

Scripturalism vs Judaism III

Jesus was not Judaized

Fred R. Coulter—June 12, 1993

Most of us have either come out of a Protestant church or a Catholic church, so most of the preaching we have heard through all of the years has been geared to refuting Protestant or Catholic doctrine. But when Christ began preaching, there were no Protestants and no Catholics. When we read the New Testament from the point of view of only refuting Protestant or Catholic doctrine, we are missing the whole major point and the whole climate and the attitude and religion of Judaism that existed.

We're going to see that there are quite a few interesting things and different things that have been in the Bible all along, but we have completely overlooked them, almost incredibly overlooked them. Let's just review just a little bit. Let's talk about Scripturalism. There were the faithful who, without the written Word, were able to either talk to God or God talked to them, and they are called *faithful!* In a sense they were Scripturalists inasmuch that if they followed the commandments of God—which He gave verbally—those would be the same as God would give when He later had it written down. So, you have the *faithful and the Scripturalists!*

When we come to Luke 24, this becomes very, very important in understanding the situation concerning the New Testament. Let's also understand that one of the difficulties that was at hand with the Apostolic Church was that they did not have the New Testament as we have it today. As a matter of fact, there was nothing other than maybe sermon notes or whatever that was given by any of the Apostles. There was nothing written down that we could say 'here is a book of the Bible.' There was nothing written down from 30_{A.D.}—when Jesus was crucified (there's a question as to whether it's 30 or 31; 30 seems to be the more correct date; it doesn't change anything because both Passovers were in the middle of the week in 30 and 31_{A.D.})

From 30_{A.D.} until 50_{A.D.} there was nothing written in the form of what we can call New Testament Scripture. This created a lot of problems and difficulties, as we will see as we go through this series. But Jesus started them out in the right way:

Luke 24:44: "...all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled.'.... [there we have the threefold division of the Bible] ...Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (vs 44-45). Jesus was a *Scripturalist*—wasn't He? The apostles were *Scripturalists*—weren't they? *Yes, indeed!*

Just as an aside: You have heard quite a bit about the Septuagint version of the Bible. The Septuagint was a translation of the Old Testament by Jewish scholars in Alexandria. They translated, supposedly, the whole Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. What is important is that a *sacred name* Bible and New Testament has the so-called *sacred names* transliterated even in the English. So, where it would be 'Lord' in the English, they would translate it 'Yahweh' in relationship to Christ in the New Testament.

Even though the Jews translated the Old Testament, the Septuagint, from Hebrew to Greek, they did not transliterate the names of God. As a matter of fact, the term 'Lord' in the New Testament comes from the Greek 'kurios' which is the same word that the Jews' translators used 270-300 years before the New Testament was ever written. Since they did not, at that point, feel it was absolutely necessary to use sacred names and transliterate them, therefore, it's a good indication that we don't today. There are other proofs that we don't. You can add that one to your arsenal of repudiation of the requirement of *sacred names* for the New Testament.

Let's just review 2-Tim. again. These are very basic for us to understand that we must be Scripturalists. There are a lot of people who come around and try to bring in doctrines that are not from Scripture. It has to be based on the Word of God. What else do you need?

- The Truth of God
- The Scriptural interpretation of the Scriptures

You can't just have the Scriptures alone and say, 'I believe it says...' It then becomes: Who are you? Let's look at a couple statements by Paul and then a couple by Peter.

2-Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture... [This includes everything—doesn't it? *Yes, it does!* A reaffirmation of what Jesus taught: 'In the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.'] ...*is* God-breathed... [by *inspiration* or *God spirited*] ...and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 15-17).

Here it shows how it is to be interpreted, 2-

Peter 1:20: “Knowing this first... [this is primary; the Greek is ‘protos’—*primary*] ...that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation.” Which also means no Scripture anywhere is subject to *private interpretation*.

- Who inspired the Scriptures? *God did!*
- Who is going to make them be fulfilled? *God is!*
- Whose interpretation do we need of all the Scriptures? *God’s interpretation!*

Precept upon precept, line upon line—it interprets itself! Here’s the reason, v 21: “Because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the Holy Spirit*.”

When we get to the point, we will show that Paul and Peter and John were the ones to finalize the New Testament. It was finalized—except the four writings of John—before the fall of Jerusalem. So, there’s that short window of time from 50_{A.D.} to the fall of Jerusalem, a maximum of 20 years in which the New Testament Scriptures were written. We’re going to see that is mighty, mighty important that it was done and canonized by the apostles because of all the other heresies going along.

Have you wondered what happened to the 5,000 people that ate from the loaves and fishes, and the 4,000 that ate from the loaves and fishes, and saw Jesus and believed, but were not converted? Have you ever wondered about the Jews who when Jesus said ‘you have to eat My flesh and drink My blood’ it says of those who believe Him they ‘turned and followed Him no more’? What did they do?

We’re going to see that this thing of the Pharisees comes down to a real heated political battle between the Church and the Pharisees. I’ll project ahead a little bit, we will see the reason God called Paul—a leading Pharisee—was to ensure that Pharisaism *never* came into the Church of God. He knew every bit of it, so he could ensure that it wouldn’t.

Here’s what Peter said of Paul, 2-Peter 3:15: “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them...” (vs 15-16). Now, we have the epistles. These epistles Peter is talking about are those that Paul sent to Peter—because Peter and Paul were not killed at the same time—at the hand of Mark. Peter then added the book of Mark and 1st and 2nd Peter to the New Testament at that point.

“...concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the

Scriptures, to their own destruction” (v 16). As I’ve mentioned many times before, he’s equating the Epistles of Paul to Scripture. He says, ‘the other epistles.’

- Have you ever wondered why we have 14 Epistles of Paul? *There’s a reason, a distinct and profound reason!*
- Have you ever wondered why we don’t have the ‘Epistle of Andrew’?
- Was he not an apostle?
- Do you not suppose he wrote some letter somewhere?

Just projecting some questions down the line while we’re looking at some of these basic Scriptures; we have a lot to cover.

They who are “...ignorant and unstable are twisting *and distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (v 16). That runs full circle right back to what we said. You have to have the Word of God, plus you have to have the interpretation of the Word of God. Then you can be a *true Scripturalist!* That’s what we have to be and that’s what God wants us to be.

Who were the ones who were mainly used of God to write the Scriptures and used as Prophets who helped write the Scriptures? *Moses!* What was Moses?

- Moses was a Levite
- Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim

He didn’t write any Scripture. He is written about. Who wrote about him? *Samuel!*

- Samuel was a Levite—son of a priest
- David wrote a lot of the Psalms, but he turned them over to the Levites

The Levites added them to the liturgy of the temple service and later added them into the Scriptures.

The Prophets:

- Jeremiah—son of a priest
- Ezekiel—son of a priest
- Daniel—one of the princes of the house David
- Ezra—Levite, a ready scribe and a priest

New Testament—the one who actually did the secretarial work in finalizing the New Testament was

- Mark—a Levite
- Matthew—a Levite
- Paul—a Benjaminite (not a Levite)
- John—we don’t know, probably a Benjaminite

It was finalized, with the exception of what John did, the compiling it together because Paul said, ‘Take Mark and give him the scrolls and bring them to

me.’ All the way through we have the thread of the Levites—don’t we?

- John the Baptist—a Levite

Remember, his parents were faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord, blameless (Luke 1:6). God is showing that here with the beginning of the preaching of John the Baptist there was a distinct change, which God was instituting. Who was He using? *He started out with the authorized people that He appointed—the Levites!* Furthermore, John the Baptist was from the house of Aaron, because his father was a priest, who went in to offer incense and only the house of Aaron can do that.

Luke 1: 80: “And the little child grew and was strengthened in spirit; and he was in the wilderness until *the* day of his appearing to Israel.” He was never trained in any of the rituals of the temple. This is a precursor that God is showing, by using a Levite of the house of Aaron of the priesthood, that He was going to sever the temple and the ritual and everything. He used the authorized person that He put in there—John the Baptist—to do it.

Luke 16:16—this is where the Protestants get off, how that the Protestants accept the Jewish proposition is that all of the Old Testament, commandments and statutes of God, were the *traditions of Judaism*. Therefore, since they were the *traditions of Judaism* we’re not to follow the Laws of God. We’ve been all these years fighting this in our preaching—which it is a true fight today with some of the Protestants—but now we know why they have thrown it out.

Luke 16:16: “The Law and the Prophets were until John... [That’s why the Protestants say we don’t have to follow the Law, because they]: *were* until John... [It doesn’t mean that whatsoever! It means that the Law and the Prophets were *the authority* until John; then John started something different *in addition to it*—not doing away with, but in addition to!] ...from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it.” Then he makes sure that the understood that it wasn’t to abrogate the laws.

Verse 17: “But it is easier *for* heaven and earth to pass away than *for* one tittle of the Law to fail.”

Let’s go to the Gospel of John, the first chapter, and remember when John the Baptist preached, he called them all ‘a generation of vipers.’ But here are some other things we need to understand in relationship to what was done. What we’re going to find out is that God ignored Judaism.

Christ was not born in Jerusalem. We’re going to see that the virgin Mary was not from Jerusalem.

When John came preaching in the wilderness, John 1:19: “And this is the testimony of John [the Baptist], when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem...” Where was John? He was clear down at the River Jordan. They had to come to him. There is no account that John the Baptist ever went to Jerusalem. There is no account that he went up and stood at the temple and said to ‘repent.’ They had to come to him.

We’re going to see some very interesting statements here to show that those religious leaders during the time when Jesus first came—in the beginning of His ministry—understood the times. They knew what they were looking for.

They came “...to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ Then he *freely* admitted, and did not deny, but declared, ‘I am not the Christ.’” (vs 19-20). Why would he say that he’s not the Christ, unless they were looking for the Christ? There would be no reason to say it.

Verse 21: “And they asked him, ‘Then who *are you?* Are you Elijah?’ And he said, ‘I am not.’.... [but Jesus said that he was] ...*Then they asked,* ‘Are you the Prophet?’ And he answered, ‘No.’” What does it mean *that Prophet?* Notice the three major important things they asked; they asked profound questions:

1. Are you the Christ? *No!*
2. Are you Elijah? *No!*
3. Are you that Prophet? *No!*

What were they looking for in that Prophet? Today we’re going to see that they knew what they were looking for. Here is one of the prophecies:

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me....” This is quite a statement, because this becomes very profound when we come to Matt. 5, 6, 7. What was Moses?

- Moses was the one who transmitted the Law of God to the people—right?
- He was the one who brought the Laws of God to the people.
- He was one who talked face-to-face with God—right?

He had the veil over him. He talked in the cloud. But nevertheless, he talked directly to God as a man talks to a man.

So, when Moses said that God was going to “...raise up unto you a Prophet... One like me. To Him you shall hearken, according to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the

voice of the LORD my God...” (vs 15-16). This is like talking to me face-to-face with God. That’s the whole purpose of Christ’s coming. He came in the flesh so that He was here right on earth, not only with mankind and human beings, but he was able to talk with God. When they said, ‘Are you that Prophet’ they understood it.

Verse 18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth. And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him” (vs 18-19).

So, when they came to John the Baptist and said, ‘Are you the Christ?’ *No, I’m not!* ‘Are you Elijah?’ Remember the last part of Malachi it says that ‘before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord I’ll send Elijah the Prophet.’ ‘Are you the Prophet?’ *No, I’m not!* Those are three leading important questions which shows they knew what to ask. They understood!

Let’s see how that even the people *knew*. Here’s the feeding of the 5,000, and here’s what the people said after they were fed. This shows that they understood the Scriptures at least enough. This shows that if they didn’t understand the Scriptures that at least they heard it preached from the synagogue. Remember how often the Scriptures were to be read in the synagogues: *the whole Scripture once every three years!* If they went to synagogue every week, once every three years they would read Deut. 18, and obviously someone would say, ‘that’s the coming Messiah.’ They knew the Messiah was going to come, without a doubt. That’s what Christ means, *Messiah*. ‘Are you the Messiah?’ That’s what they asked John the Baptist.

John 6:13: “Then they gathered *them* together, filling twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten. Now, when the men saw the miracle that Jesus had done, they said, ‘**Of a truth, this is the Prophet Who was to come into the world.**’” (vs 13-14). They *knew* what they were looking for. When they saw what Christ did, they understood.

What they couldn’t figure out was if He was the Messiah but didn’t come and do His main ministry in Jerusalem. And furthermore, He even preached to the Samaritans. If He preached in Jerusalem do you think they would have accepted Him? *No, because when He went there He was rejected!* In Jerusalem were all the Pharisaical schools and so forth. In the sermon: *What Would It be Like to be in the Church of the Pharisees?* you will think you have been there before. He was to witness to them—which He did—but the reason that

He did not go there was because they were so steeped in their *traditions*. We’re going to see that that’s the whole problem of Judaism vs Scripturalism; and Judaism vs true Christianity—the *traditions* of the fathers.

John 7:40—after He was preaching and did all the things that He did. This is at the Feast of Tabernacles. How many of you, when you find out something, you get on the phone and you tell one of the other brothers or sisters in the Church? You do right away! Just think what it was like at the Feast of Tabernacles, all these people standing around seeing the miracles, seeing people being healed, hearing Him preach and all of the priests gnashing their teeth. The beady-eyed priests just hatefully watching Jesus.

John 7:40: “Now after hearing these words, many of the people said, ‘This is truly the Prophet.’... [The one that Moses prophesied about; that’s what it’s talking about.] ...Others said, ‘This is the Christ.’ But others said, ‘Does the Christ then come out of Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ comes from the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the town where David was?’” (vs 40-42). In fact that’s where Jesus was born, but under very unusual circumstances. They came up there just before the birth, Jesus was born, and they stayed there long enough to go through the ritual purification. They went back to Nazareth and then they had to flee to Egypt and then back. So, yes, He did!

Verse 43: “Therefore, a division arose among the people because of Him. Now, some of them desired to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him. As a result, *when* the officers came... [These are the Jewish soldiers who policed the temple area. These were the officers in charge, like we would say captains and lieutenants.] ...to the chief priests and the Pharisees, they said to them, ‘Why did you not bring Him?’ The officers answered, ‘Never has a man spoken like this man.’ Then the Pharisees answered them, ‘Are you also being deceived?’” (vs 43-47). ‘Look at what we’re up against here, folks, with this thing.’

Here’s the big putdown; how do you measure things? *By your own self!* Verse 48: “‘Has even one of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in Him? But these people who do not know the law are accursed.’... [that’s the way that they believed] ...Then Nicodemus (being one of them, the one who came to Him by night) said to them, ‘Does our law judge any man without first hearing from him in person, and knowing what he does?’... [again, the big putdown] ...They answered and said to him, ‘Are you also from Galilee?’... [they hated the Galileans] ...Search and see, for no prophet has *ever* come out of Galilee.’ And each one went to his

house” (vs 48-53).

- Why Galilee?
- Why the Galileans?

from *Young’s Bible Dictionary*:

The Galileans were generous and impulsive, of simple manners, earnest piety...

‘Piety’ means *Godliness* and ‘earnest’ means they were sincere vs self-righteousness and hypocrisy. This is sincere Godliness.

...and intense nationalism. They were also excitable, passionate and violent...

You could fit all of those into Peter. He was excitable, passionate and he cutoff the ear of the high priest. He’s the one who had the sword. I’m sure he was going for the ear.

The Talmud accuses them of being quarrelsome, but admits that they cared more for honor than money. Their religious observances were simple, differing in several points from those of Judea.

And we’re going to see differing in almost every point from those of Judea, which becomes important.

The people of Galilee were specifically blames for neglecting the study of their language.

They didn’t study Hebrew or Aramaic. They spoke Greek. Matthew who was a tax collector and a Levite—how’s that for a profession?—had to speak Greek as he was collecting taxes for the Greek-speaking rulers.

Especially with absurd mal-pronunciations, sometimes leading to ridiculous mistakes. Thus there was general contempt in rabbinical circles for all that was in Galilee.

Did we just not read that? Shall a Prophet arise out of Galilee?

The Galileans were easily recognizable by their dialect and tone, as seen by the detection of Peter as one of Christ’s disciples. The name was applied by way of reproach to early Christians.

from: *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*:

In Galilee there is rabbinical evidence that in the First Century A.D. customs prevailed in Galilee, which were not current in other parts of Palestine. For example, in Galilee a newly married pair were permitted to be alone on their wedding night. There was

differences in the rights of widows and with regard to the Day of Atonement. In Galilee no work was done the day before Passover. And the festival may actually been observed a day earlier.

So there we have they were 14th-keeping Passover people in Galilee. What were the main ones in Jerusalem? *The 15th-keeping!* There is a division right there. You can see one of the reasons why Jesus was brought up in that area.

The Pharisees considered Galilee’s olive oil richly impure and the Galileans refused to accept Pharisaical rule.

Not only in meats, but in other things, as we will see. It makes some comparisons between the Pharisees and the Essenes:

The variations in customs might be accounts for by them being unlettered conservative arrogance.

What was it said of Peter when he was brought before the Sanhedrin? *You’re an unlearned man!* What was it said about Jesus? *He was not taught in any of our schools!* {see sermon: *Jesus was not a Pharisee*}

On the other hand, some of the Galileans suggest a more conservative Pharisaical school of Shemi in contrast to the School of Hillel, whose rulings became dominate. That’s only in the sense where they followed the Scriptures. There is no evidence that Jesus adhered to a Galilean religious part.

As late as the time of the Maccabees—167 B.C.—the Jewish element was small in Galilee.

So, we don’t have a lot of Jews in Galilee at that time. That’s another reason. Where there are not great numbers of Jews, you don’t have the religious schools and you don’t have the religious parties.

And it was recorded further when Simon’s expedition was reduced still further when there was a war as recorded in First Maccabees 5. The region was not governed by Jews any time after 734 B.C. until 80 B.C, when Alexander Jannes subdued this Gentile region and attempted to Judaize the population.

What I want to emphasize here is that they were not Judaized with the Pharisaical religion. That becomes important.

They were also called Galilee of the Gentiles.

Let’s read a prophecy of Christ’s ministry in Galilee. We are going to see that the greater portion of Jesus’ ministry was in Galilee, *not in Jerusalem!* And

there's a reason for it.

Isaiah 9:1: "Yet there *will be* no gloom for her who *was* in anguish, *as in* the former time. He afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali... [which is part of what is called *Galilee*.] ...but in the latter time He will glorify the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.... [Here's the prophecy of Jesus' ministry]:The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light... [Isn't that what Jesus said? *I am the Light of the world!*] ...they who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light has shined" (vs 1-2).

Isaiah 60—another prophecy of the same thing; talking about the ministry of Christ. As a matter of fact, when I read this I think of *The Messiah*, because this is one of the oratories in *The Messiah*.

Isaiah 60:1 "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you, for behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness *the* people; but the LORD shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (vs 1-3). That's talking about the first and the second coming of Christ. He was the 'great Light' at that time.

Continuing in this article: The taxes of Herodian Galilee supported an extensive building program under Herod the Great and the Herod Antipas. Impressive public buildings were erected reflecting Hellenist culture, such as vast gymnasiums, theaters, hippodromes as well as entire new cities.

Sounds like today—doesn't it?

The data on the population are fragmentary and intricate, but a reasonable estimate for the first century would find 350 Galileans, including a large slave element and about 100,000 Jews largely Hellenized.

What does 'Hellenized' mean? *The primary language at that time was the universal Greek Koine language*, which was the language that the New Testament was written in. Anyone who comes along with the nonsense that it was all written in Aramaic first, don't have a leg to stand on.

Although Jews spoke Aramaic with some local accent.

The religion worship in this northern Gentile region was related to many popular cults which had spread from around the Mediterranean.

They had their different pagan religions up there also.

Likewise, synagogues were to be found throughout Galilee, not only in towns primarily Jewish like Capernaum, but also in towns primarily Gentile like Sephorus.

Then it talks about the different synagogues. What we get from all of this was that Aryan Galileans were actually renegades as far as Jerusalem was concerned. We're going to talk a little bit about Mary and little bit about why Jesus was born the way that He was born and so forth.

Luke 1:26: "And in the sixth month *of her pregnancy*, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a **city of Galilee**, named Nazareth." Surely there were virgins in Jerusalem, but God did not come to a virgin in Jerusalem. Why? *Probably would be so steeped in Pharisaism and tradition that it would be impossible to keep Christ from that influence!* So, Christ had to be raised in a Scripturalist environment, and that God the Father was the One Who taught Him.

Verse 27: "To a virgin betrothed [engaged] to a man whose name *was* Joseph... [Generally there was a one-year engagement period. I'm sure that this was true in this case. It also had to be a legal and a lawful betrothal—correct?] ...of *the* lineage of David; and the name of the virgin *was* Mary." In Greek and in Spanish it is *Maria*. In Hebrews it is 'Miriam.' Miriam was the name of the sister of Moses.

Verse 28: "And after coming to her, the angel said, 'Hail, you who are highly favored! The Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women.' But when she saw *him*, she was *greatly* perplexed at his message, and was considering what kind of salutation this might be" (vs 28-29).

Of course, if just appeared in the middle of the room. Today we're used to watching television where we have all of this nonsense going on and people are beaming here and there from on galaxy to another, so in our mind we don't think anything of this. What if you're a 21-year-old virgin, young woman, and there you are in your house and you're betrothed to Joseph and obviously nothing is going on—no hanky-panky and all this sort of thing—and all of a sudden here is this man—who is an angel and appears as a man—and says, 'Highly favored are you, of the Lord.' You would kind of look up and say, 'I wonder what this is going on.'

Verse 30: "Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found grace with God; and behold, you shall conceive in *your* womb and give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called *the* Son of *the* Highest; and *the* Lord God shall give Him

the throne of David, His forefather” (vs 30-32).

(go to the next track)

Verse 33: “And He shall reign over the house of Jacob into the ages, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.’ But Mary said to the angel, ‘How shall this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?’” (vs 33-34). She knew where children came from. They were not dumb, ignorant people who knew nothing about anything, as most people like to portray them. When we get into modern times, you will understand why almost every movie concerning Jesus is just absolute ‘pittsville.’

Verse 35: “And the angel answered *and* said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One being begotten in you shall be called the Son of God.” The actual Greek there is ‘*gennomenon*’ which means *that which is being conceived*—present tense active indicative participle, *right at that present time*.

Verse 36: “Now behold, Elizabeth your kinswoman... [a cousin—a family affair] ...has also conceived a son in her old age...”

Let’s see some of the circumstances of how Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem. They were forced to go there. Luke 2:1: “Now it happened in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (This registration first occurred when Cyrenius was governor of Syria). Then all went to be registered, each **to his own city**” (vs 1-3)—to the city where he was born. *Joseph was born in Bethlehem*. Mary was of the line of David and also Joseph was of the line of David. The line of David through Mary’s account is handled in Luke 3 where it should read ‘the son-in-law’ God worked it out so that at the very last minute—no hanging around for anyone to figure out the prophecy.

Verse 4: “And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of *the* city of Nazareth, into Judea, to *the* city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was from *the* house and lineage of David, to register himself along with Mary, who was betrothed to him as wife... [Once they are espoused, they are called ‘husband and wife’ until the espousal is over. That is why we are also called the ‘espoused wife of Christ’ as far as the Church is concerned.] ...*and* was great with child” (vs 4-5). She had to ride a camel or a donkey all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The travel they had in those days must have been at least five days. Being pregnant she couldn’t ride very long, so she would have to ride a couple of hours and they would have to stop and take a break. Maybe she’d walk a little bit and then ride a little more. Finally, get there in about five days.

Not like today, we can get in the car and it can be 110⁰ outside and turn on the air-conditioning and whiz down the highway and go a hundred miles to church and think nothing of it, and not have any expenditure and work. We do less work driving a car to go a hundred miles than we would to walk a half-mile. We just sit there. But this was a long trip.

Verse 6: “And it came to pass *that* during the *time* they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her son, the firstborn, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn” (vs 6-7). All of these things happened to Jesus so that no person can say, ‘Lord, You don’t know: You don’t know what it’s like to be homeless. You don’t know what it’s like to be born in a barn. You don’t know what it’s like to be beaten up and kicked and crucified. You don’t know what it’s like to be shot.’ Believe me, the nails in His hands were worse than some gunshot wounds. He went through every deprivation!

Now we have the account of the shepherds, v 8: “Now *there* were shepherds in the same country, who were dwelling in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.”—which could not be done in the winter. Then the announcement came.

After all of these things that happened, after the shepherds came and found them there, v 19: “But Mary stored up all these sayings, pondering *them* in her heart.” She wasn’t told all the facts as things were going along. She was told she was going to have a son, be supernaturally conceived. She didn’t know He was going to be born in Bethlehem. God knew it was. He took them up there and He was born. Here come the shepherds and said, ‘Angels talked to us and said the Savior is born.’ So, she kept all of these things in her heart.

Verse 20: “And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all *the* things that they had heard and seen, as it was said to them. Now, when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising the little child, His name was called Jesus, which *He* was named by the angel before He was conceived in the womb” (vs 20-21). Then they brought the offering and so forth and went on down to Nazareth.

Verse 39: “Now when they had completed all things according to the Law of *the* Lord... [not the *traditions of the fathers*; distinct understanding we need to remember] (they did it): ...according to the Law of *the* Lord... [*Scripturalism!*] ...they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city, Nazareth. And the little child grew and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and *the* grace of God was upon Him. Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years *old*, they went up to Jerusalem

according to the custom of the Feast” (vs 30-42).

I’ll call your attention Matt. 2 that when the wise men came they went to Herod and said, ‘Where’s the One Who is born King of the Jews?’ Herod said, ‘I don’t know about it. I haven’t had any children. What do you mean *who’s the king of the Jews?*’ *Well, we saw the star in the east and we followed it here.* That star obviously had to be an angel. So, Herod said, ‘Let’s get all the priests over here and find out.’ They said, ‘Where is the Messiah to be born?’ *Bethlehem!* So Herod said, ‘You go to Bethlehem and you let us know, come back and tell us.’ Apparently Joseph and Mary had already left Bethlehem, and the wise men went on down to Nazareth, because they followed the star where the angel was. After that all they had to do is head out north and go on back to from where they came in the east country.

Notice that Jesus chose all of those of the area of Galilee to be His apostles. Why? *Because in that area they were Scripturalists* in the main. That doesn’t mean that there weren’t those who followed *traditions*, but *tradition* there was of very low esteem and very low value. Jesus called fishermen—unlearned, uneducated, unschooled, non-Pharisaical, non-Sadducaical, non-Essenes. Ordinary people! Why? *Because Christ had to train them in the right way*, rather than have to go an unlearn all like the Apostle Paul did. The Apostle Paul had to be nearly beaten to pulp to get all of that out of him, and all the things that he went through to know that Pharisaism was wrong.

So, Jesus called Peter, Andrew, and He said to them, ‘follow Me and I’ll make you fishers of men.’ They followed Him. They found the two brothers—James and John with their father Zebedee—right there on the Sea of Galilee mending their nets. Immediately they left the ship and their father and followed Jesus.

Notice where Jesus began His preaching, Matthew 4:23: “And Jesus went throughout all Galilee... [this is *the Light* that was prophesied in Zebulon and Naphtali] ...teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every bodily ailment among the people.” It didn’t take very long for this information to get out—did it?

Verse 24: “Then His fame went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were sick, oppressed by various diseases and torments, and possessed by demons, and lunatics, and paralytics; and He healed them. And great multitudes followed Him **from Galilee**, and Decapolis... [across the Jordan River] ... and Jerusalem... [How far did they have to go to find Jesus? *A long way!* A three to five day journey. He didn’t go to Jerusalem right away.]

...and Judea, and beyond the Jordan” (vs 24-25).

Let’s see the parallel account, and let’s see what happened when Jesus went into the synagogue. We will see their reaction, even to the Scriptures. This is not to say that even though those in Galilee had an earnest piety, followed the Scriptures in the main, that they would necessarily agree with Jesus. But His fame went out everywhere.

Luke 4:14: “Then Jesus returned... [from the temptation of Satan the devil] ...in the power of the Spirit to Galilee; and word about Him went out into the entire country around. And He taught in their synagogues, *and* was glorified by all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and according to His custom, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day and stood up to read” (vs 14-16). This is following the instructions that Ezra gave on the reading of the Scriptures in the synagogue.

Verse 17: “And there was given Him *the* book of the prophet Isaiah; and when He had unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written, ‘*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me...* [This is why they were angry at Him; He was standing there telling them that these things were fulfilled that day in their ears.] ...for this reason, He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to *the* poor; He has sent Me to heal those who are brokenhearted, to proclaim pardon to *the* captives and recovery of sight to *the* blind, to send forth in deliverance those who have been crushed, to proclaim *the* acceptable year of *the* Lord.’ And after rolling up the scroll *and* delivering it to the attendant, He sat down; and the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him. Then He began to say to them, ‘**Today, this Scripture is being fulfilled in your ears**’” (vs 17-21).

This is quite a statement—isn’t it? That is really quite a statement! Especially when you compare this with Isa. 61 where He read this Scripture. This is the reason why the Jews did not accept Jesus as their Messiah when they should have, because they expected Jesus to rise up as a military man to defeat the Romans, to save them from the Romans and that *they* would make Him the king—according to *their* terms.

Isaiah 61:1: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me because the LORD has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to preach the acceptable year of the LORD... [and that’s where He stopped] (and here’s what the Jews expected Him to continue to do): ...and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn” (vs 1-2)—to destroy the enemy. God sent them into captivity by having the Romans occupy the land and rule it—*because of their sins.*

So, there would be no vengeance until they repented of their sins.

Now, let's come back to Luke 4:20: "And after rolling up the scroll *and* delivering it to the attendant, He sat down; and the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him. Then He began to say to them, 'Today, this Scripture is being fulfilled in your ears.' And all bore witness to Him and were amazed at the words of grace that were coming out of His mouth; and they said, 'Is not this the son of Joseph?' And He said to them, 'Surely, you will say this parable to Me: "Physician, heal Yourself! Whatever we have heard being done in Capernaum, do also here in Your *own* country.'" But He said, 'Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his *own* country. For in truth..."' (vs 20-25).

Here's why they got angry at Him. Here's what really set them on end. Remember when the centurion came to Jesus and said to Jesus, 'My daughter is dying, but You just give the word and I know that You can heal her.' He said, 'I have not found such great faith in all Israel.' And this is what set them on end here in this case, too.

"...I say to you, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up for three years and six months, and there was great famine upon all the land; and Elijah was not sent to any of them, but only to a widow in Sarepta, a city of Sidonia.... [a Gentile! So, they got all mad!] ...There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.'" (vs 25-27).

Of all who was healed *the hated general who conquered Israel* and took them off into captivity. God healed him. Naaman had his little problem, because he came to Elijah and said, 'What are you going to do for me?' *Well, you know, go bathe in the Jordan seven times.* 'Why should I do that, we have better rivers in Syria than we do at the Jordan.' So, Naaman the general's servant said, 'Look, is it any great thing that he asks you to go dip yourself seven times in the Jordan? I know we have these rivers up here, but go do it.' He did it and he was cleaned—cleansed of his leprosy. This is a great insult. Does this not also tie in to Jerusalem, in a sense that he began His ministry in Galilee and He's doing the same thing to Jerusalem that Elijah and Elisha did to the people of Israel in not going to their own people? In these cases going to the Gentiles. So, you see the irony in this.

Verse 28: "Now all in the synagogue... [Because Jesus as much as said, 'Since you don't believe Me there aren't going to be any miracles done here.' So, they got all mad! Then He added insult by saying about the two Gentiles there.] ...who heard these things were filled with indignation. And they rose up *and* cast Him out of

the city, and led Him to the edge of the mountain on which their city was built, in order to throw Him down headlong; but He passed *safely* through their midst *and* departed" (vs 28-30). He just ducked out of the way and no one knew where He was. I don't know if He blinded them like the angels did to the Sodomites when they came to get the two angels there in Lot's day or not.

Verse 31: "Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath Days. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with **authority**" (vs 31-32). We're going to see that's going to be so vitally important when we get into Matt. 5-7.

We have understood Matt. 5-7 about 80% in the past. But when we get done with this I hope we understand it a little more closely—say to 95%. I don't think there's any time where we're going to come to a point that we say we know everything we ought to know about everything. Only God does!

- This shows you why Galilee was chosen.
- This shows you the background as to the seeds to rejection of Pharisaism were sown beginning with John the Baptist and all the way down through the ministry of Christ.

This is going to be important for us to understand the background as to what happened in the book of Acts.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 24:44-45
- 2) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 3) 2 Peter 1:20-21
- 4) 2 Peter 3:15-16
- 5) Luke 1:80
- 6) Luke 16:16-17
- 7) John 1:19-21
- 8) Deuteronomy 18:15-16, 18-19
- 9) John 6:13-14
- 10) John 7:40-53
- 11) Isaiah 9:1-2
- 12) Isaiah 60:1-3
- 13) Luke 1:26-36
- 14) Luke 2:1-8, 19-21, 39-42
- 15) Matthew 4:23-25
- 16) Luke 4:14-21
- 17) Isaiah 61:1-2
- 18) Luke 4:20-32

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 1:6
- Matthew 5-7
- Malachi
- Luke 3
- Matthew 2

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Young's Dictionary of the Bible*
- *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*

Sermons:

- *What Would It Be Like to be in the Church of the Pharisees?*
- *Jesus was not a Pharisee*

FRC:bo

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