

This 30 page booklet composes the Christian section of a bigger ebook called 'The Ultimate Quest' by Carlo De Paoli which can be downloaded at  
<https://wordpress.com/pages/newspiritualhumanism.wordpress.com>

## Christianity, a return to the origins

*Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'*

**Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. Mathew 7:21-25**

When Jesus said **Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock** he was delivering the Sermon of the Mount recorded in the gospel of Matthew and it is extremely clear that he is referring to the commands he gave in relation to his new covenant. There is the recurring refrain 'You have heard but I say', by 'You have heard' he is referring to an old law and by saying 'but I say' he is giving a new law. A new law not to abolish the old law but to take it to another level. In the sermon of the mount Jesus is showing a path to the Divine which comes from love and from the heart and not from fear and when you receive his word this love will guide to liberation and inner fulfilment.

Jesus was emphatic that this new covenant can be easily encapsulated in the saying which is the golden rule: <sup>5 12</sup> "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Jesus was talking with the force of thunder when he said to those who did not follow his teachings that he will deny them in front of the Father and he even called them evil doers he also admonished them that their miracles are useless when devoid of his teachings yet tragically this is exactly what has happened to Paulian Christianity which has dramatically made a u turn from the sermon of the mount and the new covenant and declared that you are automatically saved by faith alone and by blood sacrifices.

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Anyhow let us start from the beginning and examine this proposition step by step

I apologize if this chapter will offend and upset some Trinitarian Christians but I do not mean to hurt anyone. As I have said before I am only sharing my studies and experiences in the hope that some of you can benefit from them and in this section I am sharing my studies and research about early Christianity. It might represent a daunting possibility for literalist Christians to conceive that the present day Christian doctrines, as they know them, have very little connection to the Apostles. However if they could consider this mounting evidence as a possibility they would discover that a return to the Nazarenes and James the Righteous Jerusalem church could bring them a lot of peace and joy.

*'Christianity', as it will subsequently evolve from Paul, has by now severed virtually all connection with its roots, and can no longer be said to have anything to do with Jesus, only with Paul's image.* Baigent, Michael. The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception (Kindle Locations 3399-3400). Random House. Kindle Edition.

It is with some trepidation and the sense of a heavy weight on my shoulders that I start writing this chapter, the reason being that there is so much research that could be mentioned and presented in great detail but this would take a considerable amount of time and a large book written however I will attempt to do the best I can. The aim is to illustrate that once we drop the concocted doctrines of the Trinitarian Roman church we can return to the original teachings of the apostles and early Christianity and find a sense of fulfilment far deeper and loving then is offered at the moment. Once this is presented then we can appreciate how the message of Jesus fits into one of the facets of the diamond.

I am severely allergic to conspiracy theories born out of lack of knowledge and a fervid imaginative mind and I do not easily accept information unless I thoroughly investigate it first, and after months of investigation and after reading numerous books and reading through many websites I have to say that the information available at present about early Christianity has literally blown my mind.

About 20 years ago, in the shelves of a London bookshop I saw a book by Robert Eisenman entitled 'James the brother of Jesus', I quickly browsed through it and I could see that it was about the early years of Christianity in Jerusalem and the conflict between the apostles and Paul. A lot of the material was based on the Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient Judaic literature. I need to point out that the Robert Eisenman was an American biblical scholar, historian and archaeologist. He is currently professor of Middle East religions, archaeology, and Islamic law and director of the Institute for the Study of Judaeo-Christian Origins at

California State University Long Beach. At the time I found the contents of his book interesting but not enough for me to purchase it and read it not knowing that years later the information contained in it was going to blow my mind and confirm something that I was feeling deep down. There are quite a few things that I disagree with Eisenman's interpretation of the scrolls but I definitely agree with their validity.

Other authors who figure predominantly in my research are Michael Baigent, he had numerous university qualifications in psychology, comparative religion including an MA in spiritual experiences and mysticism. He is the author of many best-selling books like 'The Jesus papers, covering up the greatest conspiracy in history' and 'The Dead Sea Scrolls deception'. Another author who has greatly inspired me is Geza Vermes an ex-Catholic priest with a doctorate in the Dead Sea Scrolls and numerous other academic qualifications in ancient Christian and Judaic history. He also wrote numerous books on the subject including 'Christian beginnings' and 'The authentic Gospel of Jesus'. I also need to quote as one of the most prominent writers on this subject Bart Ehrman. Professor Ehrman completed his M.Div. and Ph.D. degrees at Princeton Seminary, where his 1985 doctoral dissertation was awarded magna cum laude. An expert on the New Testament and the history of Early Christianity, he has written or edited thirty books, numerous scholarly articles, and dozens of book reviews.

I must also mention one of the most amazing websites that have helped my research enormously is 'Early Christian Writings.com' compiled by Peter Kirby. Kirby must have spent a very long time gathering information about the earliest Christian writings many from the early church fathers. I will go into a little bit more detail about this later on but what I will say now is that reading through those writings was a rather heart breaking experience. I say rather heart breaking because it confirmed the massacre and destruction of the genuine message of Jesus in order to perpetrate one of the biggest hoaxes in the history of humanity.

I recommend you to read 'The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception' by Michael Baigent, 'Christian Beginnings' by Geza Vermes and 'James the Brother of Jesus, the Dead Sea Scrolls' by Robert Eisenman and 'Misquoting Jesus' by Bart Ehrman. I need to warn you that Eisenman's book is mostly for the serious researcher as it is nearly 400 pages long and it contains a huge amount of very detailed information.

Two very important discoveries have kick started modern research in early Christianity. The Nag Hammadi Library, a collection of thirteen ancient books (called "codices") containing over fifty texts, was discovered in upper Egypt in 1945 by a local farmer. This immensely important discovery includes a large number of primary "Gnostic Gospels" – texts once thought to have been entirely destroyed during the early Christian struggle to define "orthodoxy" including scriptures such as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Philip, and the Gospel of Truth. The discovery and translation of the Nag Hammadi library, initially completed in the 1970's, has provided impetus to a major re-evaluation of early Christian

history and the nature of Gnosticism. This discovery has further highlighted the agenda of the early Roman Catholic church to destroy every trace of scriptures that could contradict its dogma. We will examine Gnosticism a bit more in detail later on.

The second extremely important discovery were the Dead Sea Scrolls found in 11 caves in the region of Qumran, West Bank from 1946 to 1947. They are of huge importance because they consist of thousands of texts covering a period from 135 BC to 73 AD. What is important is that these texts were neither tampered or destroyed by the Paulian and Trinitarian Roman Church.

I will now quote Wikipedia because in this case it illustrates quite well the importance of this find. 'Archaeologists have long associated the scrolls with the ancient Jewish sect called the Essenes, although some recent interpretations have challenged this connection and argue that priests in Jerusalem, or other unknown Jewish groups wrote the scrolls. Robert Eisenman vigorously posits his theory that the later, non-biblical "sectarian" scrolls must be viewed in the context of a wider first-century CE "Opposition Movement," including Essenes, Zealots, Sicarii, and/or Nazoreans, and particularly the early Judeo-Christian community of Jerusalem, the Nazarenes, whose leader, James, the brother of Jesus, was acknowledged by the entire "Opposition Movement," and who is no other than the Scrolls' Teacher of Righteousness. He thus creates a strong link between the Scrolls and the pre-Pauline Jewish Christian community'.

Many of the narrations in the texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls are confirmed in other early Christian texts like the Didache and the Clementine Homilia which have only recently been brought to light. They can be read in full in the website 'Early Christian Writings'.

The amount of data is such that I cannot go into it in detail however I have given you the information on how to conduct your own research.

Various scholars have a few disagreements about the wider meaning of some of the text however there is no doubt about many key points.

**What I like to attempt in the following pages is to show you that the original apostles accepted James as the successor of Jesus and that they followed a spiritual path away from the belief that you are saved by the blood of an innocent animal or person. Quite the contrary you are saved by putting into practice the teaching of Jesus and his commandments. The peace of Jesus and his love descends on you when you cultivate the seed of the kingdom of heaven by doing what he asks us to do. The early Christian church also totally rejected the idea of multiple Gods and that Jesus was one of three Gods.**

1 – The early Christians were called Ebionites and Nazarenes. One of the meaning of Ebionite is 'poor' and 'humble' and it doesn't just denote material poverty but it stresses the need to remove arrogance and pride from our lives. Nazarene is interpreted by many as coming from Nazareth indicating that Jesus was born in Nazareth and therefore the

followers of Jesus are the Nazarenes. However many researchers now think that these term has other meanings like 'branch' Jesus being the trunk of the tree and his disciples being the branches.

2 - There was no 'international Christian Church' at the time of Jesus, the congregation was based in Jerusalem and it was the main site of the Nazarenes. The Gnostic Gospels, the Dead Sea Scrolls, The Didache and the Homilies of Clemens are in full agreement that Jesus elected as his successor James the Just and not Peter. From the Gospel of Thomas (uncorrupted by the Roman Church) verse 12:

*The disciples say to Jesus, "We know that Thou wilt leave us: who will then be the greatest over us?" Jesus says to them: "Wherever you go, you will turn to James the Just, for whose sake heaven as well as earth was produced."*

Pope Clement of Rome (30-97 CE), addresses his letter in the non-canonical 'Homilies of Clement' to "James...the Bishop of Bishops, who rules Jerusalem, the Holy Assembly of the Hebrews and the Assemblies everywhere," as does Peter similarly in his Homilies letter. This document and many others clearly show that the early Christians consider James as their undisputed leader.

Eusebius of Caesarea, (260-340 CE), Archbishop under Constantine, tells us in his Ecclesiastical History that James was "*the Lord's brother, who had been elected by the Apostles to the episcopal throne at Jerusalem,*" (E.H. 2.23).

Hegesippus, who lived immediately after the apostles, gives the most accurate account in the fifth book of his Memoirs. He writes as follows: "*James, the brother of the Lord, succeeded to the government of the Church in conjunction with the apostles. He has been called the Just by all from the time of our Saviour to the present day....He was holy from his mother's womb; and he drank no wine nor strong drink, nor did he eat flesh. No razor came upon his head; he did not anoint himself with oil, and he did not use the bath. He alone was permitted to enter into the holy place; for he wore not woollen but linen garments. And he was in the habit of entering alone into the temple, and was frequently found upon his knees begging forgiveness for the people, so that his knees became hard like those of a camel...*

- Church History II.23.5-6

The **Epistle of Clement to James**, found in the collections of early church history of Tertullian, is a letter that Catholics cite to prove that Peter initiated the line of popes in Rome as supreme leaders of the Apostolic Church. They use this letter because in it Clement writes to James that Peter has left to him the teaching post in Rome. However let us have a look at how Clement addresses James:

***"Clement to James, the lord, and the bishop of bishops, who rules Jerusalem, the holy church of the Hebrews, and the churches everywhere excellently rounded by the***

*providence of God, with the elders and deacons, and the rest of the brethren, peace be always.”*

Now let us look at how ends the letter:

*Whence I, my Lord James, having promised as I was ordered, have not failed to write in books by chapters the greater part of his discourses in every city.*

### **The Epistle of Peter to James**

This epistle also cited by Tertullian also reiterates the obedience of the Roman Church to the Jerusalem church of James. The letter starts with these words:

*Peter to James, the Lord and bishop of the holy Church, under the Father of all, through Jesus Christ, wishes peace always.*

You can read many passages attesting to this reality in the early Christian writings website.

Another very good site giving you ample evidence for this reality

<http://www.sullivan-county.com/id2/james.htm>

3) If you have look at the websites and books that I have pointed out you will be left in no doubt that the main gospel read by early Christians throughout the land that Jesus inhabited was called the Gospel of the Hebrews also known as the Gospel of the Ebionites. The Gospel of the Hebrews was the testimony closest to the Apostles and there is clear evidence from various fragments of the early church fathers that it was burned and destroyed on the orders of the Trinitarian church. What the Roman Catholics could not tolerate was the fact that the Gospel of the Hebrews described Jesus with great respect and veneration but as a man and a prophet but never as God and it was very clear on this matter. This gospel also clearly stated and confirmed that James was the successor of Jesus and when Jesus resurrected James was the first person to whom Jesus appeared. What really condemned this gospel to the pyre was the view it has on Paul:

**Irenaeus Against Heresies, i.26.2. ‘But the Ebionites use only that Gospel which is according to Matthew, and repudiate the Apostle Paul, calling him an apostate from the Law.’**

As you can see the Gospel itself has been destroyed however we have a few fragments left from the church fathers who wrote against it!

Epiphanius, Heresy xxix.9.4 (Nazoraeans). ‘They have the Gospel according to Matthew quite complete, in Hebrew: for this Gospel is certainly still preserved among them (the Jews) as it was first written in Hebrew letters.’

iii.27.4. (The Ebionites repudiated Paul) and used only the Gospel according to the Hebrews, making but slight account of the others.

Jerome also writes in Of illustrious men: '*Also the Gospel according to the Hebrews, lately translated by me into Greek and Latin speech, which Origen often uses, tells, after the resurrection of the Saviour: 'Now the Lord, when he had given the linen cloth unto the servant of the priest, went unto James and appeared to him (for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour wherein he had drunk the Lord's cup until he should see him risen again from among them that sleep)', and again after a little, 'Bring ye, saith the Lord, a table and bread', and immediately it is added, 'He took bread and blessed and brake and gave it unto James the Just and said unto him: My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from among them that sleep'.* What a beautiful verse and what a crime that the book that contained it has been destroyed!

As also we read in the Hebrew Gospel: '*And never, saith he, by ye joyful, save when ye behold your brother with love.*' Jerome On Ephesians volume 4

*On Ezek. xviii.7. And in the Gospel according to the Hebrews which the Nazarenes are accustomed to read, it is placed among the greatest sins 'if a man have grieved the spirit of his brother'.*

I am getting a little carried away so I will curtail my desire to keep posting quotations, I strongly recommend that you go to the early Christian writings website and then the page on the Gospel of the Hebrews not to be confused with the book of the Hebrews.

There is just one more quote that I want to share with you in this section because it is so beautiful:

The part of the Lord's prayer which says: '*Give us our daily bread*' in the *Gospel of the Hebrews* reads: "*the bread which thou wilt give us in thy kingdom, give us this day*".

**Be Aware!** A very dishonest person(s) have copied and pasted the Gospel of Matthew and called it The Gospel of the Hebrews and have been distributing it online. From the exerts we have from the early Church fathers we know that very little has been preserved from this Gospel and that actually it was quite different from the synoptic Gospels as I have already mentioned above.

3) In this section I will attempt to present a view that most Christians will find very difficult to even consider. What I am doing here is to question the basic tenets on which modern Christianity is based and what I am speaking of here is theses verses of Paul:

- 1) God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement,<sup>[1]</sup> through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. Romans 3:25
- 2) Rom. 11:6, "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."
- 3) For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast....Ephesians 2:8

The blood shed by Jesus on the cross satisfies God's need for blood in order to forgive our sins and if we believe this we are automatically saved! Christians insist that this vision along with the doctrine of the trinity is the original teaching of Jesus. However modern research which includes many archaeological findings is now painting a very different picture.

The apostles excommunicated Paul as a heretic. Already in the New Testament we can read from Paul himself that he had numerous clashes with the apostles of Jesus, just do a search about Paul conflict with the apostles. This is easy to understand. Paul after falling from his horse and hitting his head went to the disciples saying that he had seen a light and heard a voice, the voice of Jesus, and therefore as he was in direct contact with the Messiah and his injunction was that his message needed to change dramatically. Of course the apostles not only refuted his claims but they labelled them as totally opposite to what Jesus had preached. This created a serious rift between the apostles and Paul.

Paul in his antagonism against the apostles went as far as saying this: *'But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! Galatians 1:8* Remember that Paul in his letters writes of himself as 'We', it is called 'plural maiestatis' or in other words 'royal we'. So in his eyes even the future synoptic gospels should carry a curse! Probably by Gospel he also meant any other doctrine then his would carry a curse and this curse is also applicable to an angel from heaven!

This is a very long subject and beyond the scope of this book but if you like to read more about it in detail including **the excommunication of Paul** follow this link:

[https://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/scrolls\\_deadsea/deadsea\\_scrollsdeception/scrollsdeception13.htm](https://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/scrolls_deadsea/deadsea_scrollsdeception/scrollsdeception13.htm)

Before I continue with the quarrel between Paul and the apostles I need to say a few words about the climate of ancient Judea before and around the time of Jesus. In those days Jewish society was broadly speaking divided into two camps. On the one side there were the priests and Pharisees who claimed ownership of the interpretation of the scriptures, including rituals and the application of the Mosaic law and on the other side there was sects like the Essenes and prophetic Jews who were closer to the teachings of the prophets and an application of the law less founded on a literary interpretation of the scriptures and more on a life of virtue, simplicity and charity and we will gradually examine that this was the essence of the teachings of Jesus.

**The prophetic and messianic Jews including the Essenes did not believe that your sins are forgiven and you are saved by offering the blood of an innocent creature to God therefore the whole story of someone shading their blood to clean your sins is contrary to their faith. If instead of reading only Paul and Revelations Christians started reading the**

**Gospels they would clearly see that Jesus again and again said that you are saved by following his commandment to live a life of love and mercy.**

*'I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain-offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals. I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. **But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.**' (Amos 5:21–4)*

Isaiah was no less emphatic: '*What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I have had enough of burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats ... Trample my courts no more; Bringing offerings is futile; Incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and calling of convocation – I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity ... Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; Cease to do evil, learn to do good; Seek justice, rescue the oppressed; Defend the orphan, plead for the widow.*' (Isa. 1:11–17)

Jesus quotes the above passage in Matthew 9:13 to describe his ministry.

*For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.*  
*Hosea 6:6*

The Essenes and prophetic Jews strongly believed in the coming of the end of times and in the coming of a Messiah who will bring back the Jewish nation to a spiritual life free of the hypocrisy of the priests, a life based on virtue and charity and most importantly on a new covenant with God not based on the laws of men but on the new covenant given by Jesus, a new covenant based on love and virtue. The various books I have recommended previously can illustrate this reality in great detail.

Once we understand this religious and historical climate we can understand and appreciate the words of Jesus much better.

*Doing the best with what we got*

In the following pages in many instances I will be quoting the Gospels even if they are riddled by what is called 'creative editing' by the Roman Church. The Gospels we have today were only released by the imperial church about 400 years after Christ and we have no previous complete manuscripts. What we have are just snippets from early church fathers and any complete Gospel written before the churches' release has been destroyed. Modern discoveries like the Gnostic Gospels and the Dead Sea Scrolls highlights the amount of destruction of early texts and the 'creative editing' or corruption of the texts that occurred. But what is most shocking is the systematic destruction of the original Gospels and texts from the apostolic early church in Jerusalem.

I am highlighting this fact because I am aware that some passages in the present Gospels are manufactured but fortunately many scholars have found possible ways to tell them apart. For example examining grammar and emphasis is a good method. Let us look at '*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*' Matthew 28:19 This verse is totally out of context with a strictly monotheistic society and particularly with a preacher who was very faithful to the monotheistic Judaic teachings.

Thanks to researchers and scholars like Bart Ehrman who have thoroughly examined up to 5,000 preserved early new testaments written between 400AD and 900AD we know that the original gospels said something more akin to '*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations and tell them all what I have taught you and commanded you*'. We also know for a fact that John 5:7 which says: '*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one*' was only added in the sixteenth century.

According to the Biblical historian Dr C. R. Gregory:

The Greek manuscripts of the text of the New Testament were often altered by the scribes, who put into them the readings which were familiar to them, and which they held to be the right readings. *A careful examination shows that corrections and additions happened for centuries to reflect the changing ideologies and dogmas of the Church particularly the transformation of the original Christian belief that the Son is subordinate to the Father into the Trinity that puts a human being has co-equal to God.*

In spite of this reality I trust that we still have enough genuine material to extract the essence of Jesus's teachings

### **Fulfilment and the New Covenant**

*"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah."* Jeremiah 31:31

Another extremely important point to consider is that Jesus, although he brought a new covenant, was a Jewish prophet and for him to be considered as God himself would have been the highest heresy. Jesus always referred to the Father as superior to him. A phrase like 'I and the Father are one' in ancient mystical Judaism always meant 'I am fully aligned to the will of the Father'.

For Jesus the new covenant he was offering was based, as we have seen above, as honouring the message of the prophets preaching a religion based on virtue and charity rather than on temple rituals and countless laws created by priests intent on consolidating their hold on the people.

His message was that obedience to the Father should come from love of the Father and not from fear, in this way we can truly live an harmonious and virtuous life and, as The Sermon

of the Mountain' in the Gospel of Matthew says, we can take our relationship with the Father to another level.

I will repeat again a previous quotation because it so important in understanding the roots of the new covenant:

*'Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; Cease to do evil, learn to do good; Seek justice, rescue the oppressed; Defend the orphan, plead for the widow.'* (Isa. 1:11–17)

*I have come to fulfil the law not to destroy it*

Many people deny the new covenant on the bases of probably one of the most cited statements in the Gospels: *'I have not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it'*. Their belief is that Jesus never meant to reform the Mosaic law but to observe it to the letter. It is very difficult to grasp the meaning of one liners particularly in a religious book and it is even more difficult for literalists hell bent to prove their point. What I mean to say is that for example we can isolate one line of the Gospels where Jesus says 'I and the father are one' and see it as the proof that Jesus claimed to be God but if we read the whole Gospels we can see that over and over again Jesus proclaimed his utter submission to the Father. Jesus offered this oneness also to his disciples

Now we will explore some Gospel verses to have a clear idea of what Jesus meant by 'fulfil'. Even in the English language fulfil does not mean to repeat something for example when you fulfil your B.A. studies by passing the exams you move on to M.A. studies Also keep in mind that Jesus like previous Jewish prophets wanted to take back his people to a more sincere and virtuous form of worship and life conducted free of mindless rituals and laws that were made by men for men and for the benefit of the priesthood.

*"Having neglected the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men."* Mark 7:8

Keep in mind that denying the old laws in Israel at the time could carry a sentence of stoning to death therefore Jesus had a massive challenge in bringing a new covenant in a very hostile environment. Now let us look at a few examples of how he used the word fulfil throughout the Gospels:

*'They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.'*

Luke 21:24

It is very easy that here Jesus means till the time in which the power of the gentiles will reach their apex and then collapse.

The Gospels are full of verses of Jesus proclaiming that he had fulfilled the old prophecies and that now he could bring the new. They are rather long verses and I do not have the space to cite them in full so I will only copy short snippets, if you are interested in the full text I will write their reference for you to look them up.

Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— <sup>1</sup>to fulfil what was said through the prophet Isaiah. Matthew 4:12

"Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, <sup>21</sup>and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Luke 4:14

"Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. <sup>14</sup>In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving'. Matthew 13:14

There are many more verses confirming that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah and that the Messiah came to give a new covenant which does not abolish the old law but takes it to a level where we do not hurt others not because we are afraid of the law but because we are filled with love and compassion. In this sense the new covenant of Jesus did not abolish the old law but it took it to a truly divine dimension. Therefore to receive Jesus means to be filled by his love and righteousness.

#### The New Covenant

*He replied [to the Pharisees and the teachers of the law]: "...You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that." (Mark 7:6-13)*

*"Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely." (Luke 20:46-47)*

Interesting to see how Jesus rebuked the priests that were keeping the people in slavery by fear and by countless laws and dogma yet this is what Christianity evolved into! So now that we can see that Jesus got rid of the superfluous exteriority of priestly Judaism let us have a look at his new covenant.

Mark 2:18 – 2:22 *"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins"*

With the advent of the Messiah the old temple and ritual teachings can no longer apply, he goes even as far as saying that you cannot mix the two. There are Gospel verses where Jesus even breaks the Sabbath, sacrosanct to traditionalist Jews, proclaiming that the Sabbath was created for man but man was not created for the Sabbath.

Jesus went as far as saying that his message of love, virtue and charity now superseded the old covenant and many of the aspects of the law of Moses:

Jesus said to them, *"Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven"* John 6:32

I can, however, accept the opinion that Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to take it to a higher level where our hearts become so pure that we do not hurt others not because we are afraid of the law but because our hearts are filled with love and compassion.

***You are saved by following the commandments of Jesus and by incarnating his love in your life, this is the message of the Gospels.***

John 15 – 9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10If you obey my **command**, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's **command** and remained in his love

John 12 47 to 50

<sup>47</sup> "If anyone hears my **words** but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. <sup>48</sup> There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my **words**; the very **words** I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. <sup>49</sup> For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. <sup>50</sup> I know that his **command** leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

John 15 7 If you remain in me and my **words** remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

In the following pages you will find many more verses which keep repeating one thing and one thing along: living according to my teachings and you will receive the love of the Father. This is the blood of the new covenant.

### ***So what is the law and command of Jesus? The New Covenant***

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

—Matthew 11:25-30

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, *"The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."* Mark 12:28

From there then we can see how his message evolves but first let us take heed again of Jesus clear admonition:

*"Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock"* Matthew 7:15-20

Notice the words 'have we not prophesied and cast away demons'? Yet Jesus chastised them. Can you see modern day Christians rolling themselves on the floor and shaking their bodies and claiming that the spirit has chosen them to perform miracles? Yet they claim that you are only saved by grace and not by following Jesus command and if you do not agree they judge you into burning in hell for ever yet Jesus asked us not to judge our brother (sister).

John 15 – 9 *"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. For if you obey my **command**, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's command and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."*

Jesus never and I mean NEVER said believe I am God who has died for your sins and you will be saved, far from it. His emphasis was entirely on a life of love and virtue as the way to the divine, a message clearly an echo of prophetic and mystical Judaism. His path to the kingdom of heaven was compared to a mustard seed which we need to nurture with our actions and devotion and then one day it will flourish unto a tree that will give shelter and nourishment.

Then Jesus asked, *"What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches. Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."* Luke 13:18 to 21

As you can see Jesus stresses the graduality in the spiritual growth towards the Divine and the steps are trodden by an inner state filled with love and a life which follows the command of Jesus. So how do we love the Father above all things and how do we love our neighbour? The Gospels are filled with very clear injunctions and we will look at a few examples:

It is important to understand that Jesus used a symbolic, dramatic and poetic language to drive his message home so certain things he said need to be understood in this context. For example when he said to cut your arm and plug your eye if they lead you to sin of course he did not mean them literally!

Also Paulians say that you can never follow his commands because you are too weak. Two important things need to be said about this. The first is that the Father wants us to strive in order to follow his word but he knows our human limitations so what matters is our sincerity and dedication the rest will be done by the love we receive when we accept his word and that love is wonderful and immeasurable. The second is the word is pure love and when you have that love then you will be filled with spirit so contrary to what Paulians say you need to accept the word as your salvation in order to be filled with joy and inner strength and not what they say that you have to receive the ‘holy spirit’ first before receiving his love.

Here are a few examples of Jesus commands, they are all from the gospel of Matthew

<sup>53</sup> *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

By poor in spirit he means people who are not arrogant and do not need admiration in order to feel self-esteem. Being children of the Father is their peace and joy of life.

Who judges and is arrogant will be judged and humiliated

*“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”* Matthew 7

You will be judged by your words and speech

Matthew 12<sup>35</sup> *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.<sup>36</sup> But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.<sup>37</sup> For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

Forgive and you will be forgiven

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother who sins against me? Up to seven times? Jesus answered: “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy seven times.” Matthew 18:21

Again Jesus is emphasising the need to release hate from our hearts in order to be close to the divine.

<sup>57</sup> *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

<sup>59</sup> *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

I prefer the Latin and Italian translation of this verse which reads: *Happy are those who come with peace in their hearts for they shall be called the children of God*

Again Jesus is emphasising the need to release hate from our hearts in order to be close to the divine.

<sup>5</sup> <sup>23</sup> *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;*<sup>24</sup> *Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

Turn the other cheek

<sup>38</sup> *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:*<sup>39</sup> *But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

This is quite a symbolic and dramatic phrase and certainly it is not saying not to defend your family and life but it is stressing the fact that too often we react to events with hostility and offence creating unnecessary conflict and pain therefor we need to strive to take, as much as possible, to drama out of events and whenever possible create reconciliation and peace.

Remember to have good will in your heart.

These exhortations are present throughout the other parts of the gospel like the story of the good Samaritan, lets us a look at one of them

Generosity and a loving attitude

*“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried in Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.”* Luke 16:19

The law and commandments of Jesus are extremely clear in the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew. The beatitudes are one of the most beautiful passages in all the history of spirituality and religion and I recommend that you read them and meditate on them deeply if you are interested in the teachings of Jesus. I don’t have the space to go through all of them but again I recommend you to read them.

### **The new covenant saves you and the new covenant are the teaching of Jesus**

Matthew 26:27 <sup>27</sup> Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.” <sup>28</sup> This is my blood of the <sup>[a]</sup> new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

### **The Essence of the New Covenant**

Matthew 7:12 *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

If in all things you can keep this in mind you will have the essence of Jesus teachings enshrined in your heart.

### *The conflict between Paul and the Apostles, faith without works is an empty vessel*

In the New testaments particularly in Paul's epistles the conflict between Paul and the Apostles is clearly illustrated and we can read that at times they became quite heated. In the Dead Sea Scrolls we realise how deep that conflict was and it got to the point where the Apostles called him the spouter of lies and the lawless one. Some Christian scholars try to refute this interpretation of the Dead Sea Scrolls although there is a major consensus that 'The Just' was James as he is called by this title even in the official Gospels and the 'Spouter of lies who denies the Law' was Paul as he clearly clashed with James about the need to follow Jesus command.

James and the apostles did not oppose Paul because they wanted gentile converts to follow the Torah law to the letter. In the first Council of Jerusalem in 50AD the Apostles decided that the new gentile converts only needed to follow a small set of regulations: "*They should refrain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity*" (Acts 15:29). They clashed because Paul told the Apostles that he had received a message and vision from Jesus that there was no need to follow his command any longer and that we were saved only believing in his death and resurrection.

Christians before the Paulian takeover of the Church highly regarded the resurrection but not as an act of faith that could guarantee salvation.

### **What Jesus says about his death and resurrection has no relation whatsoever with Paul**

Matthew 16:4 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "*Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.* (Jesus answered) *"An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

John 2:18-22 The Jews then said to Him, "*What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?* Jesus answered them, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* The Jews then said, *"It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"* But He was speaking of the temple of His body. **So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken."**

You can clearly see from these two comprehensive verses that Jesus pointed to his crucifixion and resurrection as a sign and proof of his oneness with the Father and he did not say that if they believed that he was God who died on the cross for their sins they will be saved.

Another very important message that we can see in the death on the cross is Jesus saying about his tormentors: '*Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing*' Luke 23:34 In this testimony of complete love and union with the father we see the ultimate example of bearing the pain and torment in life with a heart that does not succumb to it.

It was Paul who brought to Christians the old Jewish concept that God in order to be appeased needed a blood sacrifice not from the sinner but from a third person. Later when the Church created a man-God then the concept developed into the belief that God sacrificed himself to appease himself!

We have clearly seen that that the blood of Jesus is the essence of the new covenant and his teachings and we are saved by it.

**Nowhere in the gospel Jesus says that his dying blood can automatically save us but only his commandments can. Paulian Christians have only one last desperate argument to bolster their human blood based belief and that is**

*Matthew 20:28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

However when I read it in the original Latin bible it reads like this

*sicut Filius hominis non venit ministrari sed ministrare et dare animam suam redemtionem pro multis*

I am Italian and I grew up studying Latin and 'dare animam suam' or 'dare l'anima' does not mean in any way shape or form to die for someone but it means to dedicate yourself with passion for a goal and in this case it means to dedicate yourself to free people from ignorance and redeem them from sin.

*What did Jesus instruct his disciples to do before his ascension and his ascent?*

Please pay attention to this. Paul basically said that Jesus came into his full glory after his resurrection and only then he was truly adopted becoming the son of God. After his resurrection and ascension he is supposed to have appeared to Paul telling him that jhis previous teachings about following his commands were null and void and there was no more need to practice his commands but faith alone in his death and resurrection was enough to purge you of all your sins. However the gospel of Matthew totally bursts this assertion.

*Matthew 28:19 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

I have removed the bit that said '*in the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit*' because before the Catholic Church compiled the New Testament 400 years after Jesus

those words were never in the Matthew 28:19 gospel possessed by most church fathers. Therefore you can easily see that after his resurrection Jesus never and I mean never said that you are saved by faith alone and he exhorted to preach that salvation is obtained by following his commandments of love and forgiveness.

### ***James versus Paul from the Epistle of James***

This a wonderful letter and I recommend that you read it in its entirety as it confirms the teachings of Jesus about cultivating the seed of the Kingdom of God. Let us read a few passages:

*1:19 Dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,<sup>20</sup> because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.*

*Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.<sup>23</sup> Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror<sup>24</sup> and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.<sup>25</sup> But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.*

*<sup>26</sup> Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.<sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

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*2:12 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom,<sup>13</sup> because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

Note that he stresses that it is the command or Law of Jesus that gives you freedom and that mercy will be given to you not according to your belief but according to the mercy you have shown towards others.

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*What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?<sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food.<sup>16</sup> If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?<sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

*<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.”*

*Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.* <sup>19</sup> *You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*

Paul said we are saved by faith alone and the blood of Jesus but James the leader of the Church clearly rebuked his assertion. It is a crying shame that so many ancient documents were lost and even more destroyed by the Church and the New Testament mostly contains Paul's letters. I would have loved to read more about the teachings of the Apostles. Let us hope that archaeologists will keep finding more and more lost and proscribed documents.

Earlier we mentioned the **Epistle of Peter** to James and in it we read that Peter again reiterated the opposition of the Apostles to Paul using words that are extremely similar to the Dead Sea Scrolls:

This letter is very important because it confirms the feelings of the Apostles towards Paul as an usurper as we will examine after a few pages. Peter echoes word by word what the Dead Sea scrolls tells us about the excommunication of Paul by the Apostles as an heretic who said that we did not need to follow and practice the commandments any longer.

*And this I know, not as being a prophet, but as already seeing the beginning of this very evil. For some from among the Gentiles have rejected my legal preaching, attaching themselves to certain lawless and trifling preaching of the man who is my enemy.<sup>2</sup> And these things some have attempted while I am still alive, to transform my words by certain various interpretations, in order to the dissolution of the law; as though I also myself were of such a mind, but did not freely proclaim it, which God forbid!*

In the Dead Sea Scrolls there are many references to Paul as the spouter of lies who wants to dissolve the commandments of the new covenant and I will share this one with you:

*"Unlike the Spouter of Lies ("who led the simple astray"), the Righteous Teacher "expounded the Law to his Council and to all who freely pledged themselves to join the Elect of God to keep the law in the Council of the Community, who shall be saved on the Day of Judgment,"* (Micah Pesher fragment).

*So, how did we get here?*

After the three major rebellions by the Jews against the Roman Empire (66 to 136AD) the Jews were dispersed throughout the world and their temple destroyed. The remaining Nazarenes also known as Ebionites who had their base in Jerusalem migrated mostly to areas like Egypt in northern Africa. Paul had travelled to Greece and from there to Rome the hub of the empire where he successfully created a Christian colony. This Paulian Christian sect unaffected by events in the Middle East over time grew into quite a large denomination but keep in mind that there were many other Christian groups like the Nazarenes, the Gnostics, Marcionites etc.

Over time the Paulian sect became the dominant sect in Rome but in the early stages it still considered Jesus as the son of God and subordinate to God. Over many decades proximity to Greco-Roman culture and particularly at a time when the emperor was considered a God many Paulian Christians had adopted the view that Jesus was also God as this would make Christianity even more appealing to the Roman masses. By then the Paulian faction had called itself the Roman Catholic Church.

Around more than two centuries after Christ the Catholics when confronted with questions like: 'When God is in heaven and also on earth as Jesus does it mean that there are two Gods?' To answer questions like this they gradually started developing the concept of the trinity and suddenly God the father stopped being supreme and instead he became one of three separated entities all united in a mythical 'Godhead'. **At this stage Roman Christianity had completely severed its links with Jesus and created instead a hotchpotch of Paulian theology and Roman culture.**

Even within Catholicism not all its adherents became Trinitarians, far from it as a large portion, followers of bishop Arius and called Arians, remained faithful to the traditional Unitarian view that God is one and that Jesus is subordinate to him. In this way they were far closer and faithful to the Judaic teachings of Jesus. It is estimated that at one point the Arians even outnumbered the Trinitarians and it seems that even Constantine on his death bed converted to it. His son Costantius was a devoted Unitarian. The Arians had hundreds of books and the most important was 'The Banquet' by Arius himself however when the Emperor Theodosius and after him Justinian became Trinitarian they destroyed all those texts and countless others. To deny the Trinity and even possessing Unitarian books could cause to **be flayed alive**. The only way till a few years ago that we knew about these books was because many Trinitarian Church writers wrote about them to condemn and disparage them. Fortunately in the last decades we have found some of them because they had been buried and by chance some shepherds stumbled upon them.

After Justinian the Trinitarian faction had taken full control of the Christian Church and the other denominations were persecuted in the most cruel manner, the Inquisition was formed with the task to uproot and eliminate any variant forms of Christianity, just do a search for 'Cathars' and it will give you an idea of what I am talking about.

The Protestant reformation only changed the deck chairs around but it remained deeply rooted in the Trinitarian ideology of the Catholic Church and it was often the cause of similar persecutions.

#### *How were the doctrines chosen and the Bible compiled*

In 325 AD the Roman emperor Constantine convened the **council of Nicaea** in view to resolve the many theological differences in the Christian community particularly about the trinity and the divinity of Christ. In the mean stream Christian church there were about 1800

bishops and Constantine invited all of them. However only 250 accepted his authority and the authority of the bishops who would attend it. Therefore it is clear that the deliberations taken in Nicaea were null and void as they did not represent the will of the Christian community.

In 382 AD the council of Rome was called to decide the contents of the Bible and again there was even a smaller number of attendees than Nicaea. They particularly decided what include in the New Testament, 80% of bishops plus all the Gnostic churches and many more Christian sects did not attend it and refuse its authority. It is only some decades later that the emperor Theodosius and particularly Justinian decreed that anyone who would not accept the deliberations of Nicaea and Rome would be put to death. A large numbers of gospels and writings which were not part of the Catholic canon were burned and anyone who would possess any of them could be skinned alive!

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to improved archaeological techniques the researchers begun to find many lost gospels and early Christian writings like the gospel of Mary Magdalene and the Teachings of the 12 apostles. The most sensational find, however, was in 1945 when two shepherds found in a pot hidden in a cave 13 books written in the early days of Christianity therefore the efforts of the imperial Catholic Church to destroy all traces each and every of those books were thwarted. Sadly those finds although very importamt are only a fraction of the books that were destroyed.

## **Returning to Jesus**

***What does it mean to return to the Nazarene Church of James and Jesus?***

***It is to receive the love and peace of Jesus Christ by hearing his words, we might not be perfect in following them but Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a seed which grows gradually so every effort will be acknowledged. Jesus said only God is perfectly good and therefore that is not expected of humans only their sincerity and effort.***

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* John 14:27

I will share what this would mean to me if Christianity became my main path to liberation

The path to salvation lies in following the commands of Jesus; His commands are like the water that nurtures the growth of the seeds that grow unto the Kingdom of God. His commands contain his spirit and they are the living waters.

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

—Matthew 11:25-30

Jesus, although a great reformer, would have never blasphemed against his Jewish roots and declared himself to be God. *“We all are Gods”* was an affirmation of our shared divinity. *“Before Abraham was born, I am!”* As we will see later it was an affirmation that his teachings were beyond all traditions and that our spiritual self precedes any tradition and belief system. *“Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven”* was an affirmation that Moses gave you laws based on fear of punishment but Jesus gave you commands born from love and a virtuous life.

*“The first will be the last and the last will be the first”* Don’t go around saying that you possess the spirit and can heal and chase spirits. Don’t beat your chest proclaiming that your belief and church are the best. Be simple and be humble. Let people recognise that you are a Nazarene by your peace and gentle disposition. Let people recognise that you are Nazarenes by the way you love one another. Be firm, grounded and strong in your love for Christ, that strength will give you peace and you will not need to condemn anyone to hell and overwhelmed anyone with your doctrines. Live like this and people will come to you and say: ‘Can I have some of what you got?’

*“For whoever is not against us is for us.”* Mark 9:38 If someone is not fighting against the command of Jesus: *“Love one another as I have loved you”* is with Jesus and does not use dogmas to condemn others.

Respect your limits but when you can alleviate somebody's suffering do so with joy because they allow you to worship the Father and follow his command but do not try to convert them to your belief system. Do not ask for their soul in exchange for assistance, give without asking.

Again let me remind you of this beautiful verse:

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* John 14:27

Let people recognise that you are a Nazarene by the peace in your heart and the love in your life because accepting and receiving the word will fill you with love and peace.

#### *The Gospels and the epistles of the apostles the 40 days challenge*

There is so much stuff in the New Testament which has very little to do with Jesus like the letters of Paul, Acts which is mainly a Paulian narrative by Luke who was a close friend of Paul, Revelations which was definitely not written by John and also the letters of Peter that most scholars agree were not written by Peter as it is a writing style which did not exist in his time.

I strongly advice you this experiment if you want to get close to Jesus. For 40 days read only the Gospel of Matthew, John and Thomas, the letter of James and the epistles of John.

Deeply meditate on the different pages and allow those words to become living waters in your heart. More about this:

#### *Confess your sins*

James in his letters and also John in his letters were adamant that in order to be released from inner suffering we need to 'confess our sins' and they are not talking about not going to church on Sunday but they are talking of all those times that we break the final law that Jesus emphasised in the sermon of the mount 'Do unto others as you would like others to do unto you'. Confessing our sins is becoming aware of our speech and actions and having the empathy to feel when we are needlessly hurting others and that also includes animals and the rest of creation. We need to meditate and pray to acquire the sensitivity to feel when our words and actions are creating pain and are hurting others particularly the vulnerable and defenceless. Confessing our sins is a very important part of creating the kingdom of heaven in us.

IF A SO CALLED  
ENLIGHTENMENT EXPERIENCE  
HAS STOPPED YOU FROM SAYING  
'I CAN BE WRONG'  
THEN IT HAS LED YOU TO AN ILLUSION,  
A KUNDALINI EXPERIENCE  
DOES NOT FREE YOU  
NOT EVEN KNOWING THAT  
YOU ARE THE SELF,  
KNOWING TO SAY 'I AM SORRY'  
WHEN REQUIRED FREES YOU

CARLO DE PAOLI

### *Prayer and meditation*

When you have a little time to receive the communion of the Lord you can recite the Lord's prayer a few times. Have a look at the mindfulness meditation in the Buddhist section as there is a paragraph how a Christian can adapt it to his path. Breath in and breath out slowly, deep and gently, breathing in say 'Jesus' and breathing out say 'Lord'. You can change the words to suit the moment. So first say the Lord's prayer a few or many times, as it suits you, then pray with the breath and when you feel relaxed and at peace read one or two of the Gospel verses particularly the ones presenting the commands of Jesus. Meditate on them, let them sink in your heart and fill you with the living waters of the Lord's words. You can do this in a group, you can recite together the Lord's prayer, meditate together on the breath and then share together some verses. I would also recommend that you read often the Epistle of James.

### *The Holy Spirit –*

The Holy Spirit is the love of the Father in action. In ancient Judea they regarded serious illnesses like leprosy as a curse from God and the infected people were removed to caves outside the city. The populace shunned them and avoided them at all costs. Jesus instead went to them and reminded them that the last and the forgotten in this world will be the first in the

kingdom of heaven and he healed many of them. The power of love that alleviates pain and despair is the Holy Spirit. Therefore we can say that we can reject the concept of the Father and the Son and other religious beliefs but should not reject the suffering of others and the efforts made to give them comfort and healing.

The power of the spirit does not come from throwing yourself on the floor and shaking, the power of the spirit comes to you as peace, love and compassion for the suffering of others not because you think they are inferior to you but because you see them as your brothers and sisters trapped like you in a difficult world. Now let us also extend this same compassionate heart to all the animals, plants and the whole earth.

May your hearts be filled with compassion, empathy and the peace of the Lord.

#### *The Nazarenes and the diamond*

The Nazarene path is the way of the heart as Jesus teaches about love, in other words love the Father above all things but reflect this love to all your brothers and sisters and how you treat others reflects on how truly you love the Father. This reflects very well the Upanishads verse: '*He who sees himself in all creatures and all creatures in himself knows no fear*'

But in order to experience divine love we need to release, as much as possible, our psychological and emotional constrictions and our separation from life and the world. Buddhism offers us a beautiful path of self-awareness which could enhance the Nazarene path. Near death experiences have confirmed that what really matters is not our belief but how our inner self vibrates and relates to others and love is what really matters. For this reason I hope that the Nazarene way will always be as inclusive and respectful of other paths as much as possible as long as they are also endeavouring to release hatred and acquire wisdom and love.

## The Gnostics

'Gnostics do not look to salvation from sin (original or other), but rather from the ignorance of which sin is a consequence. Ignorance -- whereby is meant ignorance of spiritual realities -- is dispelled only by Gnosis, and the decisive revelation of Gnosis is brought by the Messengers of Light, especially by Christ, the Logos of the True God. *It is not by His suffering and death but by His life of teaching and His establishing of mysteries that Christ has performed His work of salvation.*' From Gnosis.org

Gnosticism was a very large Christian denomination prevalent in northern Africa and the Middle East, once the Trinitarian Roman Church gained full control of the Imperial favour they proceeded to obliterate them and burn all their scriptures. Fortunately very close to the time when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered a farmer in Nag Hammadi, Egypt found a series of scrolls containing some of the main Gnostic Gospels. Without doubt they had been hidden by a Gnostic adherent to save them from the burning fever of the Church and preserve them for future generations.

The Gnostics were known, amongst other things, for their democratic and non-hierarchical structure whilst the Roman sect was creating an elite which gave itself the full and exclusive right of communicating with the divine; bishops gave way to cardinals and popes without whom we could not be saved. Gnostics instead shone hierarchy and whilst Rome even forbade the masses to read the bible in their own language the Gnostics gave full access to the scriptures to everyone. They also had female deacons and often the facilitator of a prayer congregation would be chosen just before the gathering.

Before I proceed I like to point out that Elaine Pagels has written a beautiful book about the Gnostics called 'The Gnostic Gospels'. If you are interested in the subject this book is a must, it is well written and very easy to follow. There is also an excellent website on the subject at: <http://www.gnosis.org/naghann/Pagels-Gnostic-Gospels.html>

Unfortunately, the conspiracy and astral traveling brigade has written quite a few ebooks on Gnosticism completely distorting its message and making into a medium oriented cult with no relation to the Gnostic texts and teachings. Once you recognise them my advice is for you to avoid them.

There were various Gnostics groups and many Gnostic texts but very little was known till recently. The only information we had came from Church letters condemning their 'heresy'. The discovery at Nag Hammadi has brought back a few of their main books. The most important one is the Gospel of Thomas and some scholars maintain that is probably one of the oldest known Gospels.

Some Gnostic Gospels have been clearly written centuries after Jesus and contain all sorts of teachings which in my view have very little to do with Christ, however the Gospel of Thomas looks very genuine and I agree with those scholars who think that is one of the oldest ones.

We will now examine some of their chore beliefs. Some aspects of Gnosticism can sound a bit complex at first so I will avoid esoteric terminology and present this subject using very simple and easily accessible terminology.

1) The word Gnosis means 'knowledge', 'realization' or 'perception'. Here we are not referring to intellectual or bookish knowledge but to a realization of our true nature or Self. The unity of the Son with the Father is a direct inner experience when our being becomes suffused in peace, joy and understanding. Here Jesus saying: 'Me and the Father are one' is not saying: 'I am God and you are not so worship me' instead is saying: 'I have achieved unity with the ultimate reality and you can as well if you follow my command'. When Jesus points to the scripture saying 'We all are Gods' is referring to the realization that we all are divine in nature.

Gnosticism is very close to Vedanta as it does not have a vision of God as a person outside of creation needing obedience and worship and melting out terrible punishments to those who do not submit. Instead they see everything as part of a divine essence, we are like drops in the ocean, a drop yet the ocean, we are like sparks from a fire, sparks yet we are also the fire. However as the Father's (or Mother) manifestation expands further and further from its source it starts to forget its essence and origin therefore we see the birth of egoism, greed, hatred and tremendous suffering.

The Gnostics maintain that Jesus spoke in parables to the crowd but he gave his deepest teachings to those closest to him and that they are the depository of those teachings. We know for sure that in the oldest Jerusalem Christian group, the Nazarenes, taught the esoteric revelations of Jesus.

The earliest surviving written references to the *Gospel of Thomas* are found in the writings of Hippolytus of Rome (c. 222–235) and Origen of Alexandria (c. 233).<sup>[23]</sup> Hippolytus wrote in his *Refutation of All Heresies* 5.7.20:

*"The Nazarenes speak of a nature which is both hidden and revealed at the same time and which they call the thought-for kingdom of heaven which is in a human being. They transmit a tradition concerning this in the Gospel entitled "According to Thomas," which states expressly, "The one who seeks me will find me in children of seven years and older, for there, hidden, I am revealed."*

2) This universe of greed and pain we live in is not created by the Father but by a rebellious being called the Demiurge in Gnostic literature. This creature is not God but a semi God, an usurper who is far more concerned with its own power and glory then with the well-being of its children. No loving father would burn and torture its children for not worshiping him. The

Demiurge because of its imperfect nature can only create beings like us humans who are deeply flawed, capable of cruelty like the Demiurge and with very poorly designed bodies that keep getting sick and malfunctioning. So to the Gnostic 'the Creator' is not worth of worship, to the contrary Jesus came to save us from this maniac and take us back home to our true Father the God of love and mercy.

To the Gnostic **the** "Yahweh" of the old testament is the Demiurge, totalitarian and vengeful rebelling against the loving 'Father' of Jesus. Marcion wrote one of the many destroyed books called 'The Tripartite', we only have a few exerts found in some Church fathers books who condemned him. In the Tripartite Marcion illustrates that the "Yahweh" of the Old Testament cannot be the same God as the Father of the New Testament and Jesus clearly says that you cannot bring these two concepts together. Sayings in the Gospel like 'You cannot sow an old cloth over a new one' and 'You cannot mix new wine with old wine' attest to this reality.

For example Marcion points to this passage in the Old Testament: God tells Moses and Aaron that "*The one who bears the sore of leprosy shall keep his garments rent and his head bare, and shall muffle his beard; he shall cry out, Unclean, unclean!*" And yet, when it comes to the Gospel, Jesus not only welcomes the leper into His presence, but even touches the man.

3) Jesus came to free us not to corral us into a church. This section is taken from the Gnostic Gospels of Elaine Paige

The "living Jesus" of these texts speaks of illusion and enlightenment, not of sin and repentance, like the Jesus of the New Testament. Instead of coming to save us from sin, he comes as a guide who opens access to spiritual understanding. But when the disciple attains enlightenment, Jesus no longer serves as his spiritual master: the two have become equal--even identical.

Third, orthodox Christians believe that Jesus is Lord and Son of God in a unique way: he remains forever distinct from the rest of humanity whom he came to save it. Yet the gnostic *Gospel of Thomas* relates that as soon as Thomas recognized him, Jesus said to Thomas that they have both received their being from the same source:

Jesus said, "*I am not your master. Because you have drunk, you have become drunk from the bubbling stream which I have measured out.... He who will drink from my mouth will become as I am: I myself shall become he, and the things that are hidden will be revealed to him.*"

From the above section we can see that Jesus was far more interested in freeing people from ignorance then being worshipped and having followers. His being had awoken to the presence of the Beloved within and his main wish and purpose was to allow others to experience the same joy. Once the realization of oneness occurs then the disciple's aspirations have been fulfilled and the teacher can happily move on. The true fulfilment of the law is to become one with the Father and with the awakening of the heart the law has been fulfilled.

### *A few more exerts from Thomas*

*And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."* His teachings are not to be taken in a literalist manner but if we meditate and open our hearts we can directly perceive the source of Jesus's words, the Beloved.

*Jesus said, "If your leaders say to you, 'Look, the (Father's) kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the (Father's) kingdom is within you and it is outside you"*

You first see it within and then you discover that there is no inside or outside and the Beloved is all there is.

*"When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty."*

Look within, look deeply, get rid of hatred and greed and then you will know where you came from, this is the real wealth.

The disciples said to Jesus, *"Tell us, how will our end come?"* Jesus said, *"Have you found the beginning, then, that you are looking for the end? You see, the end will be where the beginning is."*

We all came from one source and we all go back to it therefore when you know where we came from you will know where we will go in the end of times.

Jesus said, *"I am the light that is over all things. I am all: from me all came forth, and to me all attained. Split a piece of wood; I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there."* In monistic mysticism this does not mean 'I am God and you are not' so worship me, it is a statement that we all are Gods and even beneath a stone there is God's presence, God is all there is. I have used the word God but you can substitute it with any term that is comfortable to you.

If you liked this booklet I will soon writing another one the sermon of the mount meditations

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