

ISAIAH 53:

THE JESUS-REJECTING JEWS' WORST NIGHTMARE!

JAN LILLEBY

□□□□ **B**efore getting to the chapter 53, I shall give a short background□□ on this central Bible prophet. Clipped from the Britannica Lexicon I chose the following info,

“Isaiah□□ (flourished 8th century□□ bce, Jerusalem) was a prophet after whom the biblical□□ [Book of Isaiah](#)□□ is named (only some of the first 39 chapters are□□ [attributed](#)□□ to him), a significant contributor to□□ [Jewish](#)□□ and [Christian](#)□□ traditions. His call to prophecy about 742□□ bce□□ coincided with the beginnings of the westward expansion of the□□ [Assyrian empire](#), which threatened [Israel](#)□□ and which Isaiah proclaimed to be a warning from God to a godless people.

The earliest recorded event in his life is his call to prophecy as now found in the sixth chapter of the Book of Isaiah; this occurred about 742□□ bce. The vision (probably in the□□ [Jerusalem Temple](#)) that made him a prophet is described in a first-person narrative. According to this account he “saw” God and was overwhelmed by his contact with the divine glory and holiness. He became agonizingly aware of God’s need for a messenger to the people of□□ [Israel](#), and, despite his own sense of inadequacy, he offered himself for God’s service: “Here am I! Send me.” He was thus□□ [commissioned](#)□□ to give voice to the divine word. It was no light undertaking; he was to condemn his own people and watch the nation crumble and perish. As he tells it, he was only too aware that, coming with such a message, he would experience bitter opposition, willful disbelief, and ridicule, to withstand which he would have to be inwardly fortified. All this came to him in the form of a vision and ended as a sudden, firm, and lifelong resolve.

Of Isaiah’s parental home it is known only that his father’s name was Amoz. Since he often spoke with kings, it is sometimes suggested that Isaiah was an aristocrat, possibly even of royal stock. The same reasoning, however, might apply to any number of prophets; from Nathan in□□ [David’s](#)□□ time onward, prophets had dealings with kings and were, like Isaiah, well informed about public affairs. Moreover, Isaiah’s sympathies were emphatically with the victimized poor, not with the courtiers and well-to-do. Also, it is sometimes argued that he was of a priestly family, but his

knowledge of cultic matters and the fact that his [commissioning](#) seemingly occurred in the [Temple](#) in [Jerusalem](#) are slender evidence for his priestly descent as against his unreserved condemnation of the priests and their domain: "I am fed up with roasting rams and the grease of fattened beasts," he has God proclaim in a famous passage in the first chapter.

One could argue with equal force that Isaiah is descended from a family of prophets (though his father, the otherwise unknown Amoz, is not to be confused with the prophet [Amos](#)). He is thoroughly schooled in the traditional forms and language of prophetic speech. It is an educated speech—strong, vivid, the finest of classical [Hebrew](#). Isaiah is particularly well acquainted with the prophetic tradition known to his slightly older contemporary, [Amos](#). Four eminent Hebrew prophets addressed themselves to the people of Israel and Judah in the latter half of the 8th pre-Christian century: Amos, [Hosea](#), [Micah](#), and Isaiah. Strangely, no evidence suggests that any of these knew in person any of the others. Seemingly, they were apart and alone, yet Isaiah and Amos follow essentially the same lines of thought and differ significantly only in that Amos had addressed the northern kingdom (Israel) while Isaiah would emphatically include Judah and Jerusalem. The basic similarities in style and substance strongly suggest influence, direct or indirect, of the one on the other—and both [invoke](#) a recognizable Israelite tradition."
End of Britannica quote.

CHAPTER 53 – THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES WHICH CLEARLY POINTED DIRECTLY TO JESUS CHRIST

Notice that when Acts 8 tells of Philip teaching the Ethiopian Marshall (eunuch), it so happened that this delegate from Queen Candace's government was reading Isa. 53 among other passages. The queen's servant had been in Jerusalem during Passover and Pentecost, obviously as a believing proselyte, 7-8 years later than Acts 2, which gives us around 35-36 CE. It says nothing of him whether this was his first visit to Jerusalem. Maybe he had been there before?

His question to Philip came naturally,

...Tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?

The passage reads, Acts 8:32-34, NASB,

«32 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.»

33 "IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH."

34 The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?"

34 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him."

Editor's emphasize.

What this humble believing Ethiopian official did, after first hearing Philip's teaching on Jesus the Messiah, was what the entire Israeli nation should have done: Receiving Jesus as Savior and gotten baptized. But the nation refused this, as a whole, and ended up being destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. As we all know from history. Destruction came because they persecuted and killed His apostles (Mat. 22:7). The Jews – a majority of them – still rejects Jesus as their Messiah, and they will not have Isa. 53 read to them in the synagogues.

Isa. 52:13-15 is a short sequel which is heralding the Messiah we will be presented in chapter 53, and it reads,

"13 Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted."

14 Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men."

15 Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand."

Isaiah was heralding the First Advent of Jesus Christ...the King of kings, the Lord of lords, - Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him, he wrote.

But when thus arriving at chapter 53 – voila! A shock hits you...for this high person, the Messiah before Whom even Kings will shut up, He is seen as a suffering, miserable tortured individual, as verse 14 quotes: So His appearance was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.

THE MESSIANIC SUFFERINGS

Isa. 53:1-12, NASB,

"1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

2□□ For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.□□

3□□ He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.□□

4□□ Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.□□

5□□ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.□□

6□□ All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.□□

7□□ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.□□

8□□ By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?□□

9□□ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.□□

10□□ But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.□□

11□□ As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.□□

12□□ Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because * He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors."□□

How on God's green earth can the majority of Jewry today – after nearly 2000 years of Christian teaching and preaching still shut their eyes for Isaiah 53 – which is THE Bible passage□□ **telling the many details**□□ found with Jesus, before, during and after the crucifixion in 28 CE in

Jerusalem?

It has become a byword, in many nations, that **Isaiah 53** has become the Jesus-rejecting Jews' worst nightmare; like already indicated in my headline above.

Everything in Isa. 53, seem clearly to fit ONLY the reported history of Jesus Christ. No other person in the entire history of man fits that prophecy, - ONLY Jesus does. No wonder that this chapter was the *one picked by the Holy Spirit* to be noted in Acts 8 and the ministry of Philip to the Ethiopian official.

SHORT COMMENTS VERSE BY VERSE

VERSE 1:

A stern warning to Jewry for their persistent rejection of Jesus Messiah, foretelling of the sad fact that they will keep up their rejection *to the bitter end!* *Who has believed our message?* Sources say that there are about 12000-15000 Messianic Jews in Israel today. A typical minority. They suffer discrimination and persecution it is reported. Check internet.

VERSE 2:

Jesus did not make any remarkable deeds or was noticed by the public as He grew up in Nazareth, and He did not come forth dressed in 'royal garment' and rich attire – that of kings and national leaders. His appearance was literally quite a *humble* thing. This verse speaks of course of *how Jesus was seen* by the inhabitants...that is, His outwardly looks. No gold, silver and pearls...and he was followed by a bunch of (poor?) fishermen from Galilee and some others.

VERSE 3:

This verse 'turns up the heat' regarding how Jesus suffered pure disgust and rejection in several ways. This verse was used to *describe Jesus* in the known Oratorio by G. F. Handel, often sung in the Christmas and Passover seasons, 'Messiah' – going: *“He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”*

VERSE 4:

Here we are at the cross, as Jesus took upon Him all the sin of His people, but it could outwardly seem as if He was judged by God as a sinner...hanging on a despicable Roman cross. *We esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

VERSE 5:

This verse is the one which undoubtedly can be pointing to

ONE person only: Jesus Christ. It is a painful gruesome description of how the Roman nails were hammered through His hands and feet, to hang on that wooden cross on the Golgotha cliff right outside the walls of ancient Jerusalem in 28 CE. Remember, Isaiah spoke **as a Jew to the Jews**, thus saying...there is a special Jewish man Who will be tortured and PIERCED for *our transgressions*. The big Roman nails entirely pierced through Jesus' hands and feet. There exists NO OTHER JEWISH MAN in history Who could be mistaken for Jesus. Only Jesus fulfilled this unique prophecy by Isaiah seven hundred years before it happened.

VERSE 6:

The importance of the suffering of Messiah on the cross is repeated by Isaiah, *but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him*.

VERSE 7:

Here it tells of Jesus appearing before Pilate receiving his verdict: He is innocent! However, the people present at the hearing shouted, Crucify, crucify!! And the Gospels testify that Jesus was silent; Pilate's astonishment in Mat. 27:12-14 says it all, NASB,

12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer.

13 Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?"

*14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the **governor was quite amazed**."*

VERSE 8:

Jesus died on the cross – Isaiah used an almost poetic terminology in telling of Messiah's death. *He was cut off, out of the land of the living*.

VERSE 9:

A prophecy of Jesus being laid in the tomb originally owned by a rich man. This rich man was Joseph of Arimathea, Mat. 27:57-60, NASB, reads -

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.

58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.

59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away".

Being care taken thus by that rich man, was pointed out by

Isaiah as a sign: Jesus was a man of *total innocence!* He suffered NOT for His eventual sins, but for the sins of the Jewish people.

Peter told his audiences straight forward, Acts 2:36-39, NASB,

"36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -this Jesus whom you crucified."

*37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren *, what shall we do?"*

38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

39 "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

VERSE 10:

This is pointing to the fact that the atonement of Jesus at the cross, would lead to success, in that the Lord would save people through this work, and it all will prosper and grow.

VERSE 11:

Lines up with verse 10 in the same kind of message, in that salvation comes to the people etcetera.

VERSE 12:

Jesus would experience to be greatly exalted by God, since He took upon Him the transgressions of the people. We could say that this pointed to His ascension. Paul gives us detailed description on the high stature of Christ, Col. 2:13-19, NASB,

"13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

16□□ *Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-*□□

17□□ *things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.*□□

18□□ *Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,*□□

19□□ *and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God."*□□

I am not□□ so optimistic on behalf of the present day Jewry, and their relations regarding Jesus Christ.□□

Over eighty percent of Israel's inhabitants are Talmudic regarding religion. They do not believe on Jesus as their Messiah. Had they only taken Isaiah 53 to heart, seeing that it□□ speaks of Jesus Christ, things might not have gone sideways for them. But I am afraid that it will take that prophesied 'Great Tribulation' to come upon Israel, before they will call upon Jesus Christ for salvation.

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**MICHAEL'S ENCOUNTER WITH SATAN:
MOSES WAS RESURRECTED!
JAN LILLEBY**

In this article I have clipped in two articles from the web to give opinions on Michael's encounter with Satan in regard to Moses having died.

CLIPPED IN FROM:□□ *Biblicalhermeneutics.stackexchange.com* □
website.

(On the incident in Jude verse 9, Satan and Michael in

dispute over the dead body of Moses).

Origen claims that the Letter of Jude picked up the story of Michael and the devil arguing over the body of Moses from a Jewish text called the *Ascension of Moses*.

Origen, *De Principiis* 3.2.1



We have now to notice, agreeably to the statements of Scripture, how the opposing powers, or the devil himself, contends with the human race, inciting and instigating men to sin. And in the first place, in the book of Genesis, the serpent is described as having seduced Eve; regarding whom, in the work entitled *The Ascension of Moses* (a little treatise, of which the Apostle Jude makes mention in his Epistle), the archangel Michael, when disputing with the devil regarding the body of Moses, says that the serpent, being inspired by the devil, was the cause of Adam and Eve's transgression.

References to this apocryphal story are found in early Christian literature.

[The text we have](#) which is titled the *Ascension of Moses*, however, does not contain this particular event. It may be that our text is missing the section containing the story of the dispute over Moses' body, or we may have misidentified which text we have.

Richard Bauckham, arguing that the various references to the story are independent of the Letter of Jude, attempts to reconstruct the story's key points (*Word Biblical Commentary: Jude, 2 Peter, 65-76*, bold is mine):

“Joshua accompanied Moses up Mount Nebo, where God showed Moses the land of promise. Moses then sent Joshua back to the people to inform them of Moses' death, and Moses died. God sent the archangel Michael to remove the body of Moses to another place and bury it there, but Samma'el, **the devil, opposed him, disputing Moses' right to honorable burial.** The text may also have said that he wished to take the body to the people for them to make it an object of worship. Michael and the devil therefore engaged in a **dispute over the body.** The devil brought against Moses a charge of murder, because he smote the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. But this accusation was no better than slander (βλασφημία) against Moses, and Michael not tolerating this slander, said to the devil, "May the Lord rebuke you, devil!" At that the devil took flight, and Michael removed the body to the place commanded by God,

where he buried it with his own hands. Thus no one saw the burial of Moses.

The base form of the story seems influenced by Zechariah 3. Ruth Reese (*2 Peter and Jude*, 50) summarizes the analogies:

The scene in Zech 3:1-5 is a dispute in which Joshua the high priest is accused by Satan, and the angel of the Lord acts as God's emissary, while the Lord himself rebukes Satan using the words that will later appear in Jude, "the Lord rebuke you." Here we see both the angel as God's messenger or representative (the role that Michael has in the dispute in Jude), and we see Satan as the accuser, one who forms one side of the dispute. This is part of the role that the devil has in Jude 9."

Another website, has the following to say in the matter, gotquestions.com,

"Jude verse 9 refers to an event which is found nowhere else in Scripture. Michael had to struggle or dispute with Satan about the body of Moses, but what that entailed is not described. Another angelic struggle is related by Daniel, who describes an angel coming to him in a vision. This angel, named Gabriel in [Daniel 8:16](#) and [9:21](#), tells Daniel that he was "resisted" by a demon called "the prince of Persia" until the archangel Michael came to his assistance ([Daniel 10:13](#)). So we learn from Daniel that angels and demons fight spiritual battles over the souls of men and nations, and that the demons resist angels and try to prevent them from doing God's bidding. Jude tells us that Michael was sent by God to deal in some way with the body of Moses, which God Himself had buried after Moses' death ([Deuteronomy 34:5-6](#)).

Various theories have been put forth as to what this struggle over Moses' body was about. One is that Satan, ever the accuser of God's people ([Revelation 12:10](#)), may have resisted the raising of Moses to eternal life on the grounds of Moses' sin at [Meribah](#) ([Deuteronomy 32:51](#)) and his murder of the Egyptian ([Exodus 2:12](#)).

Some have supposed that the reference in Jude is the same as the passage in [Zechariah 3:1-2](#), "Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the LORD said to Satan, 'The LORD rebuke you, O Satan!'" But the objections to this being the same incident are obvious: (1) The only similarity between the two passages is the expression, "the Lord rebuke you." (2) The name "Michael" does not occur at all in the passage in Zechariah. (3) There is no mention made of the "body of Moses" in Zechariah, and no allusion to it whatever.

It has also been supposed that Jude is quoting an apocryphal book that contained this account, and that Jude means to confirm that the account is true. Origen (c. 185–254), an early Christian scholar and theologian, mentions the book “The Assumption of Moses” as extant in his time, containing this very account of the contest between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses. That book, now lost, was a Jewish Greek book, and Origen supposed that this was the source of the account in Jude.□□

The only material question, then, is whether the story is “true.” Whatever the origin of the account, Jude does in fact seem to refer to the contest between Michael and the devil as true. He speaks of it in the same way in which he would have done if he had spoken of the death of Moses or of his smiting the rock. And who can prove that it is not true? What evidence is there that it is not? There are many allusions in the Bible to angels. We know that the archangel Michael is real; there is frequent mention of the devil; and there are numerous affirmations that both bad and good angels are employed in important transactions on the earth. As the nature of this particular dispute over Moses’ body is wholly unknown, conjecture is useless. We do not know whether there was an argument over possession of the body, burial of the body, or anything□□ else.

These two things we do know, however: first, Scripture is inerrant. The inerrancy of Scripture is one of the pillars of the Christian faith. As Christians, our goal is to approach Scripture reverently and prayerfully, and when we find something we do not understand, we pray harder, study more, and—if the answer still eludes us—humbly acknowledge our own limitations in the face of the perfect □□ □□□ Word of□□ God.

Second,□□ [Jude 9](#)□□ is the supreme illustration of how Christians are to deal with Satan and demons. The example of Michael refusing to pronounce a curse upon Satan should be a lesson to Christians in how to relate to demonic forces. Believers are not to address them, but rather to seek the Lord’s intervening power against them. If as powerful a being as Michael deferred to the Lord in dealing with Satan, who are we to attempt to reproach, cast out, or command demons in our own strength?”

THE EDITOR’S OPINION IN THIS MATTER

□□□□ Finally I shall offer my opinion in this matter, as the editor...yours truly, hoping at least that it will show

that the fact is *that Moses is alive today!* And he shall come down back from heaven together with Elijah. There is precedence of the two ministering together, as they met with Jesus on Mt. Tabor, Mat. 17:1-4, NASB,

1 Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves.

2 And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.

3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

4 Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."



It is evident that the three disciples Peter, James and John understood this encounter as one very real physical visit of the two known prophets in OT. This was so real to them that Peter offered to build three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah. Thus we can safely conclude that the two prophets are alive. It is also much possible that it was Jesus Himself who told the disciples who these two men were. We find nothing in the texts that implies the two presented themselves. I am sure that the disciples could in no way recognize the two, since accurate photography did not exist in their time. Jesus must have been the one who named the two...thus we know that His telling is entirely correct. There are some Bible expositors that hold that both Moses as well as Elijah is R.I.P. – dead. But they couldn't be more wrong. Peter understood that the two prophets were real, and actually **alive**, thus his suggestion to build a tabernacle for Jesus, Elijah and Moses. IMAGE: Mt. Tabor, Israel.

I am convinced that these are the future 'Two Witnesses' described in Rev. 11.

Luke also gives us a testimony of the two, as real physical men – Luke 9:28-31, NASB,

28 Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to

pray.□□

29□□ *And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming.*□□

30□□ *And behold,□□ **two□□ men**□□ were talking with Him; and they were□□ **Moses**□□ and□□ **Elijah**,*□□

31□□ *who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."*

In the two different articles I clipped from the internet, one from□□ *biblicalhermeneutics.stackexchange.com*□□ and one from□□ *gotquestions.com*,□□ we find that the first proposed that the arch angel Michael – after having argued with the devil over Moses' body – took his body and buried him at an unknown place in the desert. And the other site tells of□□ *God Himself*□□ as the one who buried Moses after first Michael made Satan depart from the place, as quoted from Deut. 34:5, 6.

This leaves room for the correct understanding of the incident: □□ Michael was present the same moment that God resurrected Moses from the dead, and in that□□ instance it was that he got into argument with Satan who did not want to have Moses taken up into heaven by God!

Remember: Moses met Jesus at Mt. Tabor not long before Jesus went to Jerusalem for the crucifixion...Luke wrote that Moses told Jesus how□□ it would be when He should suffer death on the cross. Luke 9:31.

THE PROPHETIC SIDE OF THE INCIDENT WITH MOSES RAISED

There can be not much doubt that the death, burial and resurrection of Moses, really works as a prophetic image of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

They□□ both had□□ *angels present*, right before their deaths, as well as when they were raised from the dead. In Moses' case, it was the great powerful arch angel Michael, and in Jesus' narrative shown in all four gospels, we find angels supporting Him before and after his death at the cross.□

One was comforting Jesus when He was taken with anxiety in Gethsemane garden, two angels met with the women as they came to the empty tomb Sunday morning, and two angels appeared to the disciples at the ascension of Jesus.

Moses prophesied that Jesus – the Messiah – He would be a man '*like myself*'□□ whom God would raise up from among Israel's□□ people when He arrived. Deut.18:17-19, NASB,

□□
"17□□ *The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well.*□□

18□□ *'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen*

like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.□□

19□□ 'It shall come about that whoever * will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.'□□

Peter referred to this same passage in his second speech, Acts 3:22, 23, NASB,

"22□□ "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET□□ LIKE ME□□ FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you.□□

23□□ 'And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from□□ among□□ the□ people.'

That is why Moses went through□□ both death as well as a resurrection...he was literally one who would precede Jesus as a prophetic 'model' to die and then get resurrected by God.

I hope this little study may have given some light over that special incident. Thus the fact is indisputable: Both Moses and Elijah are alive, and they probably reside up in the heavens.

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WHAT EXACTLY DID JESUS TELL THE APOSTLES TO DO?

JAN LILLEBY

He told Peter one thing, and thus also the eleven. And then He told Paul another thing.

Why?

That is what I shall be explaining in the rest of this article.

JESUS TO PETER AND THE ELEVEN

Mat. 10:5-8, NASB,

"5□□ These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them:□
"Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans;□□

6 but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

8 "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give." (Editor's emphasize).

Before Jesus got crucified, He told them to go NOT to the Gentiles and also the Samaritans, but rather to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

Compared to the so-called 'Great Commission' in Mat. 28, it is a direct contradiction. In that He told His disciples NOT to go to the Gentiles, while in Mat. 28 He said: **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,"** – verse 19.

The two words 'the nations' have at all times been taken as an order to go to the 'whole world' – hasn't it?

Thus we are told by this contradiction that this is not so. He explicitly told them to go ONLY to the lost sheep of the house of Israel! The passage of Mat. 28:19 is talking ONLY of Israel, in the sense that Israel meant Jews from all the nations to which they had been scattered.

This is fully in line with what He taught in Mat. 15:24 – when He told the Gentile woman,

« But He answered and said, "I was sent only * to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Paul, in Rom. 15:8 was also in line with that same concept, of Israel to be the group which should – by Christ's ministry - hear the Kingdom-Gospel, and NOT the Gentiles (but himself was sent to them both, Acts 9:15),
"For I say that **Christ has become a servant to the circumcision** on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers,"

Jesus did not change His mind after He was crucified – He taught the apostles to go to Israel, and not to Gentiles. Reading Acts we later find that Jesus had Paul reserved for that task...he should go to Israel, Gentiles and kings (Acts 9:15).

Peter made reference to this also, in Acts 10:36-42 when speaking to the people in Cornelius' house, NASB,

“36 **The word which He sent to the sons of Israel,** preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) -

37 you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.

38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

39 "We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

40 "God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible,

41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

42 **And He ordered us to preach to the people,** and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead."

Editor's emphasize.

Verse 36 and 42 points to the historical fact that Peter said God had sent this Gospel-message TO ISRAEL, THE JEWISH PEOPLE inside the land.

Studying the Acts history and the whereabouts of the twelve those 34 years of ministry, 28-62 CE, we find that they never went out into 'world-wide mission'.

Check my fresh article here on the web, 'It Was No Coincident' in which I prove that this is true.

Jesus sent out His twelve apostles to offer the prophesied millennial kingdom to Israel. The nation had to repent to Christ first, and thus He would come back from heaven to establish the Kingdom of God in Israel. Peter's second speech tells of this quite clearly, **Acts 3: 18-23, NASB,**

"18 "But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

19 "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,

21□□ whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.□□

22□□ "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you.□□

23□□ 'And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'"
□

I emphasized verses 19 and 20: Peter clearly tells his Jewish audience that they □□ 1)□□ had to first repent to Jesus, □□ 2)□□ so God□□ could□□ send Him back to Israel! If they did not do this, God would destroy (execute) the disobedient Jews□□ from among the (Jewish) people. □□ Peter repeated the prophecy given by Moses.

Mat. 28 and Mark 16, and likewise John 21:15-17. The Great Commission, NASB,
Mat. 28:18-20,

"18□□ And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.□□

19□□ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,□□

20□□ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always *, even to the end of the age."□□

Mark 16:15-20,

15□□ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.□□

16□□ "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.□□

17□□ "These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;□□

18□□ they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover *."□□

19□□ So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.□□

20□□ And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.] [And they promptly reported all these instructions to Peter and his companions. And after that, Jesus Himself sent out through them from east to west the

sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.
J”

John 21:15-17,

15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

As for Luke, we find same "sum or order" given as with the other Gospel writers, Luke 24:46-49,

46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day,

47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

48 "You are witnesses of these things."

48 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

As we study Acts and find out the whereabouts of the apostles, and their leaders, they never went out 'Into all nations'. It is proven thus that they only went to Israel within its borders. This correct the misunderstanding that Jesus had told them to go 'world-wide'. Acts clearly tells of them that they were to be found mostly in Jerusalem, at just about every yearly fest days such as Passover and Pentecost. They always were to be seen operating under the shadows of the Portico of Solomon. How could they possibly be out there in some 'world-wide' mission, when Acts thoroughly tells us that they were not?

However, Paul was the one Christ elected to go to us Gentiles. Not Peter.

Gal. 2:7, 8 testifies to this,

"7 But on the contrary, seeing that I (Paul) had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised"

8 (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles)”

John 21 version of the ‘Great Commission’ is very direct and straight to the point: He sent them to THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.

To Peter He said, **tend My lambs, shepherd My sheep, and tend My sheep.**

What sheep? The lost sheep of the house of Israel!

The expression in Luke 21:47 - ‘to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem’ was spoken in the meaning of **those nations’ Jewish inhabitants** (which met up for the Pentecost Feast)- just like we can read in **Acts 2:5**, “Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.”

This shows us that the translations of Mat. 28 is very shallow and misleading, saying, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,…”

The Greek originals use a word which also can mean...make disciples FROM all the nations. And this is almost the same words as in Acts 2:5 – quoted above. Jews **from all nations under heaven** were present in Jerusalem on Pentecost in Acts 2.

JESUS SENDING PAUL TO US GENTILES

Acts 9:15 is already mentioned above, but again:

“But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel”.

Jesus in a vision, telling Ananias in Damascus what He had in mind regarding Paul.

Also, I quoted from Gal. 2:7, 8 of Paul going to the uncircumcised, but Peter going to the circumcised (Israel).

In Acts 22:21 Paul referred to the Jewish mob listening to his defense at the temple site, of his mission,

“And He said to me, ‘Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

Hearing that, the mob went totally mad in a senseless rage and wanted to kill Paul. Gentiles! The unclean hounds. The very reason to persecute Paul, since they thought that Paul had brought with him such a ‘hound’ to the temple.

Later, shortly after the Roman captain Claudius Lysias took Paul into custody, Jesus had appeared to the apostle saying that He would send him to testify to the Sanhedrin in Rome, Acts 23:10, 11,

“10 And as a great dissension was developing, the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them and ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force,

and bring him into the barracks.□□

11□□ But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause * at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also."□□

Such mission orders was never spoken to Peter. Peter never was told to go to Rome, Corinth, or Galatia, - Gentile nations in the Empire.

Only Paul had that mission.

Jesus was the one Who sent Peter to the nation of Israel to tell the Kingdom-Gospel. Paul was sent outside of Israel.

Paul's mission of the Kingdom-Gospel to Israel ended at Acts 28:31. Israel had fallen from their God because they did not take heed to Paul's message.

So, He sent Paul on to us Gentiles, as described in Ephesians and Colossians, written around 63-64 CE from his jail cell in Rome. And in those he reveals that Christ had abolished the Law of Moses. From that day we still has the free Grace-Gospel of Paul as our doctrine of faith. He abruptly□□ stopped□□ preaching the previous Kingdom-Gospel to Jews, and went on to preach that new revealed Grace-Gospel meant for all the world to hear.

Peter never had anything to do with our Church-dispensation. He only spoke to Israel on Christ's behalf, and that's it.

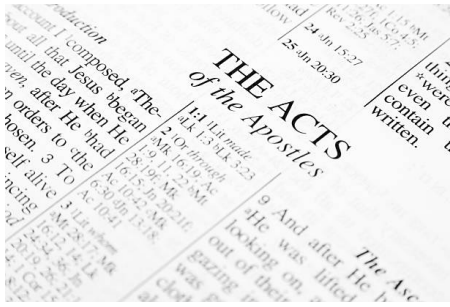
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IT WAS NO COINCIDENT:

The Jewish Ordinances of Feast Days Were
For the Purpose of Gathering Israel In
Jerusalem, So Making Necessary□
Circumstance

By□□ Creating□□ Audiences□□ to Which God Could
Tell□□ His Good News – the Gospel!

JAN LILLEBY



In the New

Testament, Jerusalem is mentioned by name all in all **139 times**:

Roughly 76 times in Hebrew and 63 times in Greek.

In Luke-Acts, which covers about 27.5 % of the New Testament, we find the Greek version Hierosolyma **27 times** and the version transliterated from the Hebrew Ierousalēm **64 times**.

When God had Moses create the Law with its commandments and ordinances, He had a focus of what should take place in a far future era: He had planned it all to come to its full use and potential when time arrived to present His Messiah, Jesus Christ, to His own people like we learn from reading the historic writings, the four Gospels and Acts.

For a Jew, even Jews scattered around in the Roman Empire, it was of great importance to meet up in Jerusalem for the Holy Feast days, such as Passover and Pentecost.

Paul kind of skipped his planned stay with the Ephesians in Acts 20:16, NASB,

« For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.” (Editor's emphasize).

So he (it was 57 CE) could make it to the **Pentecost in Jerusalem**. In this concern, Paul was just one among thousands of Jewish 'Pilgrims' to go to Jerusalem. God wanted His people to fill up the place, so He could talk to them and let them know His will and His plans etcetera.

Jerusalem was indeed the very pinnacle of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, so He could let them all hear this merry message of salvation. The Gospel of the millennial kingdom promised them through His prophets. Dan. 2:44 is but one of the verses pointing to that future earthly kingdom; for not to mention Gabriel's greeting and message given to Virgin Mary, Luke 1:32, 33 of Jesus to become the ruler of the house of Jacob (Israel).

In the four Gospels and in Acts God and Christ was **dealing with Israel only**. The Gentiles among them could at best only become proselytes, leaning on the blessings intended for the nation of God Jehovah.

It seems to yours truly that Pentecost was meant to be the time of Gospel preaching in the 34 years of Acts history, and the audiences were mainly Jews, with a minority of Gentiles (proselytes). Sure, Passover as well, but we just read what Paul did in Acts 20:16 which undoubtedly tells us that it was of the greatest importance to get there for the feast of Pentecost!

Jerusalem as found in the Acts

In Luke and Acts we count 27 times as Jerusalem is mentioned by name, in the Greek language.

Let us check it out. I will just go to Acts.

Acts also tells of Jerusalem mentioned just by 'town or city' – in the everyday knowledge that it was Jerusalem.

Acts 1:4 says, NASB,

"Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me."

The reason for this order was of course that Christ wanted the arrival of the Holy Spirit and signs to be heralded to the Jews in full public – in the midst of a multitude, so they would understand that God was dealing with them.

This idea, to have the Gospel mostly preached in a situation where there were multitudes present in **Jerusalem**, can be seen throughout Acts. This will come to light as we move on in this study.

But we cannot overlook the importance of Jesus' command, of having His disciples present in the city of **Jerusalem**.

He did not tell them to go to Galilee and stay at Capernaum, or to go to Bethany or to Caesarea. No, - the place for them to be was **Jerusalem**. That was where God had planned for **Jewish multitudes** to hear the Gospel of the Kingdom, with signs following, so they could come to faith in Jesus as their rightful God sent Messiah.

Actually, we cannot even find that Peter or anyone else of the apostles ever went out of Israel for world-wide mission. They stayed inside Israel, the entire time. Peter is reported going to places like Joppa, Lydda, Caesarea and others – when Acts does not say he stayed in Jerusalem. We never find Peter travelling abroad, like what Paul did. Only Paul was called by God to go to us Gentiles. Thus we only find him in Jerusalem casually, and not as if he ministered to Israel. He went to the synagogues in the dispersion, preaching to Jews there, and eventually turned to Gentile proselytes when Jews rejected him.

Acts is a historic book telling of **Israel's falling away from God** as His nation, - for we cannot see that the nation as a whole received Jesus as their Messiah. Only a minority of Jews came to faith in Him during these 34 years, 28-62 CE.

Acts 1:12-14 gives us the flock of believers – as they stayed in **Jerusalem**, NASB,

"12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away."

13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and

Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."

Chapters in Acts and the twelve's whereabouts

ACTS 2: They were present in Jerusalem. The coming of the Holy Spirit. Signs and manifestations of sounds likened with a stormy weather. Tongues of fire upon all in the audience. Speaking in tongues, by 13-14 different languages.

ACTS 3: They still were in Jerusalem. Text implies that it may have been during one of the Feasts, either Passover or Pentecost. Maybe a year later now, in 29 CE.

ACTS 4: Still in Jerusalem, 29 CE and verses 4 and 5 speak of multitudes coming to faith in Jesus. This confirms to us that it was one of the Feasts.

ACTS 5: The great 'Healing Wave' causing people in cities near Jerusalem to carry their sick ones and putting them on the streets where Peter was given by God to heal them all. They were delivered as the shadow from Peter fell on them, and it is still 29 CE, NASB,

"12 At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.

13 But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem.

14 And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number,

15 to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them.

16 Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed".

ACTS 6: Here we are also in **Jerusalem**, sometime later than 29-30 CE, and we are introduced to the first martyr, Stephen. Jerusalem is not mentioned by name, but we find in verse 15 that he stood before the Sanhedrin Council defending himself against their false accusations. This council resided always in the temple, and not at the streets in any town elsewhere.

ACTS 7: Still in the temple – we learn of Stephen's speech to his accusers. And his death by being stoned. Also we get the first mention in NT of the apostle Paul, at an early stage (Saul) – as he participated by keeping Stephen's garment. Thus he consented in this false judgment of a fellow Jew.

ACTS 8: The persecution of the Messianic Christians started. They were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria – but the apostles stayed in **Jerusalem** it says.

ACTS 9: Paul is seen in his furious errand to persecute the believers, by going from Jerusalem to Damascus (around 200 km) to arrest and jail the believers. Paul came back to **Jerusalem**, as a fresh convert and now a burning strong believer in Jesus Christ!

Verse 26 - When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; **but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.**

We learn that now Barnabas cared for Paul, and guided him along - for they were afraid of him still.

ACTS 10: Peter is back into focus, as Luke gives us the special incident with the Roman captain Cornelius at Caesarea. Peter visited Lydda, Joppa, and finally Caesarea it says. Where he preached the kingdom-gospel to Cornelius and his guests. But the other apostles must have stayed in Jerusalem, since it says so in chapter 11.

ACTS 11: Peter reports to those in **Jerusalem** (verse 2) to fully explain what went down as he had been in fellowship with...God forbid...Gentiles! It was forbidden to keep fellowship in any form with a 'hound' – a Gentile. They had not even admittance to the temple site. Peter had to explain to the brethren how God in a vision commanded him to go to Cornelius' house and preaching to them. Some scholars hold that it may have been around forty guests in the house hearing Peter's speech.

ACTS 12: Yet another Holy Feast taking place in Jerusalem, namely the 14th of Nisan, the Passover. It had become the year 44 CE (Roman files are telling of Herod Agrippa's death this year, ref. Acts 12:20-25. This year Herod persecuted the leaders of the Messianic assembly in Jerusalem, killing James and casting in jail Peter (with the intent to have him executed). In other words, still no word in Acts of the twelve apostles going abroad for mission. Peter – as he escaped jail being rescued by an angel of the Lord - is not reported fleeing the land. It simply declares, verse 19 - "Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there". It is obvious that he took refuge among those who had come to faith in Jesus when he preached to them in Cornelius' house, Acts 10. Think of the pure sarcasm or

irony in this situation, Peter fled Jerusalem escaping a Roman prison, and then next finding refuge in the very center of Roman rule in Israel, Caesarea!

As for the remaining chapters in Acts we find JERUSALEM mentioned in these ones:

Acts 13:27, 31; Acts 15; Acts 21:16; Acts 21:11-13, 15, 17, 31, Acts 22:5, 18; Acts 23:11; Acts 24:11; Acts 25:1, 9, 15, 24;

Acts 28:17 is the very last verse in which we find Jerusalem mentioned, NASB,

"After three days Paul called together those who were the leading men of the Jews, and when they came together, he began saying to them, "Brethren *, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans."

Conclusion

Thus we have sifted through Acts systematically. This produces a very clear and consistent conclusion:

Acts reported history by Luke's hand tells of a mission NOT to the entire world, but firstly to the nation of Israel. Peter was the leader of the early period as they preached the Kingdom-Gospel (of the millennial reign at the Second Advent) inside the land of Israel. Later on we find the apostle Paul being sent on several journeys outside the land, into the provinces of the Roman Empire, mainly those in Asia Minor (Spain is also mentioned, but no details, Rom. 15:23, 24, 28). It is doubtful anticipating that Paul ever made the trip to Spain. This is still in disputes. Quote from NASB,

"23 but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you

24 whenever * I go to Spain - for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while -

28 Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain."

When Paul wrote the epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, he was in jail for the second time. First time was not really a jail, but a rented lodging it says. But the second one was a very real Roman jailhouse, called *Carcere Mamertino*. At this situation it was that Christ revealed to Paul the Mystery (Eph. 3:1-9) of the Church dispensation, what he called 'One New Man' in Eph. 2:14, 15 and revealed to him that the Law of Moses had been abolished by Christ.

But in the entire timeline of Acts 28-62 CE we find repeatedly words in Acts telling us that the saints - Jews and their proselytes - kept the Law, as well as the New

Covenant to Israel (Heb. 9:15). Rom. 3:31 even says that they established and upheld the Law. In other words, this proves that it is NOT the Church we see in the Acts book, it is the Messianic Israel which also included the Jews in the dispersion. They were expecting the Second Advent in their own life time, if only Israel would repent to Jesus Christ (Acts 3 and Peter's speech).

The Church of the 'One New Man' is not the same body as the Acts-body. We, the believers of 2024 and on, are the Church of the 'One New Man' – preaching the Grace-Gospel of Paul, which has got as hope of salvation the heaven up above (Col. 3:1-4). The Church is never going to enter that millennial kingdom on earth!

The Grace Gospel revealed to Paul for us, is nowhere to be seen in the four Gospels or in Acts.

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**“ALL DO NOT HAVE GIFTS OF HEALINGS,
DO THEY?” :**

**PAUL'S WELL KNOWN RHETORICS
REPROVES ALL MIRACLE-FANATICISM!**

JAN LILLEBY

Here we go again...for the 'umpteenth time' I shall make a little scrutiny on the topic of miracles and sign-gifts.

Starting with Paul's teaching to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 12:28-30, NASB,

“28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

*29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? **All are not workers of miracles, are they?***

30 **All do not have gifts of healings, do they?** All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?" (Editor's emphasize).

Paul's main reason for writing this epistle to them seem to be the fact that this congregation was thrown into a confusion, thus exaggerating several things, such as for example the usage of the nine sign-gifts. (Ref. 1 Cor. 1:10-13).

All sign-gifts were given **exclusively for Israel** so they could have proof of God being the originator of this Gospel message. That they indeed were sent by God.

Paul says so in 1 Cor. 14:21, 22 that signs were given TO ISRAEL, using the **tongues-sign** for making an example. However, reading Mark 16, we find that ALL miracles/healings also were counted into this category. It was all for the sake of Israel. Quoted from NASB,

"21 In the Law it is written, "BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE, AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME," says the Lord.

22 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe."

In Mark 16:17-19, NASB, Jesus speak of signs likewise, but mention tongues as one among several signs,

"17 "These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;

18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover *."

19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God."

So it is safe to conclude that **not only the tongues** were given as a miracle-sign for Israel, but ALL MIRACLE SIGNS.

And when Israel fell from God as a nation for Him (Acts 28:25-28) and was destroyed and annulled in 70 CE by the Romans, there has been none of these sign-gifts in operation. They were suspended and thus taken off God's roster of promises given to the early Christian Jewish believers and proselytes, those who were presented by the offer of having the Kingdom of God on earth established to them by the return of Jesus from heaven. In all the Acts-

history reported by Luke, we find it proven that the Messianic church (Jews and proselytes) in this period, had all these sign-gifts among them, alongside them keeping the Law of Moses as well as observing the commandments given by the New Covenant for Israel (ref. Acts 21:20). The sign-gifts are thus reported in valid action ONLY as long as the present believers were under the Law of Moses and the New Covenant.

In our time, the dispensation of the Church, the 'One New Man' as Paul formulated it in Eph. 2:14, 15, the new Gospel was emerging by the **revelation** given Paul of the Law with its commandments and ordinances having been abolished by Christ.

Miracles and signs like healings, and casting out of demons, can only be found in NT in the time of Acts, 28 – 62 CE. But as Israel went down, all of this stopped immediately.

RESTRICTIONS OF SIGN-GIFTS IN ACTS PERIOD

My point in this little reminder-article on sign-gifts as a topic, - is that the Bible proves clearly to us all that these gifts, even in the days when they operated, HAD RESTRICTIONS TO THEM.

How so?

I have already quoted to you above: Do ALL perform healings? Do ALL speak in tongues? Do ALL interpret such tongues? Paul's well known rhetoric's makes us learn that the clear answer must be: NO THEY DON'T!



This was when these nine sign-gifts of the Holy Spirit still were operating within the congregations, as the apostles ministered to them. Acts 5 is a chapter well into signs and miracles. Likewise in Acts 19:11-20, with Paul working miracles in Ephesus, stirring up the whole place.

Much more in our time, AFTER these sign-gifts have been taken away, we must understand that there are no longer any healings and miracles available to the believers in Christ. Only Israel had such a privilege. In our time we go to the doctors and eventually the surgeons to make us well.

So – again – even if we would have had such gifts in our time, the Bible says, 'Oh really? Are you sure that ALL can perform miraculous healings?' Knowing that such was not the case, when the apostles ministered to Israel and proselytes.

Get away from that mindless fanaticism – thinking that we

must have miracles and signs to be sure we can make unbelievers repent and believe on Jesus.

In our time God is pleased to see people coming to faith in Christ WITHOUT first seeing any signs or miracles.

In Paul's two Church epistles, Ephesians and Colossians, we cannot find any teaching whatsoever on sign-gifts, miracles, healings, casting out of demons, tongues, prophesying, or anything like that. Had these things been meant for the Church dispensation of the free Grace Gospel of Paul, he most certainly would have taught us that!

But in the time of Acts, it is reported of a *constant* 'miracle-factor' found among believers, - that is, the Jewish believers and their proselytes. We Gentiles did not really get into the free faith (as free individuals) before Paul had the revelation of the Mystery taught in Eph. 3:1-9. No need any more to let Gentiles become proselytes with Israel's believers. Now we have a **direct-salvation** by faith alone according to Paul's Grace Gospel for all the nations. Signs are no longer needed!

Eph.2:8, 9 cannot be misinterpreted, NASB,

"8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

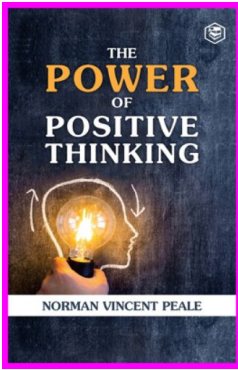
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«**POSITIVE THINKING**»:
CAN IT BE FOUND IN PAUL'S CHURCH EPISTLES?

JAN LILLEBY

Getting straight to the answer, 'NO WE CANNOT FIND SUCH A TOPIC WITH PAUL!'

Who – among Christian writers – do you think of as you just read my headline?



If the name *Norman Vincent Peale* came to mind, you hit the jackpot. This author (1898-1993) was a Protestant clergyman, Wikipedia informs. Widely known as the author of the book *'The Power of Positive Thinking'*, this was entering the market in 1952.

On YouTube I happened to hear a Baptist pastor, who in his sermon mentioned *Norman Vincent Peale*...warning against his 'theology', going... *'Donald Trump is known to have been a disciple and believer following Peale's teachings on 'Positive Thinking'!*

Now, if we ask St. Paul (please forgive the traditional Catholic titling) what he might quote to Trump had he lived today, we would risk hearing Paul's known exhortation in Eph. 5:5...as he would know about Trump's bathing in billions of dollars, (NASB net version) -

«1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;
2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

3 But immorality or any impurity **or greed** must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;

4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this you know with certainty, that no * immoral or impure person **or covetous man, who is an idolater,** has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6 **Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.**

7 Therefore do not be partakers with them;

8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord." (Editor's emphasize).

The red text: This is a warning which Paul might have thrown right in the face of Mr. Peale in his day! The critics of Peale's writings/theology are many (check Wikipedia) – and it is clear that he deceived his gullible ignorant readers witless, dumping them all into a mindset *more fit in the litterbin* than in regular human society!

Peale was a confident friend with the Nixon's. He was awarded by Ronald Reagan with the 'Presidential Medal of Freedom' March 26, 1984.□□

Psychologist□□ **Albert Ellis**, according to Wikipedia, slaughtered Peale's beliefs in 'Positive Thinking',□□ using one of his clients' cases of mental disorder, "*One of my 50-year-old clients, Sidney, read everything that Norman Vincent Peale ever wrote, went to many of his sermons at Marble Collegiate Church, and turned many of his friends onto trusting completely in God and in the Reverend Peale to cure them of all their ills. When some of these friends, in spite of their vigorous positive thinking,□□ wound up in the mental hospital, and when Sidney had to turn to massive doses of tranquilizers to keep himself going, he became disillusioned...*" □□□□ (Editor's emphasize). Ellis was just one of a□□ *multitude of critics*□□ who warned against Peale.□□ Again, check out Wikipedia.□□

'POSITIVE THINKING' SEEM TO HAVE GOTTEN TO
JUST ABOUT EVERY PASTOR OF MEGA-CHURCHES,
ALMOST TO□□ PROPORTIONS□□ OF OBSESSION!

If you want a very obvious proof of that,□□ **read my article on Joel Osteen**□□ and his inherited 'Kingdom' – with his Church congregation in Houston of 16 000 meeting up at the huge stadium like facility! He actually tells his followers to lie to themselves. If one is a poor broke fellow, he is encouraged to say to himself 'You are rich, You are rich, You are rich' – and so forth. Positive Thinking made into 'Step 2'□□ -□□ *Positive Confession*.□□ It belongs of course right in there with the heretical Word of Faith camp. The Prosperity Gospel, a gospel not found in the Bible anywhere. Then if you so wish, and have the stomach for it, the road is short into the world of the Mega-Churches, since they all seem to teach the□□ *very same poisoned kind of 'gospel'*□□ from their pulpits.

On the internet I found at least 28 such congregations, classified as 'Mega-Churches'. By name, address and who the pastor is.□□

Checking with Paul, we find that the better title to such heresy would rather have been□□ *'The Destructive Power of Positive Thinking'*.

Human self-help books, Christian or not, are flooding the markets. The message is always centered on 'What you must do to change your negative situation in life'. You have to do this, and do that, and start this, and stop this...an endless quagmire of 'Magical word formulas' which eventually would bring blessings and positive changes into one's life. But it never happens. Blessings are not appearing. It rather seems □ to send patients right into the mental hospital, as seen with example mentioned above□□ and the sick 50 year old Sidney and his friends.

No, dear fellow Christian believer, we must not trust in smart human based advice like these. We have to turn to the Word of God, served us by His true faithful apostle Paul, the apostle to us Gentiles.

I quoted Eph. 5:5 which is a stern but clear warning from God.

Paul, however, wrote so much on our salvation by faith in Christ, and to let our minds be centered on heaven up above, and not the things here on earth, and Col. 3:1-5 is a passage I cling much to. This is the best kind of 'Positive Thinking' I can ever find,

«1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.»

2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.»

3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.»

4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.»

5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.»

Paul actually tells us TO THINK on the heavenly things, more than to dwell on earthly things.

But Norman Vincent Peale and many others like him, turned it all around – 'Set your mind on the things on earth, not on the things that are above'.

You do know, I hope, that we have a HEAVENLY CALLING, and not an earthly one?

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THE SURPASSING GREATNESS
OF HIS POWER:
GOD'S POWER IS IN US WHO BELIEVE!

JAN LILLEBY

□□□□ We have learned as Christians that we should always seek to read the Bible, and understanding it by the *correct context*. Thus we are careful not to just pick out Bible verses, thus exaggerating them.

And still, to my amazement I cannot help experiencing that certain verses or passages simply comes 'jumping at you' – embracing me, kissing me, hugging me! And such verses/passages, regardless of context, simply knocks me flat out...as a *gorgeous blessing and divine greeting* from our Lord, Jesus Christ.

And one of those verses/passages is the one quoted from Ephesians 1:18-23 below. I use NASB translation and the AMP translation, their web versions.

The AMP,

“18 And [I pray] that the eyes of your heart [the very center and core of your being] may be enlightened [flooded with light by the Holy Spirit], so that you will know and cherish the hope [the divine guarantee, the confident expectation] to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints (God’s people),

19 and [so that you will begin to know] what the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His [active, spiritual] power is in us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of His mighty strength

20 which He produced in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion [whether angelic or human], and [far above] every name that is named [above every title that can be conferred], not only in this age and world but also in the one to come.

22 And He put all things [in every realm] in subjection under Christ’s feet, and appointed Him as [supreme and authoritative] head over all things in the church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills and completes all things in all [believers].”

The NASB,

“18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

21 *... far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

22 *... And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,*

23 *... which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."*

... We find Paul's prayer for the Ephesians... describing... the glory of God and Christ.

So he wanted his believers to get the full knowledge of the HOPE OF THEIR CALLING. How great that hope (of heaven up above) really is. Using a set of superlatives: ... the riches... of His glory in us;... surpassing greatness... of His power toward us who believe; the working of... His strength and His might; in the... heavenly... places; far... above all...even in ages to come;... Jesus is given as head... over all things to the church; ...the... fullness of Him... who fills all in all.

The Word of God, as it was entrusted to Paul for us, tells us we are super-blessed, made together... with Christ in His super-strength, - or put in the same... words as... with Paul:... **The riches of the glory of His inheritance IN THE SAINTS!**

In verse 19 we find out to... whom... exactly... this glorious blessing and riches and power has been given: US WHO BELIEVE.

If you... **believe**... on Jesus Christ, then you are saved, and the blessings following with that salvation has been thoroughly described above by our apostle Paul. It is all so glorious that we can hardly comprehend this. It overwhelms us so much, for our brain capacity cannot match up to the greatness of the power of God in Christ. So,... we are only asked by the Lord to... **believe**. We are not charged by Him to come up with our knowledge and brain-intelligence or IQ-ratings.

Thus Paul elegantly told... us in Eph. 2:8, 9 NASB, how this is formulated,... regarding the importance of our faith in Christ,

"8 ... For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

9 ... not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."