

ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION AND GREEK NEW TESTAMENT CLASSICS

Pilgrim's Pathway

Matthew

“God with us” entails for the Christian a daily walk with our Living Lord. It is the prayerful practice of a life and lifestyle conversant with Christ that one desires to facilitate for oneself and for others. To facilitate such a relationship with the Lord in a busy modern age I have gone back to my student days and a method of devotional meditation with which I became conversant in student years in Dublin in the 1960's. In those days I used a mini publication by Bagster Printers which featured a bible text for each day of the year written in Greek and English. This word is advanced as a web publication one might call “Precious words to sweeten life's journey” or But I have housed the devotional under the title “Walking in Emmanuel's land”. In each devotional there is a Greek term chosen around which some apt and hopefully inspiring thoughts are grouped for the reader.

1 PARTHENOS (The virgin birth) 1.23

Matthew writes “Behold the **parthenos** will carry in her womb and bear a son and they will call his name “Emmanuel” which translates “God with us”. Joseph and Mary were strictly instructed to call their son “Jesus” fro His coming and ministry was to be “Saviour to the world”. The **parthenos** concept reflects the Almah or “unmarried maid” of the Jewish prophet and the ancient constellation of the astrologer-cum-astronomer. Mary is the ultimate fulfillment of Genesis 3.15. The Prophet was going two steps further. He was envisioning the daily walk of disciples with the Lord and the glorious return of the Saviour to dwell with men. Nevertheless more than most Mary got to walk with Jesus and to stand by the cross. With such a glorious person as Christ you and I are invited to spend our days and eternity.

2 CHREMATIZO (Doing business with God) 2.11

The wise men stooped down in humility and they came to their knees and worshipped the child Jesus- God's servant- and presented to Him personally gifts –gold for a king, frankincense for a priest and myrrh for burial. Mark the nature and order of the gifts and the humble spirit of the givers who stooped and worshipped. Everything about the wise men's giving is in the aorist tense- they opened their treasures with lasting import and gave a gift with lasting significance. They were guided by heavenly sign, by bible prophecy, by dream and by God overall. They were forever changed and their transaction when they did business with God (chrematizo) is what marks them as wise.

‘Tis done the great transaction's done
I am my Lord's and He is mine!

3 BASTAZO (Bearing burdens) 3.12

"I am not worthy", John said "to carry his sandals". Those John baptized would take off their sandals as their last act of preparation. John would deter Jesus from humiliation as one in no need of repentance but Jesus identified with the repentant ones in like obedience. Those who align with Jesus deal with fire-the deep purifying power of the Holy Spirit. Those who refuse Jesus must also deal with fire – what John called ASBESTOS fire-which like "lime" dissolves or destroys without remedy. The fire of the Spirit unceasingly cleanses believers on earth and maintains heavenly holiness whilst the fire of judgment is consuming and without remedy. Abiding purpose of existence beyond the Great White Throne is enfolded in the phrase *all things are made new*. Nothing else is revealed or given and for the very good reason that *not fire but God* controls the existence of the soul and our God in His holiness is a consuming fire.

4 DEIRASTHENAI (Testing & tempting) 4.1

Jesus left the Jordan to be tested. The tests that were given were appeals to the flesh and to the world and both were repulsed by Jesus using the word of God and by His showing obedience to the Father. The third test was an illegitimate one and went too far. No one showed that in His flesh Jesus had no sin. No.2 showed that pride of life had no hold on Christ. It was a step too far-to push God to do something for base aims. The third temptation was extraordinarily brazen-to ask Jesus to bow to him. Jesus put Satan back firmly under the yoke of the Father. His third temptation is one that opens the door to that "moment in time" Luke4.5 STIGME CHRONOU when Satan knowing he has a short time vies for the rule of the world. Satan must be compelled to obedience like an ox under yoke.

5 TELEIOS (On being perfect) 5.48

God said to Abraham "Walk before me and be thou perfect" If his commands are his enablings the challenge is within the realm of the possible! The most important sermon ever spoken on how to live was the sermon on the Mount. Be perfect therefore perfect by adding the keystone of love for your enemies. The other things were **virtues** of humility, repentance, meekness, being filled with the righteousness of God, showing mercy, having a pure heart as to intent, living at peace and rejoicing when we are persecuted. To this be added **communication** and tongue control-saltiness of tang in speech and light in doctrine. To this **good works**. Then **tempers** ought to be controlled-don't be angered readily, reconcile quickly. In matters of **familiarity and sex** watch your eyes and hands as to those of the opposite sex. Be absolutely **honest and give generously** to need and lend to others too. This is true holiness.

6 MERIMNOS (Anxious care) 6.25

Have no anxious care for your soul. Life is more than food and the body than clothes. Jesus taught us to look at the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. Jesus spoke a second time referring to King Solomon and said "Even Solomon who lived amid splendour was not so provided as these." Jesus referred a third time to our carefulness of heart and mind and said –all nations think like this-but exercise faith-your Heavenly Father knows you need these things. Our grandson Ben who describes himself as having "poorly bones" was provided

with an orthopedic surgeon in town and “it was his hap”(as scripture says of Ruth) to live close to Sheffield the centre of excellence for the condition. Is it not the case that “Our heavenly Father knows what we have need of before we ask?”

7 TETHEMELIOS (A sure foundation) 7. 25

The house did not fall because it was built on the rock.

The crux is to be based on the “living rock” – the person of Jesus as Son of God. This means listening to every word-and there are 16 basic vital commands but prior to that it means the first foundation must be in Christ as the Son of God. The centre of Peter’s confession was “Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God!” It is essential to find “the stone the builders rejected”- the coign - the corner-stone elect precious-the one who died and rose again-David Livingstone’s “Living Stone”

8 OLIGOIDISTOI (Little faiths) 8.26

Why are you wretched when you should be heroes in a heroic age? The word is spoken traditionally by Homer with compassion. To the master the sailors and for that matter we ourselves though faced with overwhelming and terrifying circumstances are not expected to be less than heroes whilst He is present (cp. 6.30, 8.26, 14.31and16.8). The chief point is that their faith was too small to “engage” with the opposition because it was not captained.

9. ELEOS (There’s Mercy with the Lord) 9.13

I will there be mercy and not sacrifice. Homer used the word of “burning” and not of offering. **THUSAI** was a burnt offering **SPAZAI** was to kill an offering or slay it. For that reason "I Hewed you"[as wood] by my prophets; I slaughtered you[as sheep] by the words of my mouth and **from your (singular) judgment light (revelation) or lightning went forth**. For do I favour or am inclined to covenant mercy and not sacrifice and the personal experience and knowledge of God rather than whole burnt offering?

The Lord instanced a very dense piece of Hosea’s writing. It reads better like this “I hewed through the slaughtered prophets like a carpenter through wood –through the words of my mouth and your judgment light will go forth. The light of the gospel comes from the sacrificial death of Christ and God desires the personal experience of God as Saviour and not the continual offerings much less the cruel burning of live victims. In the passage through the prophet the Lord speaks to Himself and of Himself.

10. MISTHOS (Rewards in heaven) 10.41

Scripture speaks of martyr victors rewards, pastoral rewards, rewards for the faithful, reward for love of His appearing and more... Jesus said, “Whoever receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophets reward or a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive the reward of a righteous man.” In 1 Kings 17 it was the return to life of the son of the woman of Zarephath. In 2 Kings 4 8-37 it was the miracle of the resuscitation of the Shunamite’s son. Disciples get reward even for a very small drink of cold water. Simple actions performed out of caring for others are deeply pleasing to God and achieve preposterously inflated rewards –but ones

which equally represent who God is just as the act of the one rewarded reflects an appreciation not just of the man but of the man as a servant of God and one made what he is by God. God rewards us not for the man or child in need but as in love we see that one as Jesus standing in need.

11 EXHOMOLOGOUMAI (Truth is for the teachable) 11.25

Our Lord made an absolute confession in saying “God reveals his truth to babes”. There is a strange word in the text that asserts that only those to whom the Son **is inclined** to reveal the Father know Him. Then the Lord speaks of the meek and the lowly- those teachable and those who are willing to be lowly as the carpet. It is not those with natural ability or honed skill or those who are quick to draw the right conclusions from external data that is the intelligent ones that Christ inclines to per se. The Lord tells us that there were better elements in Sodom than Capernaum as to persons who might be convicted of sin and repent. The method of Jesus to share in joy and in sorrow did not work everywhere. The method of John to live frugally and thunder out repentance was commended but the people who were coming in were like opportunists at a January sale –rushing for the Prophet and doing what they were told. But was the “will” there to go on to follow when death threatened and life had to be lived with Godly prayer & discipline. Jesus knew there had to be the work of the Holy Spirit and it had to be a baptism of fire based on meekness and humility.

12 ADAGELLEI (I will put my Spirit on Him) 12.18

A second time Jesus referred to Hosea 6.6 and the mercy of the cross before the sacrifice of the altar and then spoke of the triune ministry from Isaiah 42.1-3 which is one of three great trinity verses from the prophet (Isaiah 6.1, 42.1, 48.16 There I am, and now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me) On the basis of Isaiah’s characterization Jesus sought a genuine low profile. Charged with healing one man on Sabbath He “healed them all” whilst the Pharisees held a Sabbath Council? On the basis of victory of Calvary Jesus was to announce the issue and turning point of judgment to the Nations” and He would carry judgment away out to sea-publish it far and wide. The Hebrew that Matthew quotes in Greek speaks of carrying His justice to victory-the LXX of carrying it to the whole earth. His name is the instrument of justice and in that would the Gentiles look with expectation.” urges the Hebrew. The Greek LXX renders “The Gentiles shall rest their expectation on His name. Isaiah 42.1-4

13 PARABOLE (Another parable) 13.24

This is the famous 13th with its parables of the seed, tares, leaven, treasure & net. Jesus is the perfect scribe ever bringing the new out of the old. The Isa6.9-10 reference related precisely for it shows the people do not “get it together” or “drop to the idea” because their heart is insensitive or dull (PACHUNO). Hippolytus speaks of unhealthy swellings, Dionysius of the sun looking enlarged in a mist and Aeschylus of fat purses. Isaiah says ***They will not learn from speech alone, they want to have a vision like you were given-however they will not go on to desire a true relationship of union with the Lord*** This word *apr* “healing” entails restoring to the pristine and a speedy healing. People then as now put off what

God desires for them and refuse His will. Seed does not germinate -the “birds” of lack of encouragement, lack of scripture and persecution and wealth and worry pick them out- seeds are crushed by the devil and spiritual foes. The kingdom of heaven would become a great organization but was never meant to be a huge structure like a roost, it would grow worldwide and provide daily bread though not free of failure. The kingdom is precious and people enjoy finding Jesus and sometimes hide their first feelings like the man who found treasure. The Lord is reaching all nations and only He can judge of who really trusts Him. In the first instance Christ is the Sower, the harvester, the gardener the baker the merchant the treasure seeker and the fisherman.

14 KRASPEDOU (The hem of His garment) 14.36

Matthew tells us of Herod’s ire-John’s beheading- a national tragedy that triggered a wave of hatred. He tells us of Christ’s withdrawal with the twelve. He displays the compassion of the Lord and miraculous feeding of the 5000 downcast men and their families against the backcloth of concern and personal grief. He tells us of more trouble-the 7-8 hour life-threatening sea storm-and Jesus’ “good cheer”. He tells of Peter’s miraculous faith walk-going where none went before-on water. He tells us of the secret-watch Jesus! He tells us of the miracle of the miraculous silencing of the storm. He tells us that those of Gennesaret who were healed by touching the hem of Jesus garment- perhaps the prayer shawl. These touched the “edge” of the garment. The word speaks of the “head” of the garment but it incorporates the term “foot” besides. We are taken by the thought that Jesus bowed over each and the edge of the garment nearest His face rather than the place at His foot may well have been. They “laid hold” “engaged” “caught up with” and “grasped” Christ where His garment spoke of prayer and vow and commitment. That entire country was the healthiest part of Galilee because the men by faith brought their sick to Jesus. What Joy!

15 GENNETHETO (It must happen) 15.28

This chapter tells how Jesus sought the affection of the heart. Pharisees in defense of Corban doctrine allowed boys to dishonour parents in the name of religion. Isaiah spoke of the heart distant from God ($\pi\omicron\rho\rho\omega$ -having reached a high point of wickedness and distance). The blindness of failure to understand the heart is widespread. Peter was even asked if he failed here. Pindar and Thucydides both use $\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ of “natural understanding-bringing the outward evidence to bear in the mind i.e. knowing man is sinful.

The Lord spoke of seven battalions of sin marching out of the heart-evil thoughts murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. Three incidents complete the lessons on the heart. First the woman of Canaan whose great faith as the master said “Must” have what it sought just as a little puppy endearing itself gets its tit-bit. Then Galilee of the gentiles brought the dumb, the maimed, the lame and the blind and they all were healed-an evidence of indiscriminate response –so that they “glorified the God of Israel” though not all of Israel. Finally the four thousand were fed with seven loaves and fishes. These were a mixed multitude-but Jesus had compassion of all men and saw them as His sheep and His other sheep.

16 ADELTHEIN (Redemptive suffering) 16.21

This chapter moves from “Red Sky” not a little laced to “Pharisaic leaven of doctrine” and then Jesus lays the critical doctrinal emphasis-“Who is the Son of Man?” and “The Son of Man must suffer many things” –even the worldly way of his fond Peter-so the “way of the cross” is paramount and it has reward at the Lord’s coming.

There are four verbs to savour- Jesus feared not the wrath of God-but emphasized that he must

(1) Depart Jerusalem-leave the body and the ministry victorious

(2)He was to “suffer many things” from leaders, religion, friends the king, revilings, spittings, plucking the beard, crucifixion, sorrow of women, broken hearts just by, writing sinners calling and condemning, a placard of crime uncommitted, shame, the curse and the gross sorrow of Gethsemane and Calvary as the Father heart of God in empathy resisted backtrack or sparing for the sake of redemption under the “determinate inclination” of God 2.23 Acts. This 2couteous wish” according with the pleasure of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost is also thereupon and thereafter a decree to which the Godhead worked and from which there would be no demur but utmost understanding!

17 METAMORPHOTHE (He was transfigured) 17.2

The transfiguration of Jesus probably took place on Mt.Hermon. In Mark 9.1-2 immediately before the event Jesus referred to the arrival of some who would not die before the Kingdom of God came with power. Jesus took only three disciples to observe this private revelation involving sight of His body in its resplendent state along with others who were glorious. It is of great interest that Christ could transform into and back out of this glory. Though no human being has any capability in this area it would appear if Elijah is truly to return he too must withdraw from glory and resume his earthly life in full manhood and die in the streets of Jerusalem.

Beyond speculation Matthew is teaching the centrality of the Exodus or death and resurrection of Christ. Jesus called this an ORAMA and allowed it to be promulgated after His resurrection. Aristides uses the term of “an appearance of the gods in bodily form”. It is also used of “speculation” . Not till the resurrection would the full impact of the afterlife overwhelmingly take hold of the disciples.

The suffering associated with Elias to come was also seen in John and for that reason Jesus took up the reference to lay emphasis not just on suffering but on the depth of obedience in Elijah and John and to lay full emphasis on the import for Himself.

We see through Matthew’s eyes the import of the mercy & compassion of Christ who would endure such suffering at the hands of men. His mercy was shown to the lunatic child. His life in the vein of suffering and fasting and vow was able to face all the exigencies and emergencies sin created-and the corruption Satan created.

The **great sorrow** of the disciples (17.23) after the elation of the Mount is curiously offset by the miracle of the fish and the tax. This provision of a stater in the fish's mouth - four day's wages – the equivalent today of about £350. This tax was gathered on the second year of Jesus ministry and it would cover His remaining days on earth. When Simon fished it out he was given additional sign and must have taken additional thought about the length of Jesus remaining life. Jesus had said "How long shall I be with you?" (17.17) The lack of faith meant that Christ had to hold up His hands in prayer to support the weak disciples constantly. He looked forward to their learning to take on the spiritual warfare of prayer. That intimate powerful relationship of Elijah lay behind Christ's message about the generation which was not taught to pray. IN John 6 Peter's confession takes another form but it gives us guidance that Jesus referred before Tabernacles on the second year of His ministry to His death in a most explicit way.

18 SYMPHONOSIN(If two or three agree) 18.18

We commonly think of symphony as an orchestral term. But if a man and wife agree with God concerning God's will in their family the third instrument in the orchestra is God in heaven. Jesus said it will "happen in heaven" or be created for them. As to the divine concert its fourth player is Christ who is present where two or three on earth meet in harmony. Thus a fast bond exists between the Father and his children through Christ our redeemer and we can be assured of being heard and of our prayers being answered. God's explicit will concerning very small persons or babies is that they live to praise Him and do not perish. They are the proper subject of prayer and together with children have special right to be protected. Little children who are taught the word and believe have ever been the centre of God's interest and hell's judgment is pronounced over those who scandalize them. Christ went so far as to say that angels in heaven behold the Father's face and care and response in respect of "Micro-infants" to whom they minister.

19 DEURO (Come on) 19.21

The chapter is famous for Christ's doctrine of marriage where He taught that hardness is at the core of break-up so often though fornication or resolute adultery serves to warrant legal breach. On children of learning age He was anxious to attract. The Lord recognized the handicap of riches and faced with a man who was legally circumspect He insisted on the culture of giving and pronounced the vital call to follow the way of service. To the rich young ruler Jesus said "Come on". You have come so far-you have only a few steps –"Unite with me, sell up and give as you see the need and "come on" –the word in Homer has the effect "Come hither"("Whoso would valiant be let him come thither") as in Bunyan-an enthusiastic encouragement.

20 LUTRON(A ransom) 20.28

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard where workers starting at 6-7am,9am,12noon,3pm and 5 pm all receive precisely the same wage. This is the way God values his servants. It flies in the face of pride and demands a humble attitude. The request of the mother of Zebedee's children suits the category for opportunism as Calvary loomed could only offer blood sweat and

tears and persecution's cup. Rewards must wait. Work proceeds on the basis of service and compassion not aggrandizement and glory. The poorest of the poor that day arose and followed him-who knows to what acts of service these blind beggars were born? The whole church can rejoice in Him who loved the souls of men and paid the great price of our ransom. That atonement, expiation, ransom price is the greatest recompense of all-what need of more. He is worthy of all I can give as long as I live!

21 DOIESETE (continue the work on the fig tree) 21.21

This chapter features **Jesus' moment** to be revealed to Israel as Daniel and Zechariah prophesied (Daniel 9.25 Zech9.9) predicted-69weeks from 14March B.C.445-6April A.D.32 -173,880 days. It features **1Jesus' Messiahship** (Psalm118.26. It features **2 Jesus' house** and healing in place of selling. It features with the greatest interest **3 Jesus' disciples** who would "**continue the work**" (the primary significance of $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\omega$) on the fig tree or "could inspire or **create** the fig tree" and could cast the Mount of Olives into every nation in the world as the kingdom grew. Thousands of Jews would believe at Pentecost and the kingdom would indeed spread. Jesus is not speaking of killing off Jewish hope and making them unproductive but the reverse. The chapter then features **God's sons** (Jews & Gentiles) and **5 Jesus' death** as the son of the vineyard owner, **6 Jesus' the rejected cornerstone** (Psa118.22) and **7 Jesus' comrades**-a band or body of people such as Plato called "heralds" or faithful "reciters" of His story, The final feature is **Jesus' judgment** as the stone that "breaks us" and moulds us or falls on us in judgment and breaks all opposition in judgment (Daniel 2.44).

22 KREMANNUMI(on these two hang all the law & prophets) 22.40

Plutarch tells us that the laws of Athens hung as wooden tablets on an axis like a wheel and segment spokes from an axle. Plutarch wrote about AD 80. Our Lord spoke of everything working on the axle of the centrality of love for God and one's neighbour. The Herodian question of what we do with money, the Sadducees' question about relationships of husband and wife in resurrection and the Pharisee's query about the most vital command bring us back to the centrality of God and of who Christ is. Our Lord's reference to Psalm 110.1 where David calls Christ "Lord" puts an end to questions from the three segments of Jewish society. It is interesting that our Lord chooses "the writings" (Kethuvim) to impress His deity. The *writings demonstrate a peculiarly affecting devotion* that signals love and commitment in action whether that of Job or David or Ezra or Naomi or Solomon.

23 OUAL(woe to you) 23.24

One of my earliest teachers stressed that the Hebrew word יָמָא is the most terrible word in that language. It is a word of "misery" and "lamentation"-the ultimate expression of devastation. Its cognate יָמַח is used in the threatening oracles of Isaiah a dozen times. Jesus seven times used this term of scribes & Pharisees. From the times of Alexander this word entered the Greek Language and was familiar to Epictetus in AD 90. Jesus deep sorrow and solemn warning to the strictest men of religion and most learned in the book was because they neither recognized God as Father nor Him as Messiah and Lord.

They “shut” the kingdom; their teaching led to hell; they revered temple & altar above God and his gift; they tithes and washed but taught nothing on judgment mercy and faith; their ablutions left the heart filthy; they whitewashed tombs but would be guilty of Messiah’s blood. Then Jesus appended His cry of desire “O Jerusalem, would that you knew your time-I would have gathered you as a hen her chicks under her wing-but you did not ONCE show the will. Jesus predicted that until the second coming that will to rebel would not be ‘broken and in confirmation He quoted Psalm 118.26 picking up the call of children that the elders rejected.

24 PAROUSIA (The Messianic visit) 24.2

The disciples asked for an epic answer concerning the completion of the federal union of cities and the era of tax in the coming of the kingdom and when would our Lord make his visit preliminary to this? The city-tax issue terminus relates both to the first fall of Jerusalem and the fall of the fully developed Rome Redivivus of the latter days. Jesus gave answer to the basic question in the plain statement “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world and then shall the purpose be achieved or end come!” He intimated the Parousia by referring (1) to Daniel’s Abomination of Desolation, (2)the flight of the Jews, (3)A lightning strike east to west, (4)A remaining carcass for eagles(Trench speaks about “dogs surrounding the carcass”), (5)The solar darkness and blood moon and earth shaking immediately **in the middle of** (ευθευς μετα plus accusative of “days”)those days the sign of parousia with clouds of coming saints and angels gathering the residue of the earth elect. Israel’s homecoming heralds the final generation prior to this coming(24.34). Moral decline in parallel with Noah’s time marks the era. The leading ecclesiastic is unprepared.

25 EPH HOSON (inasmuch) 25.45

This chapter houses the parable of the ten virgins and the intimation of the rapture when Christ takes the Church home. It houses the parable of the talents and the intimation of our Lord’s expectation of what we do with the gifts He endows us with. It speaks of his judgment of nations at his coming and the “fire of the little age”(το πυρ το αιωνιον). The non-recognition of believers in the last days is grossly heinous in the Lord’s eyes. The persecution that afflicts His people will bring severe judgment. The actions we take vis a vis others is counted like (on an equal with) that we take toward Jesus Himself. This cries out for the exercise of love in all our personal relationships.

26 PARERCHOMAI (let this cup pass) 26.24

The chapter encompasses “the alabaster box of spikenard” story; the “supper institution” story, the triple “Gethsemane prayer & vow”, the story of the “armed soldiers and betrayer” who apprehend the Master, the “testimony to Caiaphas” and “Peter’s denial at cockcrow”. In verses 2, 12, 15, 24, 28, 31,32 we have seven testimonies to Jesus’ death and in v.53 a reference to the possibility of 1200 angels to prevent the cross. **Christ distinctly said the Father valued Him so highly He would stop the process at His call.** What he did not do is make that call. He made three pleas in verses 39, 42 & 44.The first may include any of the following sentiments but not “Let it not be done” the

necessity was fundamental. –the $\omega\varsigma$ or manner –the **How** is vital. [1] (1) Let it (the cup) go by...like a ship going into the distance-with **joy and hope of arrival** in glory! Let it go by...a **speeded up** event. Let it go by...**let it be disregarded (by You)** for their sake. Let it go by...let the danger melt away like a cloud **at this time**. Let it go by...**with just a few words** I want to speak (after a kindred expression in Aristotle) [2] “If or when this cup cannot pass from me If I do not drink it, let Your will be done!” This is not the “**How** of the cup but the sheer necessity of it which Christ recognized-the **What** must be. No-one else was worthy and no other time was prophetically possible. No re-scheduling could occur. The third [3] request like the second found the disciples asleep. Without the cup the sleep of death for sin would have encompassed all mankind. The “weakness of the flesh” –the **Why** which Christ understood so very well and to some extent experienced so acutely in Gethsemane helped Him to pursue the task as did the strengthening angel that spoke of the Father’s love and the 12 legions. He had been praying for the strength of Peter’s faith and looking forward to the “New Man that the cross and Pentecost would make possible.

27 ESCHISTHE (The veil was rent) 27.51

Matthew gives testimony to the exertions of Judas to absolve himself and indeed of Pilate to extricate himself –all to no avail. The callous ignorance and taunts of the soldiers thieves and passers by are attested. The three hours darkness and heart rending Eloi cry are recorded. Then comes a reversal. The veil is rent. It is a divine act-it tears from top to bottom. Three inches thick it may have been but it is in threads. Simultaneously earth shakes, graves of saints lie open-people from the past walk around and go toward the temple into the city to witness the change. The Power of Christ’s ransom was immediately seen. A centurion bowed. The women were in awe as Joseph a well known Sanhedrinist along with Nicodemus took the body. The power of the sun, the power of rocks, the power of gravity, the power of sheol ceded to the power of the Son of God. Resurrection was and is a great reality. Paul sought to experience this awakening. To be in Christ, to be like Christ and ultimately to be with Christ is the supreme objective of life.

28 CHEIRETE (Rejoice) 28.24

The risen Christ is at the centre of the last chapter. The angel who rolled the stone away rendered the soldiers like corpses and showed the women the empty place. Christ had gone. In a moment they hear His glorious well known voice-“Rejoice”. The soldiers awoke and gave the facts and were bribed. The stolen body theory didn’t hold water but it was promulgated. Alike the swoon theory is bluff-how could a mummified corpse that expired in crucifixion survive smeared with 100lbs (7 stone) of myrrh and aloes? John20.39. As to the hallucination eleven burly men saw him in Galilee and a few doubted till he came close and commanded all 11 to go to the world. Every one did! In the last –the 67th behold of the gospel of Matthew Jesus left the eleven with the words “I am with you till the Sunteleia-what they had talked about earlier-the end of human government-and His glorious kingdom.

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