



# THE GOSPEL

## *Jesus & Our Destiny*

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### PROLOGUE - A MESSAGE FOR CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS

This is a message for Christians, Muslims, and all others who would know the "Gospel" taught by Jesus of Nazareth in 26-30 AD. It is especially intended to edify and alleviate confusion of Christian and Muslim readers. It will help Christian readers who think Jesus was sent to this world as a human sacrifice to atone for our sins so that we might have a relationship with God. It will help Muslim readers who believe God is all powerful, but not our Heavenly Father, and who know Muhammad admonished all Muslims to heed the gospel of Jesus, but did not specify what it is.

In this presentation, I will stipulate what the gospel is. I will present a clear and concise statement of the mission of Jesus, the fact of our relationship with God, the plan of salvation (how to live forever), Jesus' marching orders for his followers, and the what happens in one's spiritual achievement as a result of a life of dedication to doing God's will. I will use the direct and unequivocal teachings of Jesus himself as the basis of the presentation.

If you do not agree with my analysis, please write to me and explain your disagreement. Be sure to show red-word scripture from Jesus that substantiates your points. If you agree with me, I will appreciate your positive feedback. If you think I omitted important and relevant information, please tell me what and why you think so. If you know or are a Christian, please ask this question of yourselves:

"What was the gospel Jesus taught throughout his four-year public ministry?"

Both Christians and Muslims claim to believe the Gospel, and yet, neither group seems to know what it is. Perhaps this will be a learning opportunity for both.

Whether or not you agree with me, I ask that you send this message to everyone you know, and let them form their own conclusions. It is important that people know why Jesus came to this world and what our mission here is. To that end, I can only reiterate what Jesus said. It is not my expression of fundamentals you will be reading, but the expression of Jesus, as recorded in the gospels. According to Jesus, he taught nothing that wasn't ordained by God for him to teach.

## ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

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(King James Version)

In this section, I present commentary and scriptural support from the bible.

### 1. Why Jesus was sent to this world.

*Matthew 4:23: And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*

*Luke 4:43: And he said unto them, **I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.***

Right after selecting the first apostles, Jesus started preaching the gospel. According to Jesus, the Father sent him to preach the gospel to "cities", meaning to whomever was in those cities, and all cities had Jews and Gentiles in them. And since the purpose of preaching is to get people to BELIEVE him and ACT positively on that belief, the **reason Jesus was sent** was to get them to embrace the relationship (known as the "kingdom of God") with the Father.

### 2. For Whom Jesus was Speaking

*John 14:10, 11: **Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.***

When Jesus preached his gospel he was actually preaching what the Father had told him to preach, AND the Father was actually INSIDE Jesus' mind. Jesus was fully aware of the Father's guiding influence, and he followed that influence to the letter.

### 3. Why Jesus was Preaching

*John 14:21, 22, 23: **He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him... Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.***

Jesus wanted the people he taught to BELIEVE him and to KEEP his commandments. A person will need to love for Jesus and the Father in order to have the strength and commitment to be loyal to doing the Father's will.

#### **4. The Father's Will and How to Live Forever**

*Matthew 22:36-40: Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.***

*Luke 10:25-28: And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, **What is written in the law? how readest thou?** And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said to him, **"You have answered right; do this, and you will live."***

*John 13:34-35: **A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.***

*Matthew 18:4: **Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.***

*Matthew 23:11: **But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.***

*Luke 22:26: **But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.***

The Father has a specific will for each person, related to the person's particular path to a particular destiny. He also has a will that is generally applicability to all people. He wants all people to love him and to let their lives be dominated by unselfish loving service toward other humans. The reason is that all humans (not just members of your particular religious group) are our brothers and sisters under the Fatherhood of God. According to Jesus, if you love God and your fellow humans, you will live forever.

The scriptures above show also the very simple plan of salvation. If you love God and your fellow humans, you live forever. Those scriptures also show how to earn a high estate in heaven: being humble (loving with childlike affection) on earth, and unselfishly serving others. Jesus himself was devoted to loving his fellow humans, and his attitudes can be an inspiration for all people. This should be motive enough for all people to forego jealousy, revenge, and grudges against others. It is the Father's will that we do so.

## **5. How Forgiveness Fits into the Picture**

*Matthew 6:14, 15: **For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.***

*Mark:11:26: **And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.***

*Matthew 18:21, 22, 35: Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, **I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.** [parable about servant who would not forgive the debts of others even though the master had forgiven him – the master delivered him to his tormentors till his debts were paid] ... **So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.***

Aside from unselfish, loving service, a major component of love is the act of forgiving others of their transgressions against you. A person cannot love someone he does not forgive. Forgiveness is received only through the dug by one's forgiveness of others. That is why Jesus made such a point of the importance of forgiveness.

Since a person receives forgiveness by the act of forgiving, no sacrificial atonement is required to receive forgiveness. And, a person who has not forgiven others cannot receive forgiveness even were Jesus to be crucified a thousand times.

## **6. The Question of Human Perfection**

*Matthew 5:48: **Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.***

Furthermore, the Father wants us to be perfect on earth (to the extent our capacity will allow) just as he is in Heaven. Relative perfection is possible for us, and we should strive for it. Otherwise, Jesus would not have commanded it.

## **7. Our Relationship with God - His Spirit In Our Minds.**

*Luke 17:20,21: **The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.***

*Matthew:7:21: **Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.***

*Luke 12:32: **Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.***

And why not strive for perfection when God is our constant companion? The spirit of the Father indwelt the mind of Jesus. A similar spirit indwells each of ours. That is the meaning of Luke 17:21. That spirit presence is a GIFT from the Father that cannot be earned or deserved, not even by faith.

However, faith in one's relationship with God produces sincere devotion to the Father's will (such as the devotion of Jesus), and that is always followed by right action, doing the will of the Father. That is what gives people a direct, immediate, and strong relationship (entering the kingdom) with the Father. One's relationship with the Father IS the kingdom of Heaven.

In other words, if we are sincerely devoted to doing the Father's will, we develop a powerful relationship with God, and we can, as Jesus did, become more attuned to that will. That will lead us inexorably to personal, relative perfection.

This is a powerful aspect of the Gospel Jesus taught. Not only is God our Father, and are we his children, but he even indwells our minds, guiding us, and craving for us to seek him and unite with him in an eternal adventure. In aligning our will with that of the Father within us, we are fulfilling our destiny, for we are becoming "like" God, to the extent our capacities allow. A pint jar holds a pint perfectly, but not a quart.

## **8. Why Jesus' Death Was NOT Part of the Gospel**

*Matthew 16:15, 16, 20-23: He saith unto them, **But whom say ye that I am?** And Simon Peter answered and said, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.* But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.***

Jesus did not start telling anyone about his impending death and resurrection until late into his public ministry, when the above incident occurred. When Jesus finally did mention it, the apostles were dumbfounded in disbelief. Even his status as Christ was kept a close secret until after the transfiguration. For this reason, the death, resurrection, and deity of Jesus were not part of the Gospel Jesus taught, nor of the plan of salvation (the gospel and plan of salvation are one and the same).

Do not be misled by the simplicity of this point. While it is true that Jesus died on the cross, it is not true that the significance of his death, purported by some to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins, played any role in the gospel or the plan of salvation.

## 9. Jesus' Final Marching Orders for Us - The Great Commission

*Matthew 28:18: And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.***

*Mark 16:15: And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.***

Just before disappearing from view for the last time, Jesus gave the above orders to his apostles, and we can rightly assume they apply to us as well. The gospel, initially presented to the Jews, was intended for all mankind, throughout all time, and throughout the universe. The Father gave Jesus full and final power over us, and so Jesus was within his rights of authority to command as he did. He made it clear that believing the Gospel is what saves a person. He also made it clear that the Gospel included neither the belief in his deity status, nor in the significance of his death and resurrection.

## 10. Summary - the Real Gospel

In summary, it is true that Jesus is Lord, that he was crucified, and that he was resurrected, and that he ascended into Heaven. However it is NOT true that belief in any of those things will save a person. A person is saved who believes the Gospel. It is that simple.

The Gospel consists of (1) acceptance of the Fatherhood of God, (2) belief in the Brotherhood of Man, and (3) faith in the effectiveness of the supreme human desire to do the Father's will, to be like God. And sincerity is the key to Heaven.

Jesus made a supreme effort to show the world the loving nature of our Heavenly Father. He left us with marching orders to embrace our sonship with God and share it with others. He made it clear that those are the most important things we can do in this life. It is by such sincere action that we will become more like God. As a result, we will eventually develop balanced and magnificent personalities the way Jesus did. Our relationships with others will be treasures to them because we will love them as a father would, without force, fear, or demand of reciprocal behavior.

## EPILOGUE – OUR DESTINY

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It is possible via our wholehearted embrace of the Gospel that we can all evolve spiritually to the point of matching or surpassing the incredible spiritual achievements of Enoch and Elijah:

*Genesis 5:24: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

*2 Kings 2:11: And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked that behold there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

There are occasional witnesses to the dramatic event that signals an unreserved and irreversible union between God and man, the fusion of man's personality with the spirit of the Father that indwells man's mind. On such an event, the body simply disintegrates in a flash, and the unified being leaves our world to continue an eternal adventure of love and service in everlasting partnership with God.

No normal-minded human being is beneath such grand spiritual achievement as was enjoyed by Enoch and Elijah. All it takes is the wholehearted belief in the Gospel Jesus taught and lived, the faith-embrace of one's sonship with God, and the sincere living in unselfish loving service to others.

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