

**THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY PRESENTS
MORE SPECIAL STUDIES**

THE 8 SIGNS OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

by

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The record of eight special miracles performed by Jesus Christ as set forth in the Apostle John's gospel. Each selected sign is a marvelous display of Christ's great power in dealing with man's problems, but hidden in each sign is also the greater meaning of what God's power will do in man's earth when He rules the world.

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FOREWORD

8 SIGNS THAT GOD WANTS US TO READ

Out of all the God inspired books that make up the Bible, there is one book, the Gospel of John, that is very special in that God caused that gospel to be written so that men of all nations might come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God and have life through His name.

Within John's Gospel you can find the eight selected signs or miracles that Jesus did, each one clearly demonstrating His authority as the Christ of God. Each sign also demonstrates that behind the healing of a blind man, raising a man from the dead, or feeding five thousand hungry people there is a secondary message that says; Jesus Christ has the power to correct all the wrong things in this world and He will. This is why God gave us His Son.

It may surprise you to know, this little book you are holding, that tells about the 8 signs of John's Gospel, contains all the information any person needs to establish a personal believing relationship with God that guarantees life everlasting. Here's how God told John to explain it:

" Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through his name."

(John 20:30-31)

DEDICATION

**Every word in this book is eagerly written for everyone,
however the book is lovingly dedicated to our two Great Grandchildren,
Matthew David Burton, "Matty," 3 years old,
and Sarah Ann Sandoval, 2 years old.**

To all who open this book, enjoy it, especially Matty and Sarah, it may be, that when you first see this book someone else will read it to you. As time goes by, you may be able to read the book all by yourself. My hope is, that because you like the stories, someday you will be reading it to others, maybe your children and your grandchildren. The stories in this book of Jesus performing the 8 signs are all true. The eight selected miracles or signs are God's way of showing everyone the greatness and power of Jesus Christ. When we read His words about the signs and believe what He tells us, believing His words are true, we have God's promise of a great reward, everlasting (eonian) life. A life that can not be extinguished.

The 8 signs show us who Jesus really is and what it means to believe on Him. This is very important for everybody to know, for when we believe His words, He graciously forgives all of our sins, erases them from our record and gives us His promise of resurrection and eonian life. Eonian life means a life that continues forever, no more sickness and dying, but a happy life in a world governed by God. When He governs the earth, there will not be wars or any cause for fear, no tears, no sickness, no pain or dying, nor separation. Everyone who has come into this special relationship with God has His promise of being alive in God's wonderfully changed earth. A world that will be flowing with life and an abundance of peace. Because God has already promised life for all believers, I am a believer, I will be there, I pray that you will be there too.

With Loving care, *Gramps*

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1

JESUS CHANGES THE WATER TO WINE John 2: 1-11

There was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now I both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out A. of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.

When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the lesser wine. You have kept the good wine until now!" This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

Behind the story of **Sign number 1**,

The One who changed the water into wine is the same One who created this world.

Not everyone at the Wedding feast was aware of the miracle Jesus was performing. You can be sure that His Mother was, but the puzzled servants who were following His instructions were told to fill the waterpots with water, then draw it out and serve the Master of the feast. They must have been surprised to hear his comments. Jesus' disciples also must have been amazed, watching as their teacher changed the water into wine instantly. The Apostle John, who wrote this story, was there. He said that while observing this miraculous event, he and the other disciples believed in Him, that Jesus indeed must be the Christ.

Even people who do not know much about wine making would agree that it probably takes years to make good wine. Nature requires that the juice of the grape must have a certain period of time to age before it becomes good wine. When all the facts about wine making are considered, it becomes obvious that the One who instantly produced the better wine from water at that wedding feast in Cana was also the creator of all things, Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. He alone has the power and ability to override the laws of time and nature at His will. Yet, until the miracle was whispered among the wedding guests, those who looked upon Him saw just an ordinary man, Mary's son, much like any other man upon the earth.

Christ the creator can override all the laws of time and nature.

We may wonder why God's Spirit instructed John the writer to select this strange beginning of miracles to be first among eight specific signs or proofs that show that Jesus was much more than an ordinary man, He was the Christ (Messiah) of God.

John the writer begins his gospel with the declaration that Jesus and God are one, that **"He (Jesus Christ) was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without Him nothing was made that that was made."** John 1:2-3

The Prophet Isaiah has written about the future when Jesus Christ will assume His rightful sovereignty and rule over all the earth, when He will again override the laws of time and nature to change this earth. The sign of changing the water into wine is the proof that He is the Christ and has the power and authority to re-create the earth.

I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, the myrtle and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine and the box tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy one of Israel has created it (Isa 41:18-20).

Some Notes About Quantities and Abundance

The total amount of water that Jesus changed to wine that day is estimated at more than 150 gallons. This quantity of wine was much more than what was needed for the wedding feast. The overage, a quite valuable gift, was probably received by the home owner with great awe and gratitude. There is one other occasion, sign number 4, where Jesus produced an over abundance of food than what was needed. This fact is demonstrated by the twelve baskets the Disciples gathered after all present were filled from the five loaves and two fishes. Outflowing abundance, but without waste, will be a consistent characteristic of the coming kingdom of God upon the earth. Jesus said: I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

The Prophet Isaiah wrote about the future time when God would be governing the earth. His writings are Hebrew poetry, and he continually used the poetic word "mountain" as a figure for a government. In this passage from Isaiah, the inspired Prophet has penned a picture of the great abundance in the Government of God that will be the portion of all the people enjoying life in the kingdom of God: The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, aged wine. And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering, which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces (**Isaiah 25:6-8**).

2

THE NOBLEMAN'S SON HEALED John 4: 46-54

When Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine, there was a certain Nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."

The Nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!"

Then he inquired of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household. This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Behind the story of **Sign number 2,**

The Nobleman's son is healed. Jesus Christ can heal at a distance.

Following the wedding feast in Cana where Jesus turned the water into wine, He and his disciples went to the city of Capernaum, a fishing village on the sea of Galilee where some of His disciples lived. They were fishermen. The time for the Jewish feast of Passover was near so after a short time Jesus and His disciples went to Jerusalem to observe the feast. The Bible tells us that while He was in Jerusalem at the feast he did many wonderful miracles that caused many people to believe on Him. His fame spread throughout the land.

Those miracles that Jesus did at the feast are mentioned here and in some of the other gospels, so we know that this miracle of healing the Nobleman's son is not the second miracle in number that Jesus did, but was very special. God's Spirit told John to include it in his book for a special sign, to give us the meaning behind the miracle so that we might learn to appreciate who this one named Jesus really is.

The scripture tell us when Jesus returned from Jerusalem after the feast of Passover, His reputation was known throughout all Galilee because of those who had also been in Jerusalem where many persons had seen the miracles that Jesus did. He returned again to visit Cana where he had made the water into wine.

At this same time, about twenty miles from Cana in the village of Capernaum, there lived a man, a Nobleman whose son was very sick. When the Nobleman heard that Jesus was back in the Galilee area, he hurried to Cana to find Jesus and ask him to come to his home in Capernaum to heal his dying son. When he came to Jesus and asked Him to come with him, Jesus tested him by saying, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe." The Nobleman said, "Sir, come down or my child will die." Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives" The man took Jesus at His word and started toward his home in Capernaum.

It was after one o'clock in the afternoon when he and his servants started their twenty-mile walk. It became dark about halfway home and since travel at night was dangerous, they must have taken lodging for the night. The next morning the Nobleman and his servants started early and as they neared the city, some of his servants met them and joyfully told the Nobleman that his son was alive and well. He inquired of the servants as to when the change came in his son's health. They told him that it was at the seventh hour of the day (one o'clock in the afternoon), when the fever left him.

The father then knew that it was at the exact time that Jesus had said to him, "Your son lives." The Nobleman and his whole house believed and rejoiced in the far-reaching Power of God Jesus demonstrated that He can heal at a distance whether it's twenty miles or twenty-thousand miles. Even from heaven to earth, He can make it happen. This story is about Jesus and one young boy who was healed at a distance. It was not about healing the father or healing the servants, but the fact that the son of the household was healed by the words of Jesus caused all of them to become believers. Even though everyone of them are presently in the state of death, their faith in Jesus Christ will bring them resurrection and eonion (everlasting) life, just as God in His Word has promised.

Because of Adam's failure in disobeying God, sin and death entered the world to destroy the human race. Every descendant of Adam begins to die even before birth. Death continues working in us until it fulfills its goal. This is the reason for Jesus Christ's sacrificial death. He has conquered death so that every child of Adam may experience resurrection and attain the gift of a wonderful life beyond this present one. Unbelieving individuals with sins on their record that are not forgiven will have to forfeit these gifts purchased for them. When God in Christ takes over this earth, He will do for every individual living upon this earth what He did for the Nobleman's son. From His great throne in the heavens He will immediately heal and remove any and all sicknesses. His power will instantly stop the awful death and dying that persistently works in all living.

3

THE CRIPPLED MAN IS MADE TO WALK John 5: 1-18

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel (reportedly) went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.

Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked: and that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.' Then they asked him, 'Who is the Man who said to you, take up your bed and walk?'" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. (**The Law of The Sabbath:** The Sabbath Day was given to Israel as part of God's Covenant with them. Later, down through the years, much of that Covenant was embellished, changed and often broken by the Priests and leaders. Jesus accused the self-righteous leaders of the Pharisees of "making void the word of God with their own laws." They vented their hatred of Him and were quick to accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath. They did not know they were defying the very Jehovah of the Old Testament, the "Lord of the Sabbath who often purposely healed a person in desperate need on the Sabbath day.

His accusers insisted that He had broken the Law when He healed someone on the Sabbath. Jesus told them that any man among them who would rescue his sheep from a pit on the Sabbath was not a lawbreaker, "Therefore," He said, "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." (Matt 12:12). And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27-28.)

Behind the story of **Sign number 3**, The crippled man is made to walk:

Jesus Christ can heal all existing conditions

The crippled man in this story was probably born with a normal ability to learn to walk, but at an early age, due to some terrible accident or sickness, was made impotent, unable to walk or readily move himself about. Every morning for the greatest part of his life, thirty eight years, he would awaken to the realization that he was a cripple. Evidently the doctors of his time could do nothing more for him and his only hope was to wait with others like him at the Bethesda pool for desperately needed divine intervention.

Jesus found him in this sad condition and asked him, "Do you want to be made well?" The man explained to the Lord about his lacking someone to help him into the pool when the waters were stirred up. Jesus offered him an easier task to do, He said to him, "Get up, take up your bed and walk." The man did what he was told and immediately he was made well. (Faith is taking God at His word and responding accordingly.) That act of faith brought him not only perfect health but also complete forgiveness of his sins by the very one who spoke those words. As long as Satan and the evil forces of sin and death continue to plague this earth, suffering and dying will be a part of our everyday life until God intervenes as He has promised. A day is coming when God will take over this earth with His righteous government.

At that point all existing conditions of long-term illness and crippling diseases will become the responsibility of His government. God's government will not fail this responsibility. "The blind will see, the lame will walk, the deaf will hear and the dead shall be raised." (Every miracle that Jesus performed before men was an indication of what men could expect when God's government rules this earth. Jesus, speaking in answer to John the Baptist's disciples who had inquired, "Are you He that should come, or do we look for another?" He said, "Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached." Luke 7:22.) Jesus Christ continually demonstrated that He was capable of this great task, for as He went from village to village "great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all" (Matt 12:15-16). There will not be even one crippled person upon the earth when He rules all the nations of the world.

God's Spirit has selected this particular incident as one of the eight signs because it points to the ever existing health problems of the earth. Think of just one of our present problems, the tens of thousands people of many nations dying from the scourge of Aids. There are many other existing problems; all humans are alive and dying and it will continue to be that way until God removes sin and death from the earth. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world."

Over seven hundred years before this incident, Isaiah had prophesied that God's Christ would rescue mankind and the world from its curses: **Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, but He will save you."** Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Desert (Isa 35:4-6).

In the beginning this earth was created perfect by God, without death and without the terrible curses that have bound earth and mankind ever since Satan entered the scene with his lying tongue. Adam's failure gave Satan the opportunity to tear away earth's dominion from God's intended keeper, man. Jesus Christ's death and victorious resurrection paid the terrible price for every man and made it possible for this earth to again be reconciled to God. A day is coming when this reconciliation will be realized. Mankind and this earth will again be under God's righteous government, bringing the great outflowing of life and blessings that God's Word has promised; the salvation of the world.

A changed physical body, perfect, direct from God, no more dying. Perfect health, no more sickness and pain. A world at peace, all wars will cease, the Nations will trust in Christ. A rich, abundant, fruitful earth, free of all the former curses. Sin and iniquity removed. All this will be the portion, the inheritance of every believer when God governs the earth.

Another crippled man is told to "pick up your bed and walk to your house!"

BELIEF (faith) IN JESUS CHRIST ALWAYS BRINGS THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

At another time in Capernaum, Jesus is a guest in the home of Peter's wife's Mother, where because of His fame a great crowd of people gathered to see this man who performed great miracles. The scribes and Pharisees came also. The entrance to the house where Jesus is teaching the people is so crowded that four men carrying their paralyzed friend upon a bed cannot get through to Jesus. But they are so determined to see their friend healed they resort to hoisting him up onto the roof of the house. They then remove part of the roof and lower his bed right at the feet of Jesus.

When Jesus sees their faith, He says to the paralytic, **Son, your sins are forgiven you.** And some of the scribes are sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? **Who can forgive sins but God alone?**

THE CRIPPLED MAN'S SINS ARE FORGIVEN BEFORE HE IS HEALED OF THE PALSY

But immediately, when Jesus perceives in His spirit that they are reasoning that way within themselves, He says to them, Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins -- He says to the paralytic, **I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.** Immediately he arises, takes up the bed, and goes out in the presence of them all, so that all are amazed and glorify God, saying, **We've never seen anything like this!** (Mark 2: 5-12, paraphrased).

4

JESUS FEEDS FIVE THOUSAND HUNGRY PEOPLE John 6:4-14

Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, "two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little." One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Behind the story of **Sign number 4**, Jesus Feeds Five-thousand People:

When Christ Rules the World, No One Will Ever Be Hungry

The Mother of the lad with the lunch of five barley loaves and two fishes must have been very surprised to hear her Son's report of what happened to the lunch she had sent off with him that morning. The loaves (probably biscuit size) and fishes were multiplied in the hands of Jesus to become more than enough to feed five thousand men, not counting women and children. Each of the twelve disciples carried food to more than 400 persons, which is quite a task in itself.

Finally, after all the people had eaten their fill, the twelve disciples gathered up the fragments that remained, twelve full baskets.

We know from God's Word and our own observation that at the present time God is not ruling the earth. He is presently allowing men to do as they please. Among those who govern the nations of this world, some are well intentioned men, but there are others, selfish and power driven, not caring for the common people who are under their responsibility. The lack of good judgment by those who rule, combined with the caprice of nature, has brought about terrible conditions of famine in many nations of our world. Millions of children and adults in our present world go to bed hungry every night. Due to these continuing conditions thousands of hungry humans, young and old, die off for the lack of food.

Undoubtedly, God's choice of this miracle being selected as one of the eight special signs in John's gospel was to point out the fact that when Jesus Christ does rule the nations of this earth, not one person under His government's responsibility will suffer from hunger or be without food. He demonstrated this by miraculously feeding the five...thousand and at another time four thousand. When this earth is under His control, He will immediately re-create a bountiful garden-like earth, just as He intended it to be, yielding its increase for every living thing under His government. Many years before this miracle happened the Prophets and Psalmists had by inspiration foretold in writing what God's Christ would do for His redeemed earth:

Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them and they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land (Ezek 34:27-29).

The entire earth will experience this great change:

Then the earth shall yield her increase; God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him (Ps 67:6-7).

The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing (Ps 145:15).

All Your works shall praise You, O LORD, and Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom (Ps 145:10-12).

Added Note: FACTS ON HUNGER IN OUR PRESENT WORLD

Hunger: chronic undernourishment or outright starvation. In this world today, hunger affects hundreds of millions of peoples. The earth produces enough food to feed its people, but that food is not distributed equally among the rich and poor or across national boundaries. In addition, war, drought, or pestilence can produce local outbreaks of mass starvation.

The world's population is now (2005) more than 6 billion people and is projected to reach 8 billion by 2025. Food production must keep pace with the increasing number of people living on the planet. Since 1960, world food production has grown faster than population, mainly because of the green revolution, the efforts to increase and diversify crop yields in agriculturally less advantaged regions of the

world. Introduction of irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides, and new seed varieties resulted in increased yields of rice, wheat, and corn in many countries. In most countries, however, added water and fertilizers do not increase yields as much as in the past, and in the future, food production may not match population growth.

Children suffer from the effects of starvation more quickly than adults. According to the United Children's Fund (UNICEF), malnutrition contributes to the deaths of more than 6 million children under age five each year.

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5

JESUS WALKING UPON THE SEA John 6:15-29

Shortly after the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone ~ however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks ~ when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?" Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food, which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.

Then they said to Him, What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them; This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent. Therefore they said to Him, What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said to them, most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

Then they said to Him, Lord, give us this bread always. And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

As He continued to talk to them, He said: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. " I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the Manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so

that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh (John 6:47-51).

Behind the story of **Sign number 5**, and the meaning behind the miracle:

Jesus walks upon the sea, the ship is instantly at its Port

When all the people had eaten of the loaves and fishes to their satisfaction, many of them relaxed and watched as the twelve disciples gathered up the twelve baskets of surplus food. Some in the crowd began to think that it would be a good thing to make Jesus their king, by force if necessary, so that they could enjoy His miraculous feasts everyday. They began to spread the word of their plan that they should now make Jesus their leader, a king that could produce their daily bread just like the daily manna they believed that Moses had provided for their forefathers when they dwelt in the wilderness for forty years.

Those among them who thought only about this easy abundance of food missed the meaning of this great miracle. When this earth does become the kingdom of our God, He will indeed see that all will have their daily bread. When Jesus Christ governs all the nations from His throne in the Heavens, Israel will have the dominant place among the nations. The twelve (Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt 19:28-29.) disciples will then sit on twelve thrones ruling the twelve tribes of Israel, the same twelve disciples who were filling up the twelve baskets with the fragments of the five loaves and two fishes, a picture of their future responsibilities as rulers of their designated tribes. In that day there will always be an abundance of food But never any waste. Under God's government no one will ever go to bed hungry.

Jesus, knowing that they were talking about forcing Him to be their King, slipped quietly away from everyone including His disciples to be alone in the mountain. His disciples waited for Him, but when it began to grow dark and Jesus had not returned, the disciples decided to go down to the shore where their fishing boat waited. They entered the ship, cast off and headed back across the sea to Capernaum where some of the disciples lived. It was now dark and as they pointed the ship into a rapidly growing wind they were forced to row, using the oars rather than the sail. The wind increased greatly, and they rowed with much difficulty traveling only about three and a half miles, about half the distance to Capernaum, when suddenly off the stern behind them they could see Jesus walking on the sea approaching the ship. They were afraid.

Jesus said to them, "**It is I, don't be afraid.**" **Then they gladly took Him into the ship** and miraculously the ship was immediately at the port where it was to dock. Jesus was showing them that He was also the master of the seas; He could walk on the water, He could calm the storm. (The Psalmist earlier prophesied: He calms the storm, so that its waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven. Ps 107:29-30.) Then He instantly brought the ship and its crew safely to its port. Those on the ship positively knew that He was not just an ordinary man.

6

A MAN BORN BLIND IS GIVEN HIS SIGHT John 9: 1-41

Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth and His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." Then they said to him, "where is He?" He said, "I do not know." They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees.

Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs? And there was a division among them. They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself. "His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know, one thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."

Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from." The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.

If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing. "They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.

And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.'" Therefore your sin remains.

***ABOUT BEING LABELED A "SINNER" BY THE PHARISEES, AND BEING CAST OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE.**

The Pharisees were the most powerful of three sects of Judaism at the time of Christ. Their influence ruled the Sanhedrin and almost all of Jewish society. They overawed the civil courts having gathered to themselves all the worst features of Judaism, using their power against any reform and especially against the public acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus exposed them for what they were, often challenging their interpretation of the Law by healing a sick person on the Sabbath. The Pharisees became Jesus' implacable enemies and were leaders in bringing about His crucifixion. Jesus once said, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat" (Matt. 23:2). They assumed authority that was not theirs.

Behind the story of **Sign number 6**, Healing a man blind from birth

Jesus gives sight to a man born blind

In the time when Jesus walked upon the earth, many people were lame or blind, beyond a Doctor's help. Those that were not able to work and provide for their families would turn in desperation to begging. For many it was the only way they could stay alive. This story is about a man who was born blind. All of his life he had never seen a sunset or looked upon a beautiful scene; he was totally blind and needed someone to guide him to and from a place near the Temple where he could sit throughout the day and beg for a few coins. Then one day Jesus passed by and saw him. Jesus knew that he was blind from birth.

Jesus and His disciples stopped near the man. When the disciples asked Jesus, **"Master, who did sin, this man or his parents that caused him to be born blind?"** Jesus answered, **"Neither has this man sinned or his parents: but that the works of God should be manifest in him."** Jesus knew what He was going to do. This man, born blind would be given his sight as a sign that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah), the One who was promised in so many scriptures of the Old Testament. The One who had the power to **"open the eyes of the blind"** (Psalm 146:8). In other places the Bible tells us that when God governs the earth and makes everything right, **the eyes of the blind shall see and the lame man will leap as a deer** (Isaiah 35:5). **And on that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see** (Isaiah 29:18).

On that coming day, when Jesus Christ from His throne in heaven assumes sovereignty over this earth, He will give the gift of perfect health, a perfect body to every living being upon this earth, the good as well as the evil. Not one blind or sick person will be among the living in any nation. This gift of health, life and light, (eonian life), was purchased for all men by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He alone will determine who will retain these gifts as a permanent possession and who will lose out on life due to unbelief and an unforgiven record of sins. As Paul told Timothy: **I charge you therefore before God even the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing even His kingdom** (2 Tim 4:1).

It is a sorrowful fact that some individuals will lose their gift of eonian life because they did not pay attention to God's Words. Jesus, when teaching, warned His listeners to be careful how they hear: **For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. "So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him "** (Luke 8:18).

Some will forfeit their new life and all the wonderful benefits of Heaven's government because of their failure to believe the words that God has spoken. It is just as God's inspired word has stated: **He that does not believe the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him** (John 3:36).

The blind man in this story was given his sight as a positive example of what God's government will do for all men when He rules the world. **Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert** (Isa 35:3-7.). Blindness, like all other diseases, came into the earth when sin and death entered. Jesus Christ died to remove these penalties of sin and He will destroy death. He is the only hope of all mankind. The Pharisees who hated Jesus told the man who had received his sight to **"Give God the praise, we know that this man (Jesus) is a sinner. "He answered them, "Whether He be a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know is that whereas I was blind, now I see."**

Later when the man that was born blind found out that it was Jesus who had opened his eyes, he said to the Pharisees, **"Why herein is a marvelous thing, that you do not know from whence He is, and yet He has opened my eyes. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing."**

7

LAZARUS IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD John 11:1-46

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?"

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."

Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him." Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there."

Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone."

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" and he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

Behind the story of **Sign number 7**, The resurrection of Lazarus

Jesus Christ can give life to a person who is dead Lazarus and his sisters were close friends of Jesus. Their home was always open for Jesus to stay as a guest, which He did from time to time. Lazarus, Mary and Martha lived in Bethany, a small village near Jerusalem. One day Lazarus became very sick, so sick that his concerned sisters sent messengers to tell Jesus about their brother's sickness, hoping that the Lord would return with them to heal their brother. When Jesus heard the news, He sent the messengers back to the family with this message, "**This sickness**

is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the son of God (Jesus Christ) might be glorified thereby." Even then, after the messengers had left, Jesus stayed in the place where He was for two more days. In our compassion for sick Lazarus we might ask, "Didn't the Lord realize that Lazarus was dying?" And we also might think that the Lord who could heal all kinds of sickness, even at a distance, could immediately say the words that would heal His friend, or He should go quickly to Lazarus and heal him before he would die.

Jesus knew exactly what Lazarus' condition was. He was using this sickness and even the death of His friend as an opportunity for people to believe that He not only could heal the sick, but that He could also restore life to a person who was dead.

Those who heard His words, "**this sickness is not unto death,**" could in faith take His words to mean that even if Lazarus died, death could not hold him because Jesus would raise him from the grave. Lazarus' resurrection to life would then become a very important sign for everyone who hears the story.

When Jesus knew in His spirit that Lazarus was dead, He told the disciples, "**Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that you may believe, nevertheless let us go to him.**"

By the time they came near to Bethany, Lazarus had been in the grave four days. His sister Martha came to meet Jesus on the way and said to Him, "**Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that whatever you ask of God, He will give it to you.**" Jesus replied "**Your brother will rise again.**" Martha said to Him "**I know he will rise again in the resurrection in the last day**" (when God will be governing this earth).

The next statement that the Lord makes is a promise for every person who has ever put their faith in Him--those believers who are now living upon the earth and those who have died as believers now waiting in their graves. His declaration states just what their expectation will be when God assumes His sovereignty in the earth and rules over all nations. That coming time in the Kingdom of God is also named "The Resurrection."

Jesus said to Martha, "**I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in me, though he be dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever is living and believes in me shall never be dying** (with respect to eonian life). **Do you believe this?"**

Martha replied, "**Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.**" She then went to tell her sister Mary that Jesus was asking for her, so Mary came quickly to where He was and said, as Martha had, "**Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**" Mary was weeping.

Jesus asked where Lazarus' grave was. Someone said come and see. Then Jesus wept, not just for Lazarus' sickness and death, but He wept because as God the creator, He had created mankind to live and not die, but because of sin and death entering the world, all men presently have an appointment to die. Within a few weeks Jesus would give His life for the world and arise again from the dead to positively defeat death, putting an end to all sickness, pain and dying when He rules the world.

When they came to Lazarus' grave, which was a cave with a large stone covering the entrance, Jesus said, "**Take the stone away from the door.**" Martha objected, reminding Him that by this time there would be a very bad odor for Lazarus had been dead four days. Jesus reminded her of what he had told the messengers when they first came to Jesus, "**Didn't I tell you that if you believed my words, you would see the glory of God?**"

Then they took away the stone from the grave. Jesus lifted up His eyes in prayer, thanking God for this testimony that God had sent Him to overcome death. Then with a loud voice he cried, "**Lazarus, come forth**", and he who was dead came forth, still bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face bound about with a separate cloth. Jesus said to those near him, "**Loose him, and let him go.**" Many of the friends of Mary and Martha who had seen the things that Jesus did believed on Him.

Jesus raised a dead man to life, a man who was in the grave for four days. Jesus, as the Christ of God, has the power and He will use His power to raise every dead person who waits in their grave, even after hundreds of years. When their order comes, they will hear His voice calling their names to come forth. This is what Jesus promised for all who are in the grave. There is a resurrection for every person.

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:28-29).

The Bible record shows that Lazarus was not the first person whom Jesus raised from the dead. At least two others are recorded: the widow's son in Luke 7: 11-15 and Jairus' twelve year old daughter in Luke 8: 41-56. In Jesus' earthly ministry, whenever He came upon a dead person, He would raise that one back to life.

8

THE CRUCIFIXION, DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Jesus, knowing that the time of His suffering and crucifixion was approaching, told his friends these three startling facts about His upcoming death before it happened. Those nearest to Him felt in their hearts that these things just could not happen to the Christ, the Son of God, as they believed Him to be. But they also knew that He too was a man of flesh and blood as they were. He could grow weary, He could feel pain and He could bleed, but they also knew that this special man was God in the flesh. He told them these truths about Himself indicating that He has complete control over life and death. It is very important for everyone to know these facts when they read the record concerning Jesus' trial, death and resurrection:

1. He began to teach them that (He) the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And He spoke that saying openly (Mark 8:31-32).

2. "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father" (John 10:17-18).

3. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt 12:40).

Within a few days, each one of these statements was fulfilled to the letter.

JESUS' TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION (from John 18:1-40).

Jesus' enemies who hated and feared Him wanted to have Him killed. They sent soldiers at night to take Him captive in a garden on the Mount of Olives. The garden is where Jesus would often go to pray. Judas, the disciple who betrayed Him, led the soldiers to the garden where he knew Jesus would be. He came up to Jesus as a friend might do and kissed Him. It was a signal to the Temple soldiers that He was the one they were to arrest. The soldiers bound Jesus' hands and led him away to Annas, the High Priest's father in law, and then to Caiaphas, the High Priest, who later sent Him to Pilate, the Roman ruler.

THE JEWS' RULERS TURN JESUS OVER TO THE ROMANS

John 18:28, John 19:1-37

Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.

So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him and the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"

Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."

The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"

Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour (noon). And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away. And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews."' " Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

**JESUS IS DEAD, HIS FRIENDS PUT HIM IN A BORROWED GRAVE,
John 19:38-42**

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes,

about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

JESUS IS RESURRECTED, MARY FINDS THE TOMB IS EMPTY

John 20:1-10

Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first, and he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

MARY, BLINDED BY HER TEARS, MISTAKES JESUS FOR THE GARDENER John 20:11-18

But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

(The Bible record from the gospel of John 19:1-37, 38-42, 20:1-18 NKJV)

Behind the story of **Sign number 8**, Jesus returns to life, just as He said

Jesus is crucified and buried, but after three days rises to life

The eighth sign is a powerful story. When we think about these amazing facts, Jesus has not only died and experienced death, but by returning to life He has also conquered our enemy death. Jesus said: "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19). The Old Testament Prophet Isaiah spoke about God's regard for Messiah's (Christ's) death as being the acceptable sacrifice for the sins of the whole world (Isa. 53, Eph. 1:7). Today all peoples, everywhere, can know that Jesus' great victory over death guarantees everlasting life for those who believe God's words: **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life** (John 3:16-17).

Isaiah also prophesied that the Christ would rule the earth, when he wrote: **For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government will be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this** (Isa 9:6-7).

During His trial before the Jews, before He was sent to the Romans, Jesus was brought before the highest Jewish authority in Israel, Caiaphas the High Priest. While Jesus was standing silently before him, Caiaphas the High Priest asked Him, **"I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God?"**

Jesus said to him, **"You have just said it."** This enraged the High Priest so much that he tore his clothes and the Temple soldiers holding Jesus pushed Him around and spit in His face; some even struck Him. Then Caiaphas ordered the Temple Police to take Him to Pilate, the Roman governor at the Roman Judgment Hall, with this accusation: "This Jesus of Nazareth claims that He is the King of the Jews." The High Priest knew that the Romans who ruled over the captive Jews with an iron fist would destroy any Jew who would claim to be their King. Jesus was doomed.

When Jesus stood before the Roman governor, Pilate asked Him, **"Are you the king of the Jews?"** Jesus answered, **"You have said it."** After that Jesus was silent; (Over seven hundred years before the day of Jesus' death, Isaiah the prophet (Chapter 53) had written very accurately of the condemned Christ's silence at His trial: He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was

led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its Shearer's is silent, so He opened not His mouth... He poured out His soul unto death. He was numbered with the transgressors; He bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors, Eph. 1:7, In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.) He did not answer His accusers, not even when they brought out false witnesses who lied about Him. Jesus continued to be silent when the angry crowd chose a bad man, Barabbas, to be set free instead of Him. The crowd shouted that Jesus should be crucified, nailed to a tree by His hands and feet until He died, a very painful death.

Pilate wanted to spare Jesus, but had to give in to the hateful Jewish leaders and the shouting mob that wanted to see Jesus crucified. The Governor washed his hands in view of the crowd and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person, see you to it." He then had Jesus scourged with a cruel whip and turned him over to the Roman soldiers for His execution.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium (the judgment hall) and gathered the whole garrison around Him. They then stripped Him of His clothing and put an old scarlet robe on Him. When they had made a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and put a reed in His right hand. They sarcastically bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spit on Him, and took the reed to strike Him on the head, and when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified (paraphrased, Matt 27:27-31).

THE CROWN OF THORNS, FOR THE KING OF THE UNIVERSE

The Roman soldiers clothed Jesus in one of Pilate's old robes and mockingly bowed their knees and derided Him. Of all the painful abuses that were heaped upon the Lord Jesus, the most subtle was the satanic inspired crown of thorns made from a thorn bush that grows wild in the area. The Roman soldiers twisted the thorn branches into a crown-like circle and pushed it down upon His bleeding head. They then hit Him with a reed and mocked Him for saying that He was a King. Satan, knowing this, must have smiled, thinking that at last he would see Jesus destroyed and God's plan for man's redemption wrecked. He must have been even more pleased about the crown of thorns because the reality of thorns growing in the earth, a part of the curse, was brought about by Satan's cruel deception of Adam and Eve.

The thorns from which the crown was made were not a part of God's original creation. When God commanded the earth to bring forth grass and herbs and fruit trees, these came forth and "God saw that it was good." The thorns and thistles came into the world after Adam and Eve listened to Satan and failed to believe God. Their disobedience caused sin and death to enter our world, bringing in all the terrible curses now a part of our daily lives. God told Adam, "**Cursed is the**

ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; For dust you are, and to dust you shall return." (Gen. 3:17-18).

God's good news to the world concerning all these curses brought in by man's disobedience is that they will all be removed because of Jesus Christ's obedience. The thorn will be purged when Jesus Christ governs from Messiah's throne in the heavens. Isaiah tells of that coming time; **"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cutoff"** (Isaiah 55:13).

The 8 signs of John's gospel offer to those who read them, eight opportunities for bringing about faith (belief) into their lives. Faith brings God's gift of forgiveness and the assurance of everlasting life in God's redeemed earth, just like those who believed Jesus' words in the stories of this book. This is why God inspired John to write about what John had personally witnessed and to sum up his book with this promise; **"Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."**(John 20:30-31).

Belief and faith are the same word in the Greek scriptures. When a person first "believes" and responds to what God has said concerning His Son Jesus Christ, that's "faith", and the beginning of an "at one" relationship with God. At that moment his personal salvation is assured. Then, each new act of considering God's words, believing those words and making them a part of his life, adds to his record of faith. Jesus said: **" This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent"** (John 6:29). In the Bible, three times it's said: **Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.** (Rom. 4:3, Gal. 3:6, James 2:23).

If at anytime while reading about the 8 signs, your heart and mind urged you to believe on this peaceful, yet mighty one called Jesus, do it! Follow that urging and tell God that you believe the record that He has given. (He will already know it). Later on, tell others also. This decision will always be the best, most valuable work that you can do for yourself in this life.

The End