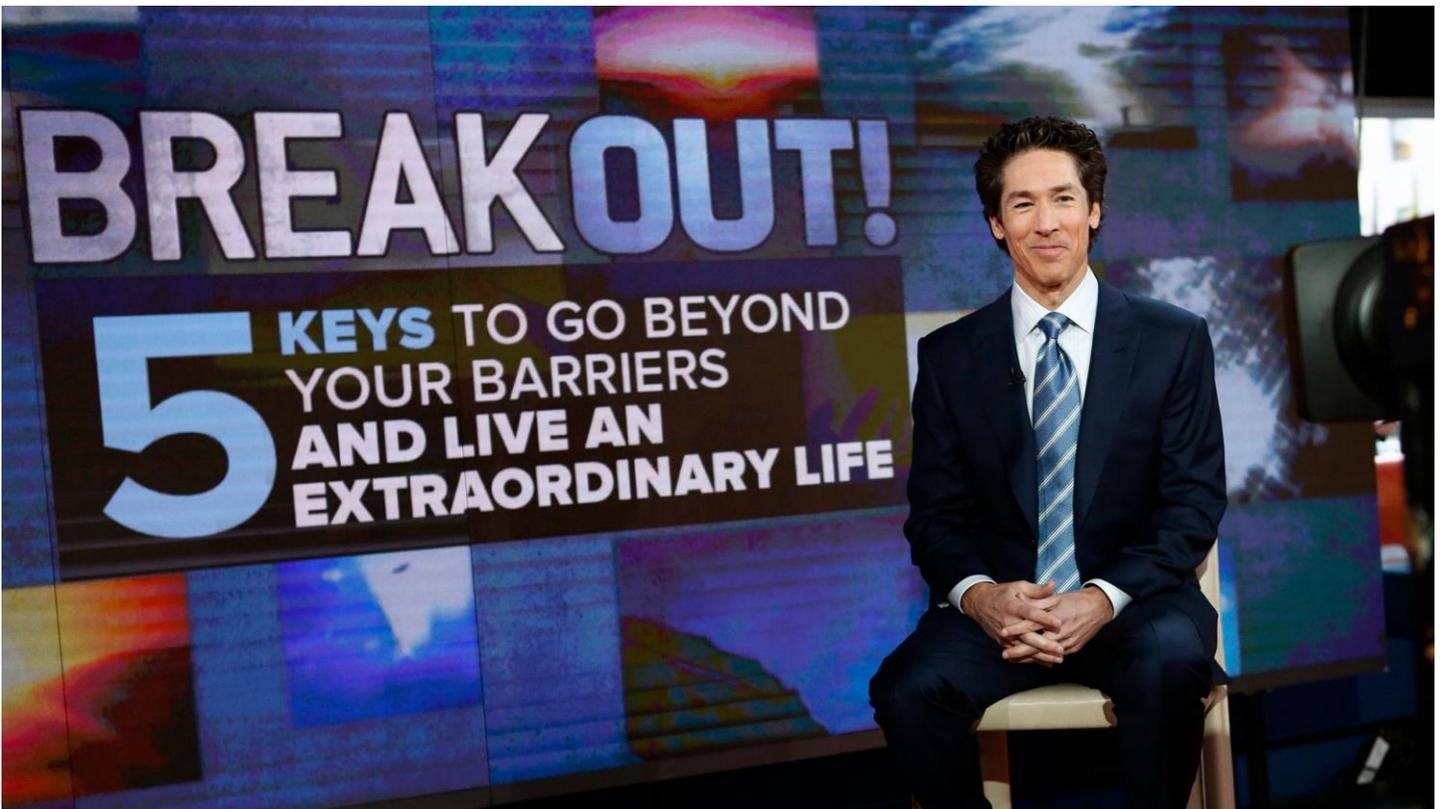
THE SUFFERING SERVANT

In about 240 A.D., so almost 1,800 years ago, Origen Adamantius said “Jesus did not do what Peter wanted, but came down from the mountain to those who could not go up it and see his transfiguration, so that they might at least see him as they were capable of seeing him.” Only a 100 years later, Ephrem the Syrian, said, “Peter is sharply censured, because it is his task to build the church on earth and not a hut on the mountain.”

Then in about 415 A.D. Augustine of Hippo closed his sermon on Christ’s Transfiguration like this... “Come down, Peter! ... Proclaim the word! Keep at it in season and out of season. Convict. Admonish.... Work.

Perspire. Endure torture.... Come down in order to work on earth, to serve on earth, to be despised, to be crucified on earth. Life comes down to be killed; bread comes down to be used up; the way comes down to become exhausted underway; the spring comes down to run dry. And you refuse to work? Do not seek what is yours. Have love. Proclaim the truth. Then you will come to eternity where you will find certainty!”

So many Christians today, especially in America, think like Peter once thought. They think being a child of Almighty God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, a friend of Glorified Jesus, grants to them a power, that if properly deciphered and decoded, if correctly harnessed and applied, if only recognized and embraced, the Christian person would want for nothing in this life, or the next... I've often wondered how you get to the next, if your every problem, illness and injury is immediately healed.



I once officiated a funeral where the deceased's spouse, adult kids and their pastor gathered around the coffin just before the service and tried to raise the person from the dead. It did not work and more than one of them implied that it was due to my lack of faith. If that's true, I'm confident the deceased will thank me when we meet again. I could tell a lot of similar stories... I have ministered to so many Christians over the years who simply cannot believe that tragedy has struck them... Cannot believe that a loving and merciful God would allow them to suffer.

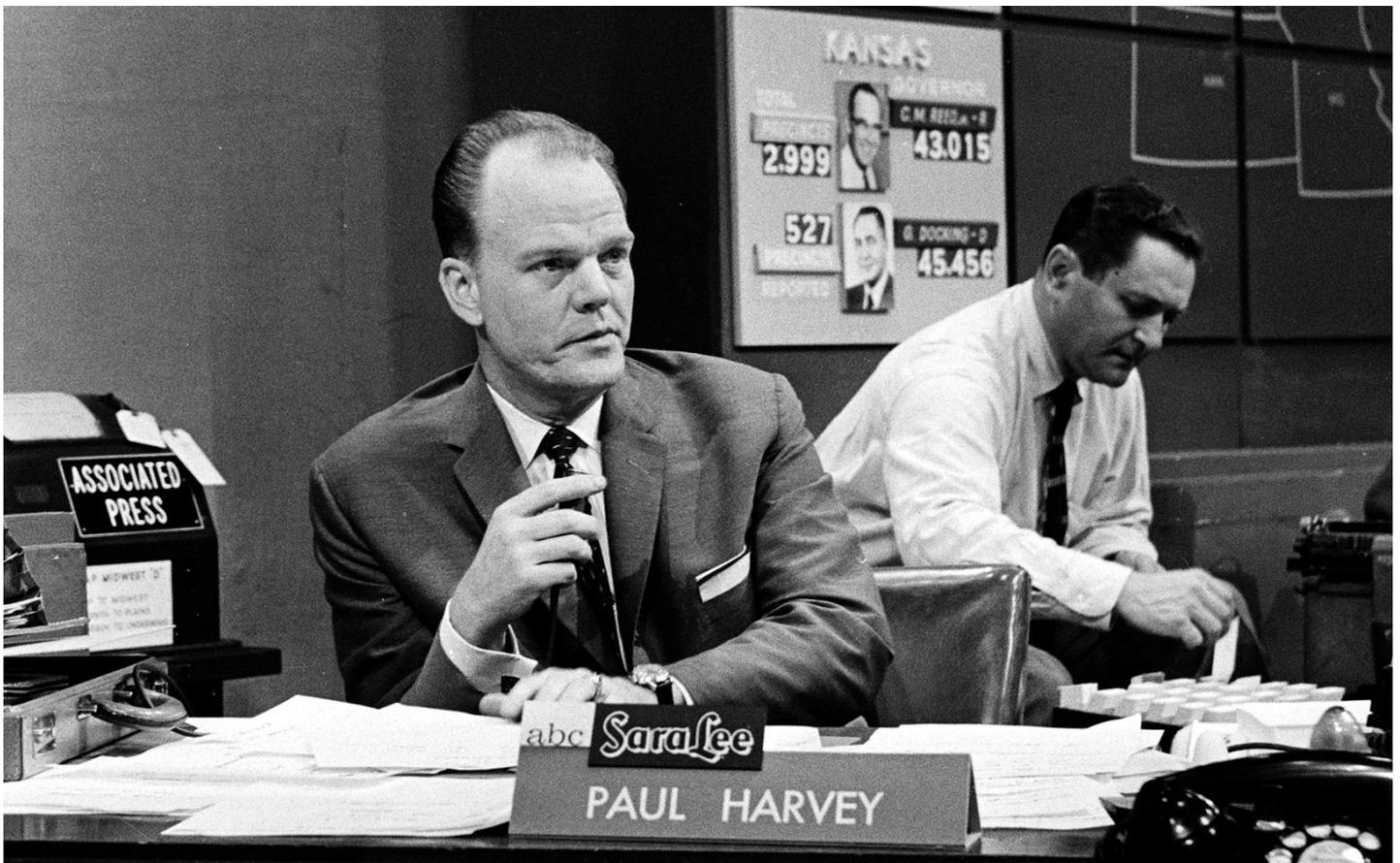
It's another perspective problem. Instead of why me, how about asking why not me? Instead of why me, how about asking why Him.

I saw a great quote... While it applies to young ladies, I think we can all get something from it... A good and loving man is someone who wipes away your tears, even after you left Him hanging on the cross for your sins. That's how you spell love.



My dear friends, just like Peter, we must be open to the full and correct revelation. It is as Paul taught in Romans 8:31-39, 31bNIVIf God is for us, who can be against us? 32He who did not spare his own Son, but

gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? The Father willingly and actually sacrificed the Word of God made flesh for us - After that, is there anything that He wouldn't give us? Is there any tiny bit of suffering that He wouldn't move heaven and earth to immediately eradicate?

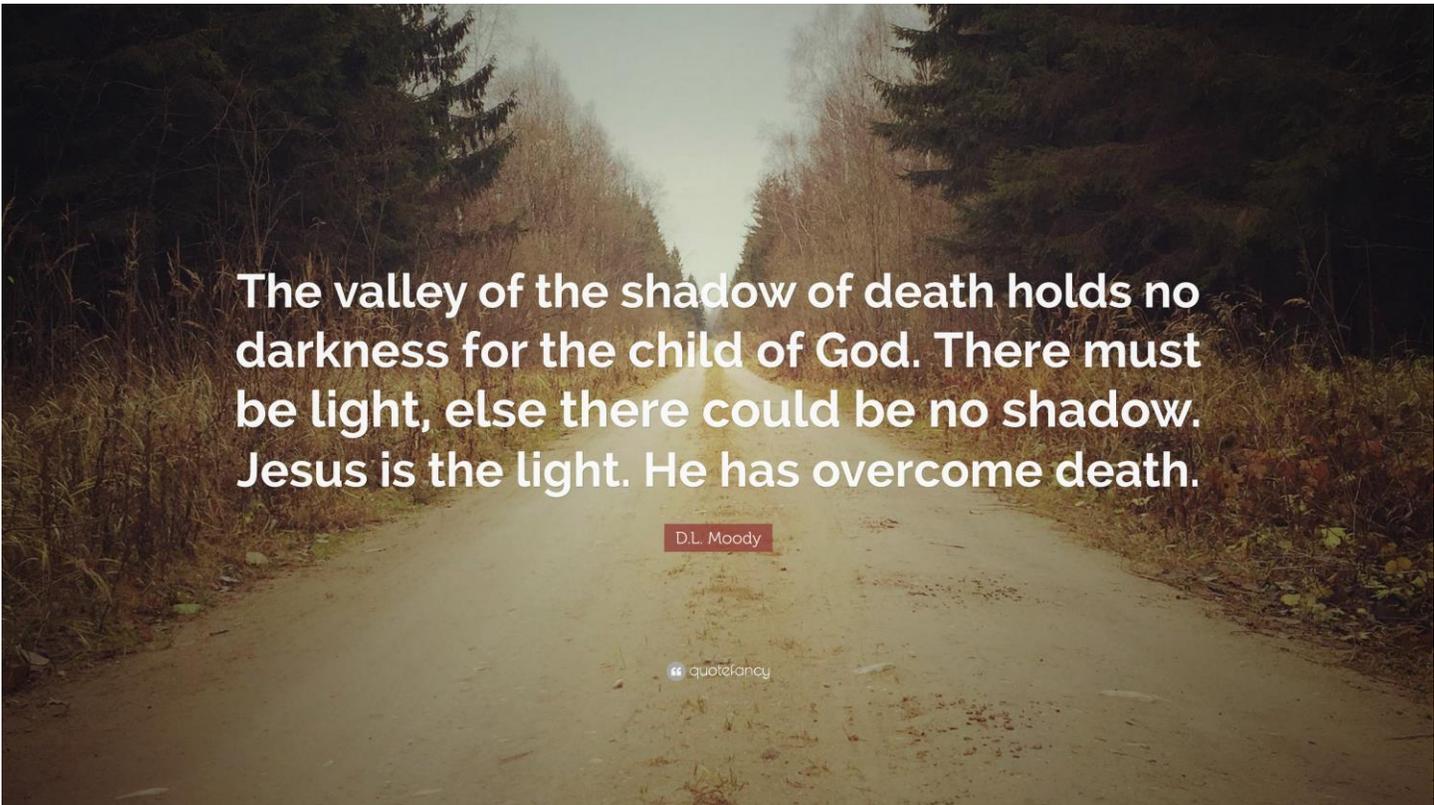


Well, the passage continues... 33NIVWho will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35aWho shall separate

us from the love of Christ? Okay, well we see that Paul is mostly talking about justification and our eternal reward, but still, if God loves us enough to hand Jesus over to the executioner for our salvation surely He will also ensure that we never endure any pain or discomfort either...

Again there's more, like me, Paul goes on...

35bNIV Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



The valley of the shadow of death holds no darkness for the child of God. There must be light, else there could be no shadow. Jesus is the light. He has overcome death.

D.L. Moody

quote fancy

It is through the valley of hardship, trial, tribulation, trouble, suffering and pain that we experience the faithfulness of God and are conformed to Him - conformed to the One who is Agapê. Unconditional, self-sacrificing love. It is our faith in Him built, not by mountain-top experiences, but when we are stretched beyond human capability. That is the crucible within which we grow to be like Him.

I heard a Marine say that the most important thing that he could hope for his people and for his own children was that they would continue to grow.

That seems strange. Not health, wealth, happiness. Not success, productivity, long-life, but continued growth.

Most people don't grow much. They shun growth - avoid it like the COVID 19 plague... Because growth always implies being vulnerable, looking dumb, failing often and so being afraid and struggling to get whatever it is to get. Learning something new is humbling - just ask some of the Elders learning to use Zoom over the last few weeks.

But when we are open to the struggle and push past our fears, the trial enables a perspective change. Instead of why am I not healed, it becomes why would I, or anyone else, ever be healed of anything? You see suffering creates a change from an entitlement mentality to a humbly grateful mentality.



I mean if you think about it, one of the biggest contributing factors to the Fall of mankind was an entitlement attitude in Adam and Eve.

Instead of being overwhelmed with humble gratitude for all that God had given them... "You may eat from every tree in the entire Garden, except this one." Full and unrestricted access to everything else - all the other trees, bushes, plants, grass, dandelions, what have you, are good; just avoid this lone tree in the middle... And that single restriction was their entire focus - what they did not have. There's a saying that I've mentioned before... What would tomorrow look like

if you only had the people and the things that you thanked God for today?

God has given everything - given Jesus - handed over what was most precious to Him - God has bled in order to provide an eternity in His Holy presence and we, like our forebears, grumble about what we don't have. Be humble - be grateful - be faithful - trust in Him.



So, off the mountain we go, and as we go, Jesus strongly commands Peter, James and John to tell no one what they saw, until after His resurrection.

There are a few elements here. First, we have another admonishment to keep the Messianic secret.

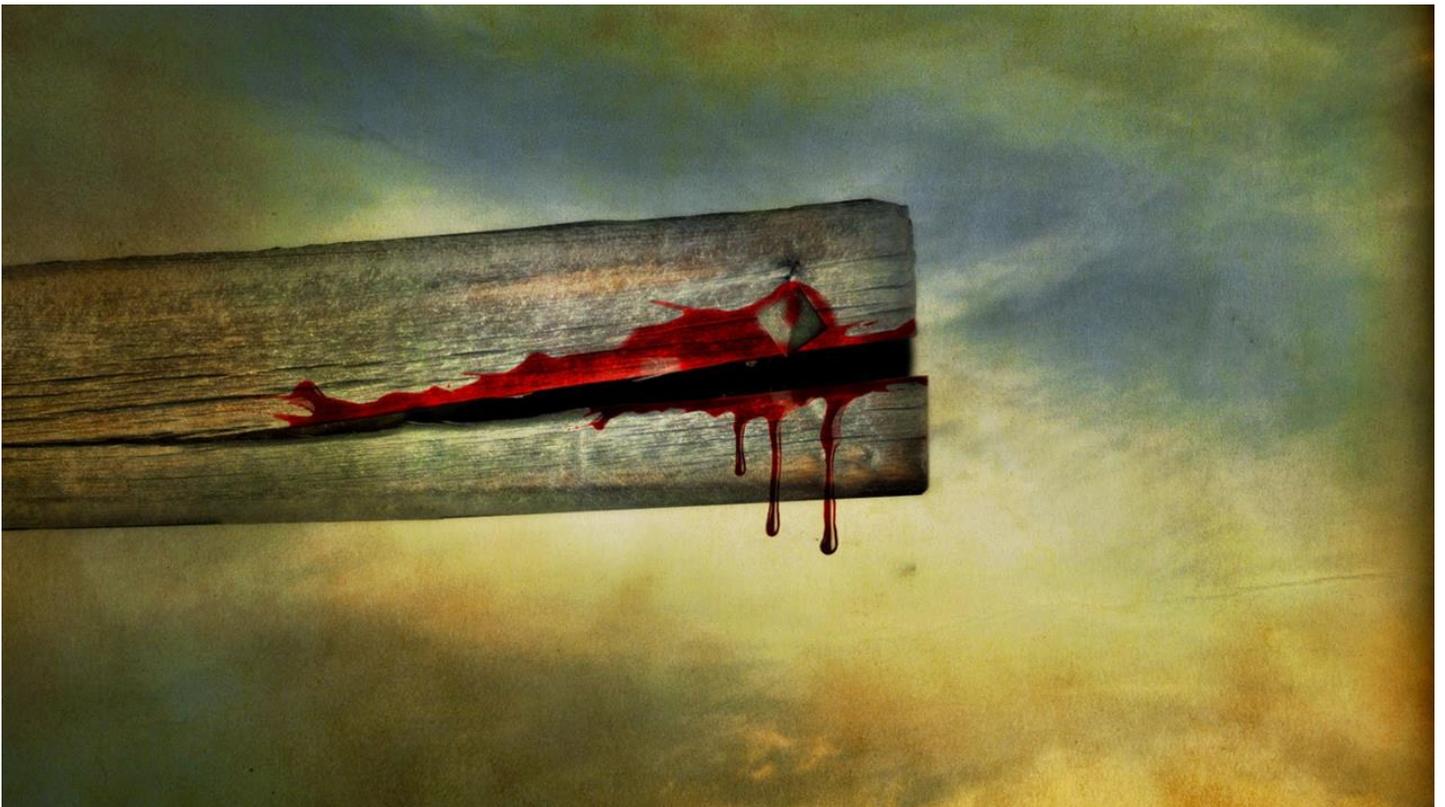


We've seen it before - the Gospels record Jesus commanding silence more than a dozen times. As one scholar put it, "A Christ without a cross is not the kind of Christ that Jesus intends to be." An even better way to understand it is that the mission that Jesus was on, could not be grasped until after it was over. Only after Jesus had died, been Resurrected and then Ascended, with a promise to return, could His ministry be correctly comprehended.

Widespread knowledge of His divinity would only serve to hinder his journey to what awaited Him in Jerusalem.

Here, the command to silence is to the “Inner circle,” and as far as we can tell, that included not telling even the other Disciples.

But, for the first time, we clearly see that it isn’t a permanent injunction. In fact, they will be required to speak boldly of it after the Resurrection.



That brings us to the final element here. There cannot be a Resurrection without a preceding death. Jesus

cannot be raised from the dead, without first being dead.



That's why the Son of Man title is used. The Son of God can't die, but the Son of God made the Son of Man can. So, once again, the specter of an ugly death is cast to the fore.

It is interesting that once again Jesus talks about His supernatural, glorious, never seen before, never seen since, bodily Resurrection and all anyone hears is that He's going to die.

That leads us to the question in verse 10 and helps us make sense of it... They, and by “They,” it’s probably Peter, ask Jesus, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

The guys just saw Jesus radiating the Shekinah Glory from within Himself - they saw Moses, they heard God the Father thunder, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” They saw the physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit power and they saw the great prophet Elijah speaking to Jesus.

They would have quickly remembered that Jesus had already taught them that John the Baptist was Elijah. In Matthew 11:14, Jesus told them, “John himself is Elijah who was to come.” But the Elijah they just saw wasn’t John.

And then, even after all of that, glory and confusion, Jesus was still saying that He was going to die. It made absolutely no sense whatsoever. They’re thinking, we just witnessed all of that - we just saw the real Elijah who was to come and ready everything standing with You - how could this possibly end badly? What is it that we’re missing?

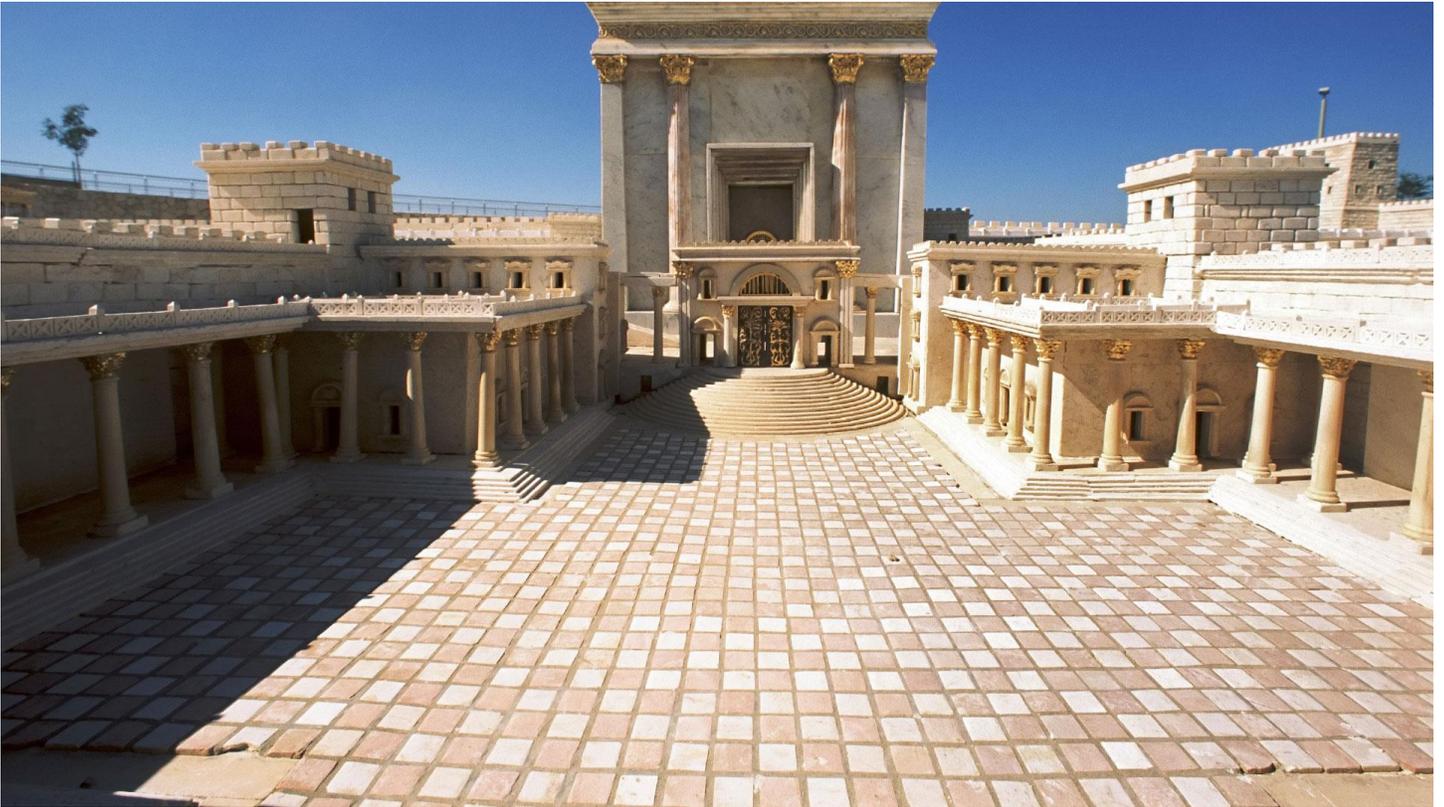
Malachi was the final prophet of God before a nearly 500-year long drought preceding John the Baptist and Jesus. Tertullian, writing in about 200 A.D., called the Book of Malachi, “The skirt and boundary of Christianity.”

MALACHI 4:4-6, ⁴NIV“REMEMBER THE LAW OF MY SERVANT MOSES, THE DECREES AND LAWS I GAVE HIM AT HOREB FOR ALL ISRAEL. ⁵“SEE, I WILL SEND THE PROPHET ELIJAH TO YOU BEFORE THAT GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY OF THE LORD COMES. ⁶HE WILL TURN THE HEARTS OF THE PARENTS TO THEIR CHILDREN, AND THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN TO THEIR PARENTS; OR ELSE I WILL COME AND STRIKE THE LAND WITH TOTAL DESTRUCTION.”

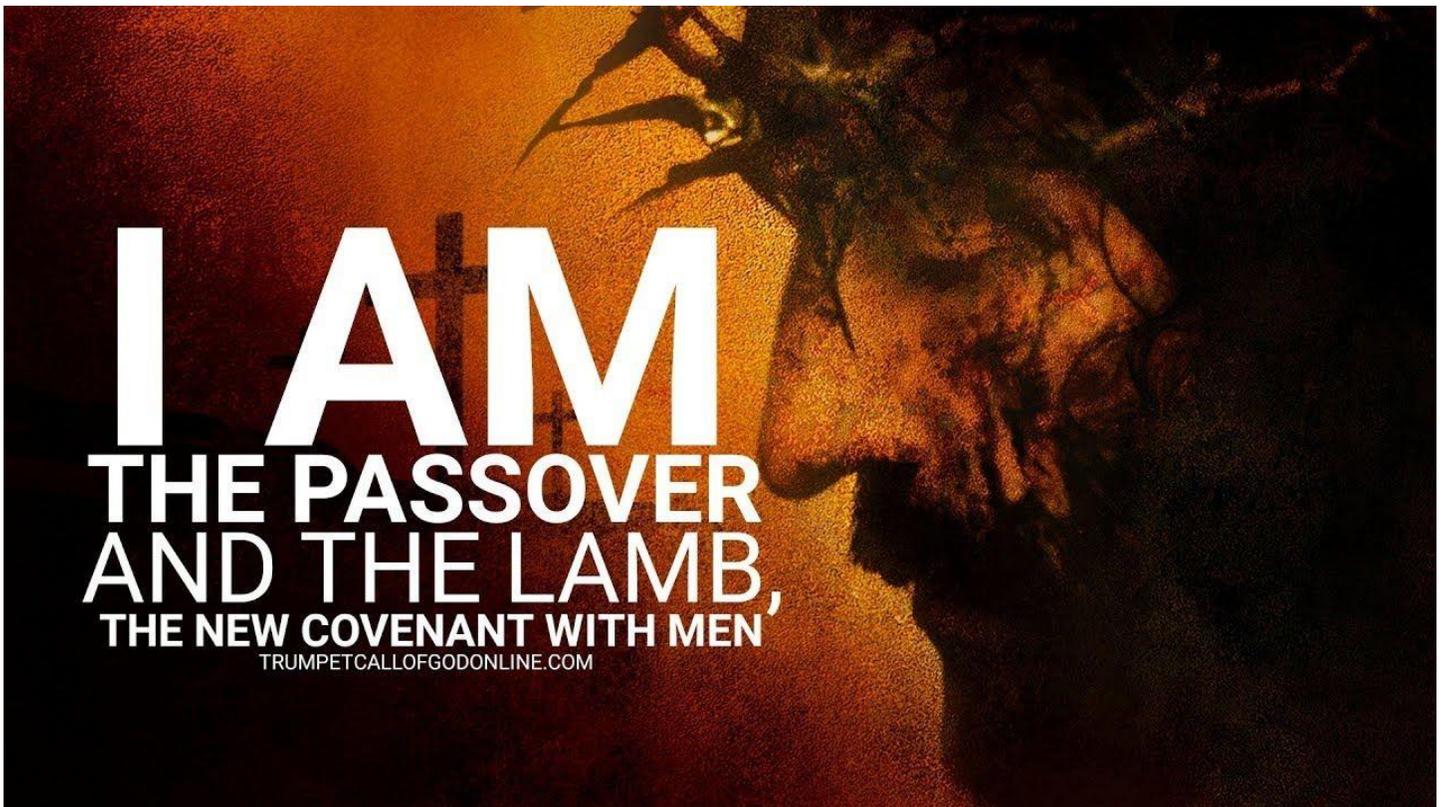
In Malachi 4:4-6, the prophet recorded the Words of God, ⁴NIV“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. ⁵“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. ⁶He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

The bit about the hearts of parents and children actually means that whole families will be of one accord in their devotion to God. That's confirmed by Jesus. The Malachi passage says nothing directly about Elijah "Restoring all things," but that's the way the Disciples understood it, meaning that's the way the Scribes understood it and Jesus confirmed that understanding when He said, "Elijah is coming and will restore all things," in verse 11.

The gist then of Malachi's prophecy was that the Jews were to remain wholly devoted to God as outlined in the Scripture. And that eventually God would send Elijah to prepare the way for His coming.



That part is back in Malachi chapter 3, and continuing there, we see that after Elijah's ministry in preparing the way for the Lord, the Lord will come to His Temple and then essentially, God asks, when I come, what mortal can stand before Me? Who can endure the righteous judgement of the Lord? The answer is no one and that's why He will bring about a New Covenant to those humble enough to realize their need of a New Covenant that is unilaterally God's.



So, going back to the end of Malachi we see that if the Jews don't earnestly follow the Scripture and if they do not heed Elijah then they will be cursed. God will "Come and strike the land with total destruction."

The guys don't directly quote the Malachi Scripture; they quote the teaching of the Scripture experts. Why? Well, God the Father just commanded them to, "Listen to Jesus."

Jesus keeps talking about dying. The Scripture seems to say that once Elijah comes, everything is going to be good - at least for the faithful Jews. We just saw Elijah. How can we have anything remotely resembling defeat

now? That's what the Biblical scholars of the day would say... There must be a disconnect and it can't be with the Scripture itself... There must be a problem with the expert's interpretation... Could You please explain this to us Lord?

When we see what's going on and the thought process involved, the question isn't dumb at all - it makes perfect sense... We will listen to You Jesus, but we are completely confused by what we've been taught, what we just witnessed and by what You're telling us about Your future... And by extension our future.



After confirming the Scribe's understanding of Elijah's

role, Jesus shows them, in verse 12, the disconnect. Yes, Elijah must come first and yes, he came to straighten the way for the Lord and to turn the hearts of the people back to God so that they would be receptive to the Lord... And that's precisely what he already did.

John the Baptizer came and preached repentance. What does that mean? Repentance at its core is an acknowledgment of imperfection - an acknowledgement of a need for change, a need for help - a need for mercy.

Repentance is a perspective change that is all about a sincere heart. It is impossible to be repentant without first being humble. James 4:6 quotes the Old Testament Scripture; God showers His Grace upon the humble and at the same time is actively opposed to the proud. Jesus repeatedly taught that the humble would be lifted up and the proud would be brought down.

No Jewish person would allow a grasshopper-eating wild-eyed itinerant preacher dunk them in the Jordan River unless that Jewish person was truly desirous of being right with God while simultaneously acknowledging to the whole world publicly that they were unworthy in themselves. That's humbleness.

As I've pointed out many times, the Bible confirms that the people who submitted to John's baptism were the very people able to accept Jesus, while conversely those too proud to be baptized were the same ones who later murdered God among us (Luke 7:29&30).

Elijah did come and he did turn the hearts of families toward God and in so doing he did prepare the way for Jesus... What no Jewish person got, was what a monumental failure that ministry would prove to be from a human perspective.

Because the Jews, by and large, became proud in their own ability to be worthy of God's favor, they missed His prophet and because of that, they missed Him too. A seeming failure for sure, but God always has a more perfect plan. The seeming failure allowed for millions of Gentiles to become the children of God.

The religious leaders mistreated John the Baptist - they heckled him and harassed him and ultimately the most Jewish of the rulers of the time had him imprisoned and then executed.

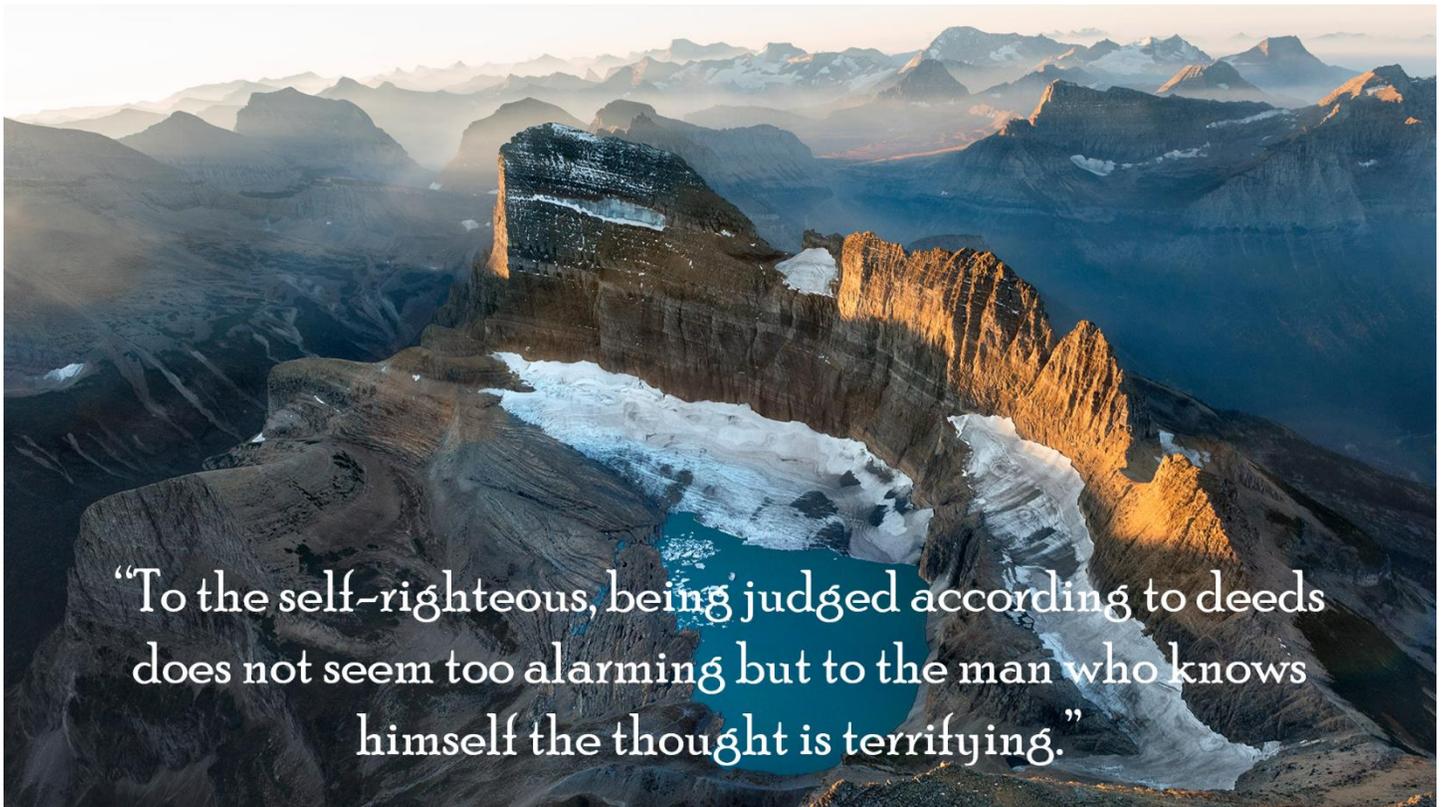
John paved the way for Jesus in that regard as well... What was done to John was merely a foretaste of what was to come for the Messiah.



The way to the Temple was prepared for the Lord and that's what Palm Sunday is all about. Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem as He had resolutely determined. We could say that He was stoic, but that's not right, what He was, was trustingly obedient.

See the difference? We Christians are not fatalistic; we are Believers in God and therefore in His plan. We are not defeatists; we are victors within His Will.

On Palm Sunday 20 centuries ago, Jerusalem was full of pilgrims who were themselves full of hope. It was the time of the Passover when everyone was excited with the expectation of the coming of the Lord - the arrival of the great Messiah who would set everything right.



Of course, as we said, the majority of Jews were confident in their own goodness and fully believed that the Messiah would usher in nothing but wonderful things for them.

They were convinced that God’s Anointed would bless them beyond comprehension while He would curse their enemies, likewise, beyond comprehension.

What never occurred to them was that they were themselves God's enemies. Their reliance on religion, which is to say their reliance upon their own efforts, goodness and performance, instead of on God's mercy made them people who were repulsed by God's prophet John and by His Anointed One, Jesus.



Are we in that same danger? I mean let's take a moment and be honest about it. Do we sometimes think we're better than we are? That's subjective, how about better than others? That's probably the easiest litmus test for self-righteousness.

I don't mean what you tell other people, or even what you tell yourself, I mean the initial visceral impulse you get when you see a sinner?

Are you judgmental? Do you feel comfortable critiquing everyone and everything? Do you find yourself regularly engaged in fixing what's wrong with the world? Have you ever wondered how you got that position and why you feel qualified for the task?

Unless you're a trained counselor, teacher, physician, instructor, pastor, expert, scholar, etc. who has been specifically sought out for your professional advice, the reason you have the position and feel qualified to render your opinion is because you think highly of yourself.

It can be called pride. If we're a little harsher we could call it haughty arrogance. When it relates to what we're talking about now, we call it self-righteousness.

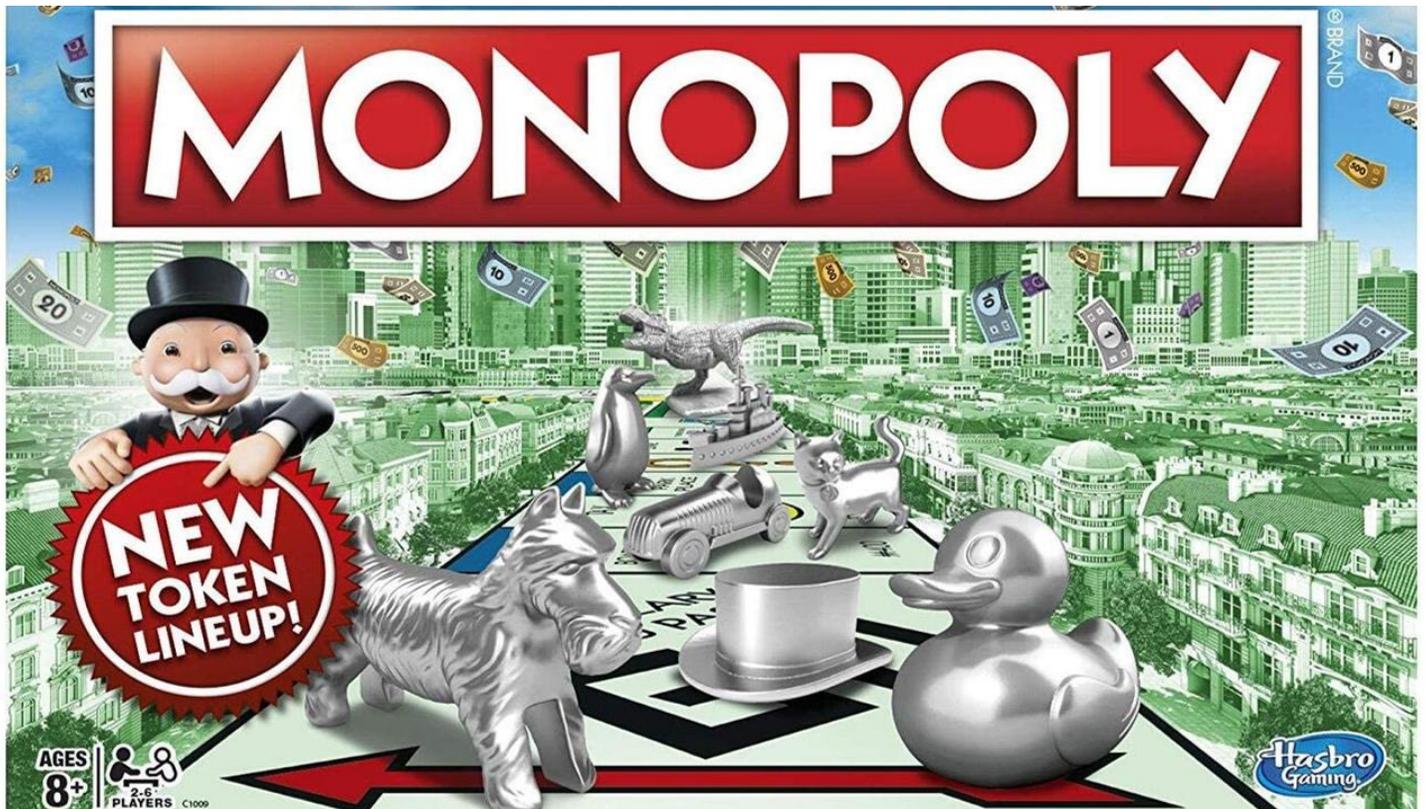
Before you get too offended, or maybe to offend even more, let me say that I don't know anyone who isn't in this boat. That's not to let anyone off the hook. You can't use that to relax a bit and say well it's universal -

just another human trait - I'm not alone, so I don't need to get too worked up.

Wrong. You need to get worked up - we all do. I know some of you are thinking, well, no, I don't really have that problem. Wrong again.

You may not look down your nose at, what could be termed, the down and out, struggling with sin, weak, discarded, disenfranchised, disaffected people, but I'll bet you are extremely judgmental of those seen as highly functioning successful people.

People who seem to have it all - everything going their way - everything easy... They struggle with the same issues facing the most dysfunctional people in our society. They just do a better job of hiding it because they do a better job of playing the game, we call the American Dream.



My point is that we must all guard against the self-righteous attitude that so easily entangles, and the first step is acknowledging that you have the disease.

The prophet Malachi shared God's intention 450 years before it happened and the people were unprepared, because they had misinterpreted the meaning.

I mentioned it earlier - it's time to just read it. Malachi 3:1–2, 1NIV "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the Lord of

hosts. 2“But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap.

On Palm Sunday 20 centuries ago, the Jewish people were eager for the Lord to come a rescue them from their lot in life.

The Jews as a whole, hated their own leaders, they loathed the Romans, they despised the Samaritans, they were disgusted by Gentiles in general, they looked down on Jews who were more religious than them and looked down on Jews who were less scrupulous than them and the Anointed One was going to fix it all - in other words, He was going to fix everyone else.

What they didn’t grasp was verse 2. “Who can endure the day of His coming?” “Who can stand?” The people then, just as the people today, must fully embrace the fact that no one can endure - no one can stand - unless they humbly, gratefully allow the Lord to cause them to stand.