



## World Christian Fellowship

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### What is the greatest confession of man?

#### Jesus is the Son of the Living God!

#### Matthew 16:13-17

**Matthew 16:13-17**, *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"*

<sup>14</sup>*So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

<sup>15</sup>*He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

<sup>16</sup>*Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

<sup>17</sup>*Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*

We have come to the climax, the apex, the high point of Jesus' endeavour to teach the disciples.

It is final examination the Lord gives them.

Only one question.

You either pass or fail.

### **Jesus asked the ultimate question?**

A question that every human being on the face of the earth must face.

### **Who is Jesus Christ?**

Answer to that question hinges eternal destiny.

Because of the monumental importance of the question and the importance of the answer we say, then, that this is the apex of the gospel.

This is the apex of Matthew's effort, this is the apex or the thesis of the New Testament,

it is the thesis even of the Old Testament.

### **Who is Jesus Christ?**

He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Great supreme confession is the basic reality of Christianity.

Over 2 and half years our Lord has been moving to this moment, teaching, affirming, establishing, building, and rebuilding their confidence, their commitment.

Until ultimately Peter, on behalf of all of them, can say, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

It is a monumental moment in the ministry of our Lord and the life of His disciples.

I pray that this moment somehow can seize our hearts as it must have seized the hearts of those who were on that dusty road between the villages surrounding Caesarea Philippi the day Jesus asked the question.

For some months, Jesus has sought seclusion.

- Away from the misguided multitudes who wanted to make Him a political ruler,
- Away from the hatred and animosity,
- Away from the jealous ambition of Herod who wanted to do away with Him,
- Away from the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes who saw Him as a threat to their religious security.

Jesus has sought to be away from that.

But not only because of the negative pressure, also because of the positive need to teach and instruct and build up His disciples for that which was to come in a matter of a few months, the cross and all the surrounding events.

We see Jesus is moving into a ministry of devoted time given to the twelve.

He has for some months primarily spent His time in the gentile areas, the northern and eastern part of the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus had much fruit there and some time to be with them.

We find Him withdrawing even further away to a more obscure place in order that He might focus in a greater way on their needs and the lessons for them.

### **Background.**

**V 13,** *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"*

The borders of Caesarea Philippi.

The word Caesarea means of Caesar. It is a town named for Caesar.

There is a Caesarea down on the coast at this time in history, it is down almost directly west of the city of Jerusalem.

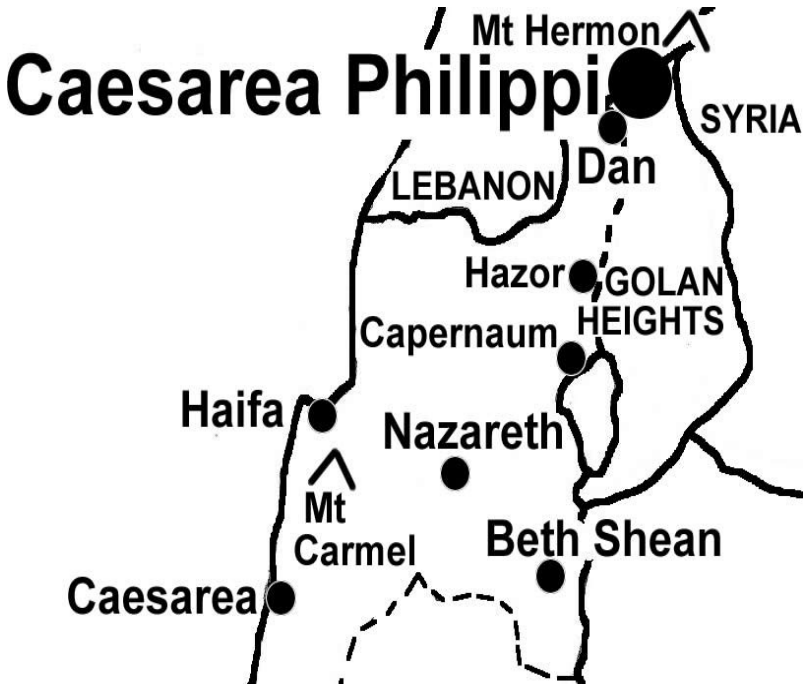
This is called Caesarea Philippi to distinguish it from the Caesarea down in the southern and western part of the land of Palestine.

- The northernmost point in the land of Palestine was identified by the term Dan.

- The southernmost point was identified by the term Beersheba.

When wanting to encompass the whole land, we say the land extended from **Dan to Beersheba**.

The very northeastern corner was Dan. Two and a half miles west of Dan was a town known as Panias.



**Panias** was named for Pan. Pan was a Greek god, supposedly born in a cave in that area. That also was the area where the headwaters of the Jordan started.

The north end of the Sea of Galilee and you proceeded 25 miles north and east, you would go up above sea level about 1,700 feet to a plateau.

That plateau stretches out along the foot of Mount Hermon. Mount Hermon ascends into the sky about **9,232 feet**.

It is snow covered most all the year and is in full view of the villages of the northern part of Galilee, including Cana, Nazareth, and the others.

But up on that plateau was the town of Panias. Of course, it had become a centre for this cult, it was one of the more modern of the cults in that area at that time.

The town of Panias was occupied predominantly by gentiles, rather than Jews.

Because it was on the very frontier of heathendom, and the very last outpost of Judaism, it tended to be dominated by the Greek influences.

Today that part of the world would be as Syria, but at this juncture in history, it's under the control of Israel.

- It was to that place that Jesus retreated.
- It would be a welcome retreat from the heat of the Galilean lowlands.

- It would be a welcome retreat from the pressure of the very Jewish society there.
- It would also be a retreat from the influence of Herod, who was after Jesus Christ, without doubt, into the territory controlled by Philip the Tetrarch.

Now, Philip the Tetrarch was a more kind, patient and imposing no threat to Christ and His disciples. He was, however, committed to Caesar as indicated by the fact that he himself changed the name of Panias to Caesarea.

Philip rebuilt much of it, and he turned it into a very nice place, named it after the Caesar. It was designated Caesarea Philippi because he was the one who enlarged it and to distinguish it from the other one.

The Lord went there with His disciples.

Now, this particular incident is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and in Luke because of its utter importance.

Mark and Luke fill in some interesting details.

**Mark 8:27**, *Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?"*

**Luke 9:18**, *And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"*

## Two important Questions.

There they were at the very crossroads of Judaism and Heathen.

Jesus asked them the question that every religion in the world must answer:

**Who do you say I am?**

There is a secondary question asked by Pilate that should come as a corollary to that first question.

Pilate asked the second question.

**“What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?”**

**Matthew 27:22**, *Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!”*

## First Question?

**V 13**, *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”*

Jesus uses the term Son of man to refer to Himself.

This term is used 80 plus times in the New Testament, and so it is the Lord’s most common designation of Himself.

Although it is definitely a prophetic title of Messiah taken from **Daniel 7:13 -14,**

He uses it more as a sign of His humiliation, as a sign of His identification with humanity.

Jesus calls Himself by the name that He commonly called Himself, Son of man.

### **Who do men say that I am?**

Jesus have been around for two plus years, and been preaching, teaching, healing, doing signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

What is the result of all of this?

### **Who do people say I am?**

### **What a crucial question?**

Jesus came into the world to reveal Himself.

Now it's time to find out what they were reading, in terms of that revelation.

### **Do they really know who Jesus is?**

Nothing is as important for Him and the extension of His Kingdom as that question.

I don't think Jesus is really looking for an answer.

I think this is a leading question.

Jesus knew what they thought about Him. But He wanted out of the disciples' mouth a clear statement of the wrong answer, and then He wanted to hit for the right answer and, therefore, make it stand out by contrast.

He wants the general opinions of men as they fall short of reality as a backdrop for the truth, which the disciples will give.

What Jesus is seeking is the confession that they ought to make with their lips from their heart after nearly two and a half years of being with Him.

Jesus is after a verdict.

It's time for that now, the lessons are over, the course has reached its climax, now is the test.

They respond.

### **Answer to the question.**

**V 14,** *So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

**John the Baptist.**

**What didn't they say?**

They didn't say, "Some say you are Beelzebub, the prince of demons."

They had said that back in **Matthew 10:25**, but they knew the Lord wasn't looking for what His enemies said.

They knew He was looking for.

### **What is the positive response to me?**

Jesus knew what His enemies thought, but what do the rest of the people general opinion about me?

What is the consensus of the populace?

**Matthew 14:1-2**, *At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus<sup>2</sup> and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him."*

Herod said, "It's John the Baptist, back from the dead."

### **Why did Herod say that?**

Because John the Baptist was a prophet, John the Baptist was declaring the coming of Messiah.

Jesus did works that were inexplicable defined humanly.

This is the one who's announcing the coming of the Messiah.

The one who does these mighty deeds must be one who's come back from heaven. He saw the parallel in the ministries and then he equated the fact that this must be John risen from the dead.

Undoubtedly this was more popular than just with Herod. There were a lot of people who thought Jesus was John come back from the dead.

John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah and not the Messiah.

They picked John the Baptist for their opinion because he was a forerunner to the Messiah and because having been risen from the dead, it explained how He could do the supernatural things He did.

*“Some said you are Elijah.”*

**Elijah** was the summit of the prophetic office.

**Malachi 4:5**, *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.*

The Jews believed then that Elijah would come back from heaven. Elijah would be resurrected.

He would come back from heaven prior to the coming of Messiah.

They say this based on the same thinking.

One, he is a forerunner of the Messiah.

Two, he is come back from the dead or come back from heaven.

If you were to go to a **Jewish Passover** today, you would see at the Jewish Passover table, an empty chair. If you were to ask the host why there is an empty chair during the Passover in which no one sits, he would tell you it is the chair for Elijah.

They are waiting for Elijah to show up because when he takes his seat, the Messiah is not far behind. Based on **Malachi 4**.

*“He is Jeremiah.”*

If you have ever had occasion to read what’s known as the **Apocrypha, the non-biblical writings** that sometimes appear between the **Old and the New Testament in a Roman Catholic Bible**.

Apocrypha has a series of books in it called, 1, 2 and 3 Maccabees. Named for Judas Maccabeus who was a great leader during that period of time after the end of the Old Testament before the start of the New.

There are many interesting stories and legends.

One of them is fascinating is that Jeremiah, prior to the Babylonian captivity in **586 B.C.**, took the Ark of the Covenant and took the altar of incense out of the temple in order that the gentiles wouldn’t take it and desecrate it, and he hid it in Mount Nebo.

The legend and superstition say that the Jews held onto this that before the Messiah comes back to establish His Kingdom, Jeremiah will return. Jeremiah will go get the Ark of the Covenant and he will go get the altar of incense and restore them to their place, and then the Messiah will come.

During the Maccabean period, you can read in **2 Maccabees** a supposed account of where Jeremiah did appear. It pictures him as a man with a great white beard, grey hair, glorious appearance. He comes down and he takes a golden sword, and he gives it to Judas Maccabeus.

**Judas Maccabeus** uses that sword to lead the Maccabean revolution and overthrow the Greeks. So, Jeremiah had become a hero to them.

Because when he was a prophet, they threw him in a pit to get rid of him but suddenly, he is a hero.

Many of the Jews were looking for Jeremiah to come back so that he could restore the Ark and the altar to its rightful place. Again, you have the same two factors.

- One is that they were looking for one who was a forerunner of the Messiah.
- Two, that he would be one who came back from the grave, or back from heaven, back from life with God,

which was the only way they could explain his ability to do miraculous works.

So, some said He's John the Baptist.

Some said He is Elijah.

Some said He is Jeremiah.

### **How come they had those variations?**

- Maybe some saw in Him the character and the quality of John the Baptist.
- Maybe some saw in Him the fire and the intensity and the fervency of an Elijah.
- Maybe some saw in Him the lamenting, grieving, broken heartedness of Jeremiah.

But they had these varying opinions, all having in common the same two factors:

- a forerunner of the Messiah and
- one come back from the dead.

He was one of the prophets.

**Luke 9:19**, *So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again."*

He was another one of the prophets risen again.

The resurrection sort of must be in there or they can't explain the supernatural character.

They never deny Jesus' miracles.

They never deny that they had to come supernaturally.

Some who thought it was Zephaniah. Zephaniah, that gentle, warm spirit of love. They may have seen that in Jesus and thought it was perhaps Zephaniah.

All these opinions about Jesus are floating around.

But they all have this remarkable thing in common:

- They knew He had to be from out of this world,
- They believed He was the forerunner of the Messiah.

They did not believe He was the Messiah.

They couldn't deny that He was a prophet.

They couldn't deny that He had supernatural power.

But they would not accept that He was the Messiah.

They got as close as they could without getting to the truth.

They are very much like our modern world that wants to go so far with Jesus and never any farther.

No human categories into which Jesus properly fits.

Jesus asked them the second question.

**V15**, *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

Now I want to hear from you.

**Who do you say?**

**The question of all questions.**

You will answer that question.

You are answering that question right this very moment.

Your eternal destiny depends upon the answer you give.

You can't avoid the question.

You are pinned against the wall of eternity, and you will be forced to answer that question.

**Greatest Discovery.**

**What was their answer?**

Every person's final examination.

**V 16**, *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

Simon Peter, the spokesman.

He was always up front.

He was the mouthpiece.

Whenever there was some speaking to be done, he did it.

**Matthew 15:15**, *Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us."*

**Matthew 19:27**, *Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"*

**Matthew 26:33**, *Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble."*

**John 6:68**, *But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."*

**John 13:23-24**, *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.<sup>24</sup> Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.*

Peter was the spokesman. We see it in many places. It was just his role to speak, and he articulated the consensus of the group.

This isn't just Peter, this is Peter gathering up the consensus of the disciples, speaking in their behalf.

Simon Peter, his full name, says: *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

It's a formal confession, and it demands a formal designation, not an off-handed one. This is the consensus.

Let us look at the confession.

- It is decisive.
- It is emphatic.
- It is brief.
- It is unqualified.

*"You are the Christ."*

You are the Messiah.

Christ being the Greek equivalent of Messiah.

- ✓ You are the anointed One of God.
- ✓ You are the promised Messiah.
- ✓ You are the One we've been looking for, the anointed One, the Prophet that should come, the eternal King, the eternal Saviour, the eternal High Priest.
- ✓ You are the One who is all the embodiment of all our hopes, dreams, desires, and all the promises.

**What is so important about this?**

**Didn't they always believe that?**

Yes and no!

They came in and out.

**John 1:40-42**, *One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup>He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found*

*the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). <sup>42</sup>And he brought him to Jesus.*

**If they knew that in the beginning, why did He spend two and a half years trying to convince them?**

Because from the time they made that initial assent, they begin to fall.

**Why?**

Because they were believing at that point the testimony of John the Baptist.

**John 1:29**, *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

**John 1:34**, *And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”*

They were believing the testimony of John the Baptist.

They were also believing what they saw when Jesus.

**Nathaniel** saw with His mind when He couldn’t see him with His eye, knew everything about him before He ever met him. So, there were a few little things that made them believe.

If Jesus had suddenly just knocked off the Romans and taken over and set up the Kingdom, they just would have gone right up from there.

But then suddenly started the humility, rejection, hatred, and they begin to wonder whether what they thought at the beginning was in fact true at all.

John the Baptist who said, "I bear witness this is the Son of God."

John the Baptist who said, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world."

When **John the Baptist** was a prisoner and he wasn't seeing Jesus do what he thought He would do, in

**Matthew 11:2-3**, *And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples<sup>3</sup> and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"*

**John 6:69**, *Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

There were those moments of great faith. And then there were those moments when Jesus said to them, "O ye little faith."

The Lord has brought them through two and a half years, and I think when they come to this point, there is a confident affirming that they really do now believe this is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

They have just seen a display of miracles.

They have just heard profound teaching.

They are convinced of this. Even though as He goes to the cross particularly, they begin to shake a little.

**John 14** passage where the Lord is telling them about, He was going to die and leave them.

They were getting very nervous and they say, "We don't know where you are going."

**John 14:8-9**, *Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?*

At this point, this is an affirmation of a supreme confession that they believe He is the Messiah.

The Spirit of God imbedded it in their hearts when He came and made them the men that changed the world. This is their confession.

Took all this time to get them to this place.

Through all the struggles and hatred of the Pharisees and the rejection of the people and the confusion of their Messianic expectations and God's plan being different than the plan they thought, and yet they arrive at that point.

You are the Messiah.

They got the question right. He was the One.

*"You are the Messiah The Son of the living God."*

Not only Son of man, but Son of God.

Not only God, but the living God, as opposed to the dead idols.

You are the Son, the Son not only of man but the Son of God, the Son not only of God but the Son of the living God.

Our God is a living God. He is opposite all the other dead gods. When Jesus is called the Son of God, it is saying that He is one, in essence, with God.

They believed that He was God.

**Why then did Philip say, 'Show us the Father'?"**

Because I don't think he understood the full implications of what it was that Jesus was God.

I don't think he understood the trinity fully.

I don't think I do, either.

Somewhat understanding of Jesus. But they believed that this was the Messiah, this was one with God. Son means equal with God. It's the Son of essence, not the Son of servitude.

Remember the Jews took up stones to stone Him because He said God was His Father, making Himself equal with God,

**John 5:17-18**, *But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."*

<sup>18</sup> *Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.*

Not extravagant language. Not flowery speech, but it's right on target.

**V 17**, *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

Son of John, son of Jonas, bar means son of.

*"for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*

You didn't get that information about who I am from your humanness.

Flesh and blood referring to his humanness.

It wasn't your superior intellect.

It isn't your merit, calculation, analysis, and intuition.

It isn't your religious tradition that showed you.

There is nothing in the human realm that could reveal this.

**1 Corinthians 12:3**, *Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

It is God who discloses His Son to the human understanding.

For we are just another group of blind people as we saw last week.

Jesus calls him in this verse Simon, son of Jonah. He doesn't use the term Peter.

He was calling him by his old human name, before his conversion so that he will emphasize the inadequacy and the blindness of his humanness.

**Matthew 11:27**, *All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does*

*anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.*

The Father reveals the Son, the Son reveals the Father, only by divine revelation can we know Christ.

If you know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God because the Father has revealed it.

**How has the Father revealed it?**

**How did Peter get the information?**

The Father revealed Jesus Christ to be the Messiah through Christ Himself.

It was those years of following Jesus and listening to Jesus through the valleys and through the roads, mountains, water, villages, cities and at the table.

As the light began to dawn and the Spirit of God opened their heart, the revelation came through the presence of Christ Himself until their consciousness was wide open to the fact that this was the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

You will discover who Jesus Christ is only when you look at Jesus Christ.

When you listen to Jesus Christ.

When you follow the path that He walked and you hear the words that He taught and you see the things that He did, and

the dawning of your consciousness comes when the Holy Spirit takes those realities and makes them live in your dead soul.

**Romans 10:17**, *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

You gaze on His glory, and you are transformed into His image. God used Christ to reveal Himself.

The Spirit of God applies the truth to our hard and dark hearts. In the life of Christ, there was some monumental evidence. When Jesus was revealing Himself, there were basically two categories in which He revealed Himself to Peter and everybody else.

**Matthew 5:17**, *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil.*

People marvelled at Him because He spoke as one having authority.

He taught divine truth.

**Matthew 5,**

**Matthew 6,**

**Matthew 10,**

**Matthew 13.**

Profound truth. His words were a dynamic revelation of who He was.

- ✓ His works.
- ✓ His power over disease.
- ✓ His power over nature.
- ✓ His power over demons.
- ✓ His power over sins.
- ✓ His power over death.

**Matthew 12:8**, *For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.*”

They put Jesus out of the possibility of the category of Jeremiah, Elijah, John the Baptist, or one of the prophets. When He said, “I am the Lord of the Sabbath.”

### **What Jesus was saying?**

The Sabbath was the centre of all life in Israel.

Everything revolved around the Sabbath.

Everything in their calendar was in cycles of seven, and the Sabbath was the centre of everything.

All their days of worship, all their great feasts, festivals and all of the celebrations were tied around the Sabbath concept.

Sabbath, by the way, means rest or cessation.

Sabbath was a day of rest or a time of rest with two things in mind.

One, cessation from work.

Two, holy convocation/ worship.

You stop your work,

You worship God.

There were all kinds of Sabbaths.

God gave them a catalogue of Sabbaths.

**Leviticus 23**, catalogue of Sabbaths.

**First Sabbath.**

**Leviticus 23:1-3**, *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts. <sup>3</sup>‘Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.*

One, you rest from your work.

Two, you worship God.

This Sabbath was the one that was every week. Every week on Saturday, the seventh day, they rested from their work, and they had a holy worship of God, every week!

### **Passover Sabbath:**

#### **Leviticus 23:4-8.**

**Leviticus 23:6**, *And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.*

**V 7**, you do not work in it.

It is a Sabbath as well.

#### **Feast of first fruits.**

#### **Leviticus 23:9-14.**

The feast of first fruits is also a Sabbath. It is a rest. It is a coming before the Lord.

#### **Feast of Trumpets.**

#### **Leviticus 23:23-25.**

This Sabbath occurs in the Sabbath month, the seventh month. You do not work, and you bring an offering before the Lord.

#### **Day of Atonement.**

**Leviticus 23:26-27**, *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>27</sup>“Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.*

The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

The tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement, is a holy convocation and again a time of rest. It is also a Sabbath.

### **The feast of Tabernacles.**

#### **Leviticus 23:33-44.**

This Sabbath occurring in the seventh month, a time of rest and holy convocation.

All through the Jewish year, every week was Sabbath.

Every week was Sabbath.

Then periodically, you had these six other major Sabbath events so that life for them was Sabbath.

Sabbath, time of rest from the work, time of worship of God.

**Leviticus 25** two more Sabbaths are given here.

### **The seven-year Sabbath.**

**Leviticus 25:3-4**, *Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; <sup>4</sup>but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the*

*land, a sabbath to the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard.*

They would work for six years, and then in the seventh year, keep a Sabbath. You only sow your field and prune your vineyard and gather your fruit for six years. The seventh year is a Sabbath rest unto the Lord. That was a whole year to concentrate on worship, a whole year to slow down the activity of work and to have a holy convocation.

### **Year of Jubilee.**

#### **Leviticus 25:8-17.**

Seven times seven, or after the forty-ninth year, comes the fiftieth, year which is a Sabbath.

During that fiftieth year, you have the epitome, you have the ultimate of the cycling of the Sabbaths.

So that in the fiftieth year, in the ultimate Sabbath, on a Sabbath day, on the Sabbath of the Day of Atonement in the Sabbath of jubilee, a great trumpet blast comes forth, and Sabbath reaches its ultimate climax.

**Leviticus 25:9-13**, *Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. <sup>10</sup>And you shall consecrate the fiftieth*

*year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. <sup>11</sup>That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. <sup>12</sup>For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field. <sup>13</sup>In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession.*

Imagine that you are in Israel, and for years somebody else has had the land that your family has owned, that your father possessed, you have had to pawn it to survive.

Even you have sold yourself as an indentured servant into slavery, and suddenly you come to that time when that trumpet's going to blast, and you are going to be liberated from your slavery. You are going to be given back your land with all its crops and all its potential.

On that Day of Atonement, on that Sabbath day in the Sabbath jubilee, that trumpet would be blown, and everything would happen in that moment. All the people would be turned loose, the captives would be liberated.

There would be liberty.

There would be freedom for all.

There would be restoration.

Sabbath is a symbol.

From the weekly Sabbath to the jubilee and everything in between, it is a symbol, it is a picture, it is a type, it is not a reality.

It is only a picture of a reality.

The reality is that someday there is coming a true rest for the people of God.

Someday there's coming a real holiness.

Someday there's coming a genuine holy convocation.

Someday there will be a true liberating of the land and captives and a true setting free of the slaves.

Every time a Jew celebrated the Sabbath, and every time he celebrated a feast, and every time he celebrated the Sabbath year, and every time he celebrated a jubilee, he would be reminded that someday there would be a real rest.

Someday there would be a real cessation of work because all those times in between, he was working. He was even carrying out a system of sacrifice that involved external ceremony and effort.

Nobody ever argues that the sacrifices of the Old Testament were symbols of the coming of Christ who was the ultimate Lamb.

All the sacrifices of the Old Testament simply pictured Christ.

The whole Sabbath system had no purpose except to point to the One who would bring true holiness and rest.

**Luke 4:16-19**, *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. <sup>17</sup>And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: <sup>18</sup>“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me <sup>U</sup>to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup>To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

**Luke 4:21**, *And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

I am the jubilee.

I am the Sabbath rest. I am the source of true holiness.

That is exactly why He violated their Sabbath ordinances.

- ✓ If He wanted to take a trip on the Sabbath, He took a trip.
- ✓ If He wanted to pluck corn on the Sabbath, He plucked corn.

- ✓ If He wanted to peel the corn and eat it on the Sabbath, He did it on the Sabbath.
- ✓ If He wanted to heal on the Sabbath, He healed on the Sabbath.

Because He was no longer interested in the shadows.

Because the reality was there.

The thing that was maybe so devastatingly convincing about Jesus was this Lordship over the whole sabbatical system which ruled and governed their lives.

That is why the New Testament repeats every one of the Ten Commandments except remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy,  
it doesn't repeat that one.

### **Why?**

You don't need the picture if the reality is present.

Some people seem more content with a picture than they do with the reality.

**Matthew 11:28**, *Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

In that synagogue in Nazareth, He said, "I am the fulfilment of all of that to which Isaiah referred. I am the one who will set the captives free. I am the one who proclaims the real spiritual jubilee."

Jesus Himself went to the cross, died on the sixth day, was in the grave on the seventh day and risen. He was resting, too!

Jesus ended that Sabbath.

He finished His work on the cross, on the sixth day He said, "It is finished," rested on the Sabbath.

Jesus began on the new dawning of the first day, that new covenant, that new era.

We do not hold on to the Sabbath picture anymore.

So don't think that you have got to be careful because you can't walk too far on Sunday.

**Colossians 2:16-17**, *So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, <sup>17</sup> which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

Don't let anybody judge you on that.

**Why?**

These are a shadow of things to come, but the reality is Christ.

**Hebrews 4**, "There remained a rest for the people of God."

He says enter into that rest, it is the rest of salvation.

Since I embraced Jesus Christ, who is the Sabbath, who is the jubilee, who is the fulfilment of all the pictures, I have a holiness within me that is valid every day.

I have a holy convocation going on with God every conscious moment of my life.

I have a rest. I don't need one day a week to rest spiritually. That external imagery only portrayed a spiritual reality. I rest in God.

**Do you?**

## **Conclusion.**

**What happens when you answer the question right?**

**What happens when you know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God?**

*V 17, Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah.*

**What does it mean to be blessed?**

To have Jesus pronounce a blessing on you!

**Ephesians 1:3**, *"And you are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus."*

All the divine supernatural resources that God can pour out on the children of His love and the brothers of Jesus Christ are yours.