

0A. Stage 2. Infancy. Following Jesus Mashiach.

2.1.A.(6). The Son of Man. Authority to Free. Mark 1:21-34

2.2.A(5). Bonding. Following Jesus Mashiach. Mark 1:16-20

2.3.Bp(7). Devoted Prayer. Mark 1:35-39

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2.5.C.(12). Lord of Sabbath restores as Son of Man. Mark 2:23-28.

2.6.Ca2(10). Physician Calls Sick. Mark 2:13-17.

2.7.Cb(11). Bridegroom. Kingdom Celebration. Mark 2:18-22.

2.8. CP (6a). Restoring Prayer. Presence. Mark 2:29-34.

Master Chart.

Stage 2: Following Disciple

After the critical foundation of your spiritual life as disciple of Jesus Mashiach as been laid, as you learn to *live by faith in him* as your Lord and Life-giver, repenting and being sanctified of your old fleshly life. Now, it is time for you to start walking with the Lord in this earthly world.

Developmentally, infants who learn to walk move from the private safety of the home into the wider world, as they follow the lead of their parent. In this way, a whole new world opens for you, as a disciple, as you learn to *follow Jesus Mashiach* and see how his restoring power as the Son of Man releases people that they might move from darkness into light!

And, as little children walk with their parents through this world, they need to be assured that they are safe in the powerful protection of their parents that they might discover this new world before them!

The Son of Man has Authority:

In your second stage of growth as a disciple, you will learn first to follow Jesus Mashiach as the Son of Man. When Jesus refers to himself as “the

Son of Man,” he does not just mean that he is human, which he is, of course. Rather, if you think of all the “sons” who have been born, Jesus is “the” son, the Firstborn and Heir of all the sons, of all humanity. Being our human family’s “firstborn” Son and Heir, Jesus has a responsibility from God.

At the very beginning of our story, when our first parents Adam and Eve sinned and cast all our generations into *sin and death*, snatched from God’s family and thrown into the kingdom of darkness and death (Isaiah 9:2), the Lord God promised that our Firstborn, the “Seed of the woman” (Genesis 3:15), would crush the enslaving Serpent’s “head” to restore us to God.

So, as you learn to walk with Jesus Mashiach through this broken world, as you follow him to the people who need his healing touch, learn of how Jesus as “the Son of Man” has the power and authority from God to *restore* what sin and Satan have held in bondage.

As a disciple who learns to “follow” Jesus Mashiach, learn how we are meant to bring freedom and restoration to people in their brokenness and bondage.

Key Verse.

¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, **“Follow me,”** and I **will make you become fishers of men.”** ¹⁸ And **immediately they left** their nets and **followed** him” Mark 1:17-18

¹⁰ But that you may know that **the Son of Man** has **authority** on earth to **forgive sins**”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” Mark 2:10-11.

Developmental Disciple Stage:

Picture the development of infants as they transition from helpless and immobile babies to infants able to stand, to take their first steps, and then to walk! This newfound skill they practice in the safety of the home, until finally, they are able to hold the hands of their parent and to venture outside to explore the wide world!

Importantly, the infant does not become a free agent, an emancipated and autonomous individual the first step out the door. Rather, she stays close to her parent, who has the power to lead, protect, and teach her about this big new world.

Now, consider your second stage of development as a *disciple* who learns to follow Jesus Mashiach as your Lord, the restoring “Son of Man.” Now that you are *alive and thriving* in Jesus, it is time for you to “walk” with him in this earthly world.

Do not fall into the *folly* of many, who do not think that the Lord Jesus has a place in your real, everyday life. That his “Lordship” has little to say as you interact, talk with, work, negotiate, and spend time with the people of this world who don’t know him.

Rather, it is this very *real life* in this broken and dark world, in which people are “bound” by oppressive spiritual powers, they are weighed down in unforgiveness and conflict, they are broken by injuries, by sins, and by addictions and afflictions beyond their control. Follow Jesus Mashiach as he draws near to restore and free these needy people!

See, as a disciple in your *infancy*, the start of your *new and eternal life* in Jesus Mashiach, you need to be convinced in your mind that your Lord Jesus can make a difference.

Your flesh will tell you that it is better for you to traverse this world alone. That once you are able to stand on your own “two feet,” you are well-capable and qualified to walk alone. But, consider this. As a disciple, yes, you do not walk as a *human infant* in a *physical world*.

Rather, you walk in this earthly world of flesh as a disciple living in a spiritual reality. The surrounding spiritual reality, this dark kingdom which covers this earth, is far deadlier than any urban *crime zone* to an infant. In this world of *spiritual darkness and death*, when you walk alone, you face:

- **Oppressive spirits:** in these upcoming accounts, you will encounter human lives infested with and even controlled by “unclean spirits”—spiritual powers that oppose God and seek to *defile* you with sin and addiction. They seek to take over your life, to keep you alone in slavery.
- **Bondage of Sin:** When our sins are not forgiven, they weigh our hearts down with guilt and are the disease that kills our life with God. In these encounters, we will see that sin is like an untreatable, hidden disease that paralyzes the soul. In the world, there is no relief from sin’s bondage.
- **Broken Souls:** through the flesh, our souls are *bound* to this world and he injuries, pains, and afflictions which we experience. When our bodies our lives are afflicted by this world, our souls are also bound up in these afflictions. Without the Lord’s healing power, there would be no freedom for these broken souls.

So, in this second stage of your discipleship, you will learn a valuable life-lesson which will stay with you while you walk this earth. You will learn to follow the Lord Jesus Mashiach, obeying his Word and waiting for his Spirit’s leading as you pass through this broken world together.

Following the Lord Jesus closely by *living in His Word* and walking by His Spirit will teach you about him, as you see his heart moved by the people he touches and heals. You will know his comfort, as he bears your burdens as well (Matthew 11:28-30). Like a little child *bonding* with her parent as she walks with him to places familiar and strange, inhospitable and pleasant, so you will learn to stay near to him.

Remember, though you will soon pass into the next stage of your development as a disciple, you must never stop walking with and following the Lord. For, your entire time on earth are but scant moments in the Kingdom's eternal scope, and a lifetime is far too short a span to spend hand-in-hand with your Lord.

Case Study: Walking alone in Omaha.

My early years as a disciple were spent surrounded with brothers in Christ and filled with the sweet fellowship of my youth group. We had competed as athletes, worshipped at the same church, spread the Gospel, and graduated together from high school.

But, as I stepped off the plane onto the tarmac at Omaha, Nebraska to the drone of cicadas and stifling humidity, I knew I was suddenly alone. In the midst of the very immediate fellowship, I had neglected my walk with the Lord. Now, I had to re-learn what it meant to take his hand, to listen for his voice, to recall his Words to direct, correct, and guide.

After a while, his familiar voice drew near to me, and I answered. He called, and I followed. We walked alone through empty classrooms late at night. We met privately in the chapel. Soon, we brought the gospel to six, fourteen, thirty. Everyday for a whole semester, we talked and helped the broken.

We continued to walk together as he led me to a summer in Taiwan and ministering to fifty. Then an auditorium of hundreds of high school students. Then, into synagogues throughout Chicago. And, a congregation with close to

eighty nationalities as a microcosm of the diverse family of God. And, I expect that he will still be holding my hand when he comes to lead me home. We never outgrow following Jesus with child-like face. For, in the eternal spans of the Kingdom, even the oldest among us are as the littlest of children!

Milestone/ Abilities:

For the infant learning to follow her parent, bonding is *becoming like* the parent, as the familiarity of how they respond in every situation gives the child an intimate view of how they should live in this world.

So, as you follow Jesus Mashiach as the Son of Man, you will get to know him and his authority and mighty power to restore, free, and forgive. As you share life together, a mutual trust will form, and you will show the Lord that what he asks, you will do. Bonding means you become like your Lord Jesus, sharing in his calling and mission to restore people in this world of brokenness.

A. Knowing/ Responding to Jesus:

First, endeavor to know the Lord in the power of his authority. You will find that there is nothing that saturates your life with his power than *obeying his command*. As it says in Joel: “the Lord utters his voice before his army, for his camp is exceedingly great; he who executes his word is powerful” Joel 2:11. Simon Peter discovered this power, when he asked Jesus to *command* that Peter come to him on the water, and he walked on the frothy waves! (Matthew 14:28).

Make this your *life prayer* as you follow the Lord: “Lord, command me to come to you!” as you pass through the trials and extreme

hardships of this world. Ask him to command the impossible, and you will do it!

Following him is simple but can be complicated by the flesh. First, follow him by obeying his Words (John 14:21). Resist the *debased and fleshly deceit of religion* which allures you to follow anything but the authoritative person of Jesus. Yes, follow doctrines religiously; follow precepts, rules, customs, traditions, dogmas, and even entire theologies. Follow the popular Bible study teachers, the trendy lesson plans. Follow these, and the Lord himself will be shut out of your life, knocking to get in (Revelation 3:20). And, follow his Spirit and not the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

B. Living in His Household:

Second, as a member of the *royal house* of Jesus Mashiach, learn to *draw near* in prayer to offer yourself to the Father and to the Lord Jesus. To follow Jesus Mashiach will not just involve your mind, your actions, or your heart, but it will require you offer your whole life to him to follow.

As you learn to follow him, be especially keen to hear when he *calls you to follow him away, to leave* the comforting fellowship, the burgeon of the crowd—follow him to the quiet place, the lonely place where he will call to you and you will give yourself as an offering to him. He will claim you as his own, like David, a “man after God’s own heart.”

Jesus himself drew near to the Father to devote himself to him, giving his life as an offering to his God. You give yourself to Jesus, a life spent to honor him, like the “guests” of the bridegroom giving themselves over to the *surpassing celebration* of the Son of Man, the “bridegroom” who inherits all of *heaven and earth* (Mark 2:19).

C. Establishing His Throne and Kingdom: Finally, as you follow the Lord Jesus as his disciple, you will be like the Physician’s aid, showing him the afflicted ones, the suffering, the broken, the hurt, bringing them

to Jesus, the “physician,” that he might call them into the healing comforts of his Kingdom.

Assessment Question:

As a disciple learning to Follow Jesus Mashiach in this dark and testing world, consider whether you are indeed “bonding”—becoming closer to know the One who is calling you? Take stock of the key ways that you walk with him in this life.

Further Discovery:

2.1.A(6).The Son of Man: Authority to Free. Mark 1:21-34.

Mark 1:21-28; 2:10

22 And they were astonished at his teaching, for he **taught** them as one who had **authority**, and not as the scribes. 23 And immediately there was in **their synagogue** a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out... (Mark 1:22-23)

¹⁰ But that you may know that **the Son of Man** has **authority** on earth to **forgive sins**—he said to the paralytic— (2:10)

Background:

- **The Son of Man:** (Psalm 8:4-6).
- **Authority to forgive sins:** (Mark 2:10)

Focus:

- 1.Changing Life: Teaching with Authority. 1:21-22
2. Cleansing Spirit: Holy Word. 1:23-26
3. Commanding Authority: Lord's Teaching. 1:27-38

Consider:

As a disciple, one of the first things you will encounter as you begin to follow Jesus Mashiach as your Lord is his *teaching*, the words of his you read in this Gospel and the other Gospels. But, this “teaching” will be

different from any other *teaching* you have experienced, because Jesus Mashiach is not a merely human teacher. He is the Son come from God, so he teaches with “authority” and “power.” That is why his first audiences were “astonished” (1:22) at his teaching.

But, the goal of Jesus Mashiach for you as his disciple is not merely to “astonish” you—he cares little if he impresses people or not. Rather, the Words Jesus gives you are the *means of his power* to change your life. For, when you *hear His Words* and act on them, obeying or following or heeding—He works powerfully in your life to build your *love* and *knowledge of him* (John 14:21); to give you eternal life and protection (John 5:24); and, to ground your life on His solid foundation (Matthew 7:24-25).

Case Study: I can personally attest to the truth of his promise. At one point in my life, I was facing the loss of everything. Having lost a university teaching job, my wife was institutionalized and under suicide watch, child services threatened to remove my children, and there was no help in sight in this foreign land. But, I clung to the Lord Jesus Mashiach and His strong Word, and we weathered the storm, with everything restored and our house well-established on the Rock!

So, cling to the Lord’s Words and Commands as you would cling to the Lord Jesus Himself! Memorize and have them for quick access, for the Word of God is “living and active, sharper than any two edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). Grow in knowing the consecrating touch of the Lord’s Word to transform your life and the life of those He has given you!

1. **Changing Life:** Teaching with Authority. 1:21-22

When you think of the Lord’s Words and his “teaching,” abandon your old understanding of “teaching” which has been entirely fleshly in its nature. That is, the people in that synagogue were “astonished” because Jesus taught them as one who had “authority” (1:22), speaking to them as the Lord from God. And, at its heart, “authority” is relational

in its effect. For, there are only certain people in your life who have the “place” and the “right” to speak with authority. So, a parent, a spouse, or a trusted advisor, speak with the weight of “relationship.”

In this way, the “teaching” of Jesus Mashiach is unique because, as your God-appointed Mashiach, he has come to you as your “Lord”—the Son of God who has been give “all authority” over all peoples (Matthew 28:18). So, when he speaks to you, he speaks to you as your Lord.

He speaks about your life, your obedience, your problems—not in an abstract, anonymous, or disinterested way. Instead, he speaks to you as your Lord. He speaks of your life as a life He has redeemed, one that he is working powerfully in. He speaks to you as your Savior, your friend, your companion walking through life, your Lord, your Kinsman-Redeemer, your brother, your friend.

So, respond to the “relational power” of the Lord’s teaching. For, how you respond to the Lord’s teaching is responding to the Lord himself. That is why when you *obey the Word* of the Lord, even when your fleshly self is screaming for the opposite, to indulge in that sin or to choose lawless selfishness, but when you obey His Word and not your own flesh, you show that you actually “love” him. More than your life itself (John 14:21).

Never, never relegate Jesus Mashiach to the place of an anonymous, earthly teacher. Doing so will void His Word of its power. Then, you will come to Him to in a Lord-servant relationship, but as a mere “acquirer of knowledge” coming to Jesus as any other harmless Sage. For this reason, the Jewish nation have long *emasculated* their view of Mashiach to be a hoary and wizened scholar amidst the swarm of scholars Israel has produced. For, such a weakling has no place to make any claims on their lives. Such a frail Mashiach is useless except to *justify* Israel’s Self-serving purposes. Yet, what will Israel do on that day when it is surrounded by the world’s nations, blood-hungry for its total

annihilation? With its defenses depleted and its barriers broken down, it can only wait for its destruction. Will it turn to its Shneerson- like scholar-Messiah for Talmudic pronouncements as its people are trampled underfoot?

2. Cleansing Spirit: Holy Word. 1:23-26

Not only does Jesus Mashiach teach with the “relational authority” as the Lord Himself, but he teaches with an authority that rules both “heaven” and “earth.”

Notice that the first impact of his teaching is that “immediately,” spiritual uncleanness was revealed from its dark hiding place (1:23). Now, we should not be surprised that this *unclean spirit* was hiding in the “synagogue” in the midst of religious activity. Fleshly religion is designed for that very purpose, to *hide* from the scathing holiness of God. Just as our first parents used *fig leaves* to cover their inadequacy, so we use religious activity—earthly doctrines, religious customs and rituals, to give us a veneer of righteousness instead of submitting to the life-changing righteousness of the Lord.

But, the “teaching” of Jesus Mashiach uncovers this *unclean spirit*, who knows that this Lord cannot abide spiritual uncleanness but seeks to “destroy” it (24), which Jesus proceeds to do by “rebuking” this *demon* and commanding it, “Come out!” (26).

Notably, we see how the power of Jesus Mashiach results in deep, *spiritual cleansing* and freedom from the grip of unclean spirits. No other earthly teaching can accomplish this deep cleansing. But, Jesus has the authority in the spiritual realm to heal this deep uncleanness.

Even so, many suffer from hidden, deep and unseen, spiritual bondages. Unclean spirits cause defilements of heart, mind, and soul, and their damaging *power* can affect us at the unseen levels.

So, as one who belongs to the Lord and follows in his way, your first priority is read the Word to illuminate any areas of dark uncleanness, of

spiritual bondage, of sin in your life. Confess these immediately, asking the Lord Jesus to “forgive and cleanse” you of this uncleanness (1 John 1:9). For, once you are freed of the *vile bondage* of spiritual uncleanness, the Lord can then use you to help those in your “net” to experience this same cleansing and freedom of the Kingdom of God!

3. Commanding Authority: Lord’s Teaching. 1:27-38

The synagogue witnesses were amazed at the “new” teaching of Jesus Mashiach—new to them as *fleshly eyes* are unaccustomed to the *Spirit’s power*, but also “new” as a glimpse of the New Life of the Kingdom!

These witnesses attested to the “authority” of Jesus to “command” even the unclean spirits, and “they obey him” (1:27). We, too, should notice the immediate response of the spirit to leave at the Lord’s “command.” How telling that *enemy spirits* respond with such quick obedience, but in the realm of earth, the responses to the Lord’s command are quite varied—from ignoring, to refusing, to delay, or even reluctant compliance.

This discrepancy reveals our Lord’s great mercy, for he helps us as errant children to follow his commands with more and more immediacy, as our view of his Lordship comes into view as we continue to “walk” with Jesus and follow him.

May we be like Simon Peter who, at first, viewed Jesus with fleshly eyes, as simply a “master” (Luke 5:5). By honoring Jesus as simply a “master,” conceding that he has a measure of limited authority as either a teacher or as a role model, we can localize the areas in our lives where he may hold sway—over our religious activities or our times of need. And, if Jesus’s limited authority covers religious things, we can be the masters of all the other areas of our lives. But, when Jesus reveals himself to Simon Peter as having all and unlimited authority in heaven and earth, commanding even the *swarm of fish* to gather to Peter’s nets,

Simon can only simply cry out: “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” (Luke 5:8).

When we walk with the Lord Jesus Mashiach, we know that he deserves quick and total obedience when he commands us. But, like children learning to walk with their parents, we learn by running off, ignoring, or doing the opposite of what was commanded. We learn from our detours that it is better to obey than to resist.

For, in our walks with the Lord, if we refuse him at any point, our growth in the Lord will be stunted and stalled until we obey what he commands us to do.

And, to walk in direct disobedience to the Lord and his commands is rebellion and walking in the darkness, out of fellowship with him. As a child lost in the scary mall, our waywardness and disobedience to the Lord corrects us to know that aligning ourselves with the Lord and His commands is truly good for us and our safety.

Question:

Further Discovery:

The Firstborn of Man: the Son of Man.

Genesis 2:4, 3:15.

2.2.A(5).Bonding: Following the Lord Jesus Mashiach.

Mark 1:16-20

Read Mark 1:16-20.

¹⁶ Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, **“Follow me,”** and I **will make you become fishers of men.** ¹⁸ And **immediately they left** their nets and **followed** him. Mark 1:16-18

Background:

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Focus:

1. Be with the Lord. 1:16-17
2. Be Transformed: 1:17
3. Bring others into Kingdom. 1:17
4. Leave to gain new life. 1:18-20

Bond: Follow the Lord Jesus Mashiach.

Learning to walk with a parent helps the infant learn all about his world and how to live in it. And, so it is with your new spiritual life in the Kingdom of God! Your first step to live as a disciple is literally to obey the Call of Jesus Mashiach, “Follow Me!” and to follow him without hesitation! Consider what it means to “follow the Lord Jesus Mashiach” as his disciple, walking on this earth but also learning by faith the Spiritual Realities which comprise your real and true life with him! For, to walk with the Lord Jesus means to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2

Corinthians 5:7), learning to be aware of his near presence, the illumination the Word of God gives you to see the *reality* behind the material and visible experience of earth, and to be attuned to the Holy Spirit, the very life of God in you as the Spirit leads, convicts, teaches, and gives you knowledge and insight!

Above all things, remember this: your call to “Follow me” is the call to *bond* with Jesus Mashiach as your Lord. There is no higher call or love than this bond between you. Never lapse into the fleshly carelessness to think the *vibrant life* of bonding with the Lord himself can be *replaced* with the more convenient substitutes. Yes, if you bond with the person of Jesus, you will also follow his way, his word, his mission. But, it is too easy to merely follow his “word” and lose sight of the person (John 5:39-40); to follow his way and neglect his personal *leading*, or to follow his mission and let it become merely your own personal ambition.

1. Be with the Lord. 1:16-17

So, when Jesus calls to you, “Follow Me,” he is calling you first to be with him, to walk beside him, to follow him and walk, hand-in-hand in this world. For He says to you, “And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the Age” (Matthew 28:20).

In your first steps of learning to follow Jesus, let you first be drawn to come before him and his presence prayerfully. Think of David’s words in Psalm 63:1 and say to the Lord, “earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.” May your soul realize that what it thirst for is the *living water* found in Jesus alone (John 4:10). Know that of all that things you encounter on earth, you will only find a “dry and weary land” until you come close to Jesus. Call out to Him, like David and Thomas in the presence of the living Lord, “My Lord and My God!” (John 20:28).

2. Be Transformed: 1:17

You will find that in drawing near to know and respond to the Lord will change you. You will be nourished by the rich “vine” of your new life (John 15:5), and you will begin to mature as a spiritual being from infancy to a mature childhood.

So, when Jesus calls you, he says: “Follow me, and I will **make you become....**” In other words, your growth is the result of the Lord God’s “work” in you. First of all, this work is by “grace” and not by human and fleshly work. In other words, forbid that you think that you are the “designer” of your spiritual growth. In the previous church age, the church stagnated by the proliferation of *fleshly growth tools* that presumed to replace the Lord’s own handiwork that people fashioned themselves into mere reflections of the popular Christian culture or marketplace, but sterile in terms of bearing spiritual fruit.

Instead, endeavor to be the Lord’s own “workmanship” so “created in Mashiach Jesus to do good works” that God prepares for you to do (Ephesians 2:9).

Now, what is the nature of what you are to become? As with human growth, you can surrender to, nourish, and manage the growth process. Spiritually, you do this by simply surrendering to the Spirit’s work as it “puts to death the deeds of the flesh” and replaces this with the Spirit’s new life (Romans 8:13). Put off the old, sacrificing and surrendering the things of this world, so that you can be furnished with the Lord’s new life (2 Corinthians 5:17). Most importantly, that you might grow to resemble the Lord Jesus Mashiach so that he might be the first born of many brothers! (Romans 8:28-30)

Thus, you will “mature” and grow up in your new life as Jesus Mashiach works in your life and transforms you. But, this growth is not in a spiritual vacuum, lest you think you are a spiritual being *forever* meant to live in this world’s fleshly and material realm. No, you grow up to become stronger, more effective, and more fruitful in the unseen

reality of the Lord's Family and Kingdom! For, the more you grow, the more people you can help both in the brotherhood of the Household and in the world, as the Kingdom rescues the lost!

3. Bring others into Kingdom. 1:17

Thus, when you walk with Jesus, you are bonding with him, growing, and for the purpose of having a kingdom impact. For, you were not meant to live a solitary life in the Kingdom but rather to fill it with people you love—friends, families, relatives, co-workers, all whom the Lord will bring into the Kingdom through you!

So, Jesus Mashiach finishes his call by saying, "Follow Me, and I will make you become ***fishers of men!***" Realizing that "fishing" was the very life of these first disciples, Jesus calls them to "fish" for men. Not just in their spare time, or recreationally, or as an option. But, as integral in the new life which is rooted in the Family of God and his expanding Kingdom.

Not with a single line, isolating contact to only a few select and rare people. Rather, like a net thrown across a wide area, you are to bring the Kingdom's *wide net* to the expansive reach of all whom the Lord has brought into your life, beginning with those nearest and dearest to you! That is why, makes this central calling to "fish" for people a central part of his commission to the church, saying "Disciple the nations" (Matthew 28:19).

Of course, as a disciple learning to *walk* with the Lord, you will simply observe first how the Lord expands the net of his Kingdom. In your casting, know that the Lord and his new life will always be what attracts people to the Kingdom!

4. Leave to gain new life. 1:18-20

Finally, these men experienced the fullness of the Kingdom and the rewards of walking with Jesus immediately, because they learn the

secret of walking with the Lord: the importance of acting with *immediacy*. When Jesus calls you, your first impulse is to get up and act in response to his powerful call. For example, when Jesus called Peter to join him in walking on the water, Peter stood on the water because he was responding to the call of Jesus: The Lord always gives you the power to obey His call.

So, when Jesus called the first disciples, they “immediately left their nets (18)... their father Zebedee (20)... and “the hired servants” to follow him. Leave means to not only “let go” but also to “leave in his hands”—to entrust to, sacrifice, offer to Jesus the things of this life that He might give you what is Kingdom-new! This is the secret of Kingdom growth—to offer up what is old and fleshly of this world to receive the Kingdom and its life. This is called the process of “redemption”:



Question:

Further Discovery:

2.3.BP(7).Devoted Prayer: Consecrating Self Daily to God.

Mark 1:35-39.

Mark 1:35-39.

35 And **rising** very **early in the morning**, while it was **still dark**, he departed and went out to a **desolate place**, and ([2. Consecrate Live: sacrifice your will](#)) there **he prayed**.³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him searched for him,³⁷ and they found him and said to him, “**Everyone** is **looking** for you.” ([3. Clear Calling: what is his purpose?](#))³⁸ And he said to them, “Let us go on to the **next towns**, that I may preach there also, for that is **why** I came out.”³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, **preaching** in their synagogues and **casting out demons**. (1:35-39)

Background:

Today, we picture prayer as a mental exercise, a silent thinking that occurs, like meditation, alone in quiet solitude. However, the Biblical picture of prayer is not solitary but sacrificial— presenting yourself before the Lord God in his throne room. Before the enthroned God, there was an altar, and your one act was to offer to God what was precious and holy, whether it was an offering for guilt, a fellowship offering, or some other gift. Even prayers can be seen as putting your request on the altar before God and releasing it to his care. Faith in many ways occurs at the altar, where the man of faith offers himself up while making the request, thus surrendering one’s hopes, works, and ability to make the prayer come to pass. The prayer of faith offers oneself up on the altar that the Lord’s will be done. So, when God presented to Abraham the word of promise that his own “Seed-Zara” would be multiplied as the stars of the heavens, Abraham had to

respond to this promise in faith. That is, he had to relocate his trust from his Self and fleshly strength to rest upon this Seed-Zera. And, he had to surrender and give up to God all his hopes and desires, all his plans and efforts to accomplish the building of his line by his own power and strength. Only then could he look to the Lord God and his promised “Seed-Zera” to accomplish all that was promised to Abraham.

In this way, we will consider perhaps the most *holy* of prayers. For, the prayer of the disciple is as intimate as a son appearing before the King, crawling up on his lap, and asking for what only his Father God could provide.

This prayer of Devotion, as Jesus himself modeled, becomes a regular part of the Disciple’s life and a key feature of his life in Mashiach’s Kingdom Family.

And, it is fundamentally different from the detached, anonymous and cheapened prayer that has developed in the last days of the church. In the rich modern church, entitled supplicants would demand as their right prosperity and wealth.

However, the prayer of Devotion, which we see Jesus offer to God as his first sacrifice of the day, shaped his entire life and ministry. Not to secure for himself earthly baubles but to align him with the heart and purposes of His heavenly Father.

Focus:

- 1) Commune with God. 1:35.
- 2) Consecrate Life: Sacrifice your Will and Purpose. 1: 36-38.
- 3) Clear Calling: what is His purpose? 1:39

Consider:

Remember that as a young disciple, your “infancy” involves *knowing* your Lord and your Father God by walking with Him. So, this *devotional*

prayer, demonstrate here to us by the Lord Mashiach himself as he met with his Father and *gave himself up to him*, is not just a habit he religiously practiced. It was a primary way that He drew near to the Father to know him, to align his heart with the Father's purpose, and to always surrender to His Father a life devoted to building His House and Kingdom.

If you are a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, the Son of David, you have in your *family background* the predisposition of King David, the man after God's own heart. For, it is the *fruit of our lineage* to draw near and seek the *heart* of our heavenly Father, to wait on Him, to desire Him, to give Him our lives along with our prayers, that in praying, "Your will be done" (Matthew 6:) we also say, "Here I am, send me" and "I have come to do your will, O God."

Moreover, David's "heart after God" did not instantly form the moment he stepped on the throne. Rather, seen in the record of David's Psalms recorded in scripture, David's daily practice was to *give himself* to the Lord that he might know the Lord's own heart, that he might know and do all that was precious to the Lord God. This David did from his youth in the quiet watches and solitude of his shepherding, and here is where David became a man after God's own heart.

So, as a young disciple beginning your walk with God, even as you walk in the wilderness and battlefield that is the Last Days landscape as the whole world is tested. In this wilderness, be like David. Be like Jesus Mashiach. Devote yourself to the Lord as a young disciple that your heart will be ready for the greater tests and the many kingdom victories that will be yours as a man after God's own heart, doing the impossible works that God has for you in this great Kingdom struggle!

So, let's learn how to seek the Lord in "Devotional Prayer" as we see here demonstrated by the Lord Jesus Mashiach.

1) Commune with God. 1:35.

First, consider what makes Jesus Mashiach outstanding among his peers, what separates him in his prayer life from sleeping and comfortable companions who still sleep in this “very early” time in the morning (1:35). While the whole world sleeps, Jesus Mashiach “rises” the dark and goes to a “desolate place” to “pray.”

Now, you are right that Jesus could have prayed in the comfort of his own sleeping area, staying where the others were. But, to think this is to miss the whole point of Jesus’s prayer. Jesus seeks out a “desolate place” away from the warmth and comforts of the home because his purpose is not simply to lift up light words spoken in ease and comfort. No, his purpose was *to commune* with His heavenly Father, to meet the Lord God in a holy time shared only between the two of them. A private time where he could give himself fully to His Father in the Father’s very presence.

In this way, see your time of Devotional Prayer as a time spent in the actual presence of God. In the private and secluded place, your spiritual predecessors—Jesus and King David—discovered that the presence and nearness of God is most acutely experienced. King David prayed with the realization that this world is a “dry and weary land where there is no water” (Psalm 63:1)—but time in this Devotional Prayer in the Lord’s presence is to immerse yourself in the presence of the One who is the “fountain of living water” (Jeremiah 2:13).

So, as a disciple in your *infancy*, do not fear the times of lonely solitude but rather, welcome these as your private audience before the King. And, give him what he values most, your heart and life given to Him for his *special service* to build His house and kingdom.

2) Clear Calling: what is His purpose? 1:39 1: 36-38.

Now, we do not know the exact words and prayers that passed between heaven and earth as the Lord Jesus Mashiach presented himself before

his God and Father. But, we see the very obvious fruit, the unique way and glory of the Kingdom.

For, Jesus Mashiach sought the Father's presence to know his heart, and it was to this heavenly wisdom to which Jesus aligned his own life and actions.

So, when the group of his disciples finally finds Jesus in this desolate place of prayer, they are full of reasonable and pressing agendas of what Jesus must do next for that day. They say, "Everyone is looking for you" (36) as the reason for their desperate actions, likely thinking that Jesus would fall in step with the pressing needs of the crowd and the compelling social pressures.

But, Jesus responds to them as a man who is free from the dictates of the crowd. He is not simply a popular figure, driven by the crowd and motivated by the *fleshly urge* to blend in, to accommodate, and to satisfy the popular purposes of man. Instead, he is a "man after God's own heart," whose passion still warms his own heart and guides his way forward. So, he says unexpectedly, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also" (1:38).

Behind this unexpected direction is not just a need to be contrary. Rather, Jesus explains, "That is **why** I came out."

Having spent time with His Father, Jesus knows for sure the "Why" behind his actions. He knows the Father's purpose guiding his ministry, the purpose that calls him to forego the popularity of staying in one spot to appease the needy crowd.

So, do you want to be a disciple so intimately acquainted with the Father's presence to know deeply the very "heart" of your father and his purposes for you? Do you want the Father and the Lord Jesus to confide in you their greater purposes, the higher reasons driving the Kingdom strategy and the very campaigns they are planning to launch?

If you want to be *this* kind of disciple, a disciple of the battle-tested lineage of King David, who fought the Lord's battles to protect and secure what the Lord's heart desired? Of the Lord Jesus Mashiach, who came to earth to show us how to battle and conquer the *devious Serpent*, who prior to the Kingdom *pillaged humanity with impunity* but now, at the Kingdom's advance, has been "put under our feet" (Romans 16:20) and has "fled" as the saints have resisted him (James 4:7)?

To be shaped and imprinted with the Father God's own heart and passion, meet him in devotional prayer.

3) Consecrate Life: Sacrifice your Will and Purpose. Romans 12:1-2

Yes, your "Devotional Prayer" should be:

- A regular part of your life, perhaps even daily as it likely was for the Lord Jesus.
- A private time to spend with the Lord in seclusion, away from the social presence of others that you may devote yourself fully to the Lord and his presence.
- A seeking of the Lord's purpose for yourself.

Granted, your devotional prayer should be all these things, but how should you actually pray when you come before the Lord in "Devotional Prayer"?

Consider the words of Paul as a template for such a "Devotional Prayer" which is really a prayer of consecration. You are not just offering before the Lord and putting on his altar not simply gifts of worship or praise; not simply prayers as requests; nor are you presenting to him thanksgiving. Rather, you are consecrating to the Lord your whole life, given to him as a "living sacrifice" that you may be used to know and to do His will for that day. Consider Paul's prayer of consecration:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your **spiritual worship**. [b] 2 Do not be conformed to this world, [c] but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may **discern what is the will of God**, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

To present your body, the entirety of your being, to the Lord as a “living sacrifice” (12:1) means that your life is *consecrated*—like Samuel given to serve in the Temple, your life is a “living sacrifice,” is given over to God—not to live for your own Self-important purposes but to live for the will of God! Devote yourself to God to know the heart and mind of God.

Case Study: I remember clearly that night in my late 20’s, as I sat before the Lord in quiet consecration, waiting on the Lord in my darkened room, the island breeze blowing through my windows. I wanted to know what was on the Lord’s heart, and he answered that he had a precious task to be done. There was a blockage keeping His Jewish people from their rightful Mashiach, Jesus.

Satisfying His heart’s desire took me from Hawaii to Chicago, to doctoral work spent in the Jewish community for nearly a decade doing fieldwork to understand what kept his people from Mashiach. After many years, it turned out that Israel had not yet realized that God’s promise to David that he would “raise up Seed-Zera” for David according to duty-*yibbum* and redemptive right-*geullah* would result in a son whose paternity was of two lineages—of the Redeemer raising up Seed (God/ Judah/ Boaz) and the one for whom seed was raised up (David/ Er/ Mahlon). So, Jesus Mashiach, raised up by the Holy Spirit from David’s own genetic material, was both the Son of David (in the flesh) and the Son of God (in the Spirit).

Question:

Further Discovery:

2.4.C(12). The Son of Man as Authority Frees those of Faith: Sin and Disease. Mark 2.1-12.

Read Mark 2:1-12

⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? [\(3. Authority to Restore: Rest\)](#) ¹⁰ But that you may know that **the Son of Man** has **authority** on earth to **forgive sins**—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” Mark 2:9-11.

Background: The Son of Man’s Right to Redeem.

³ So God **blessed** the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on it God **rested** from all his work that he had done in creation. ⁴ These are the **generations** of the **heavens** and the **earth** when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. Genesis 2:3-4

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring- Seed/Zera and **her offspring- Seed/Zera**; he shall **bruise your head**, and you shall bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15

The first promise of Mashiach is God’s promise to humanity’s first family after Adam and Eve were judged for their sinned to lose all that they had been given.

Prior to their fall, our first parents lived in time and place holy to the Lord God-Yaheweh *Elohim*, a garden blessed with God's presence. Living with God, Adam and Eve and their "generations" were meant to be the heirs of the "heavens" and the "earth" (Gen. 2:4). However, choosing to live as their own "Lords," they lost everything. And, as their relationship with God *died* as promised (Gen. 2:17), they were removed from the Lord God's gracious Lordship and enslaved to the power of the cursed Serpent, whose voice they listened to in rebelling against God to sin.

So, the Lord God pronounced a *curse* on the land as the power of death would now rule, replacing God's blessing and peace. And, as Pharaoh employed implements of oppression to enslave the Israelites, now this deadly Serpent used other *cursed devices* to impose his *harsh slavery upon* humanity, devices designed to "break" humanity, afflicting soul (sin), mind (falsehoods), body (sickness), and heart (lusts and idolatrous hardness). Anything form of slavery to "break" the family of man and keep it from the Lordship of God.

As a disciple of the Lord Jesus Mashiach, may the Spirit give you discernment to see what the Lord Jesus saw, the very obvious *enslavements* rendering people helpless and too crushed to repent and trust in God for a new Kingdom. As our First Family's appointed *Kinsman-Redeemer*, the promised "Seed" who would *crush* the Cursed Serpent and disarm his *tools of enslavement*, Jesus Mashiach comes from the Father as the Seed promised to us, who would "crush" the Serpent's domination over us.

So, when Jesus calls himself "the Son of Man," know that he is referring to his responsibility as the Firstborn Son of humanity, the promised "Seed of Woman" (Genesis 3:15), who has the *right* and power from God to restore his family to their original place with God as

their Lord and Father. This restoration involves *breaking* the enslaving devices of the cursed Serpent—*sin, disease, and spiritual oppression*.

What should those restored expect? The Kingdom of God returns us to our original place of blessing under the *blessed rule* of the Lord God, reborn in our “spiritual lives” to enjoy God’s “holy” realm of *blessing* and *rest* (Genesis 2:3).

Focus:

1. Active Faith: seen by the Lord. 2:1-5
2. Accepted by Faith into Family. 2:6-7
3. Authority to Restore: Rest. 2:8-12.

Consider:

As you see Jesus Mashiach perform his *restorative work* as the Son of Man, the long-awaited Mashiach to free his people from *cursed bondage*, the hostile reaction of the religious leaders is quite expected. Before them is one who has the demonstrable power to bring freedom to people that the world has never seen before. And, they stand by powerlessly, like the *priests of Baal* witnessing the fire of God fall at the prayers of Elijah. Before them stands humanity’s *rightful Heir, its promised Redeemer*. And, they can only watch as the lost children come home to the Kingdom of God before their very eyes, showing that every form of religion, even Jewish religion that names the true God as Elohim and Yahweh, every religion that resists the work of this Mashiach is mere posturing before the work of the Restorer—not just of Israel’s tribes but the families of the whole world. So, discover how the kingdom comes by the liberating power of God, and that true faith is the key to moving from darkness into the light of God’s Kingdom Family. As

we read the story of this *paralytic* whose healing testifies of the restoring power of Jesus Mashiach, let's view this as a *typical* way that the needy are drawn into the Kingdom from their dark places of enslavement.

1. Active Faith: seen by the Lord. 2:1-5.

At first, we see a crowd of people drawn to Jesus. Now, we must ask, what was the reason they were drawn to Jesus? We have already seen his very public healing of the sick and casting out of unclean spirits. Again, unlike any other human religion in the world, the reality of the Kingdom's power restores broken people to the reality of God's blessing as their Lord and Father. And, it is this *restorative power* that draws people now to Jesus Mashiach.

Consider at this point how far this scene diverges from our modern expectations of how people come into the Kingdom. Have the followers of Jesus Mashiach strayed so far from the mark that we no longer see nor expect Jesus Mashiach to work such overt displays of Kingdom power and restoration? Perhaps generations of *religious doctrines*, more reliant on human theologizing than on the Lord's evident power have shifted our approach to the Kingdom.

Perhaps we should re-calibrate our expectations of how people should be naturally drawn to Jesus. Not by the manufactured religious arguments we design to lure people to Jesus today—that it will “improve” one's life or give one's life “meaning” in the face of philosophical misgivings or modern doubt. That “faith” for its own sake is a worthy prize to secure, that those of the “faith” camp can rally against the hordes of the “faithless.”

Instead, we must recover the original power of the name of Jesus to draw crowds of needy and broken people to the promise of restoration. We must revisit the truth of this world's “brokenness”—not because

people live differently from us, but that we all share *fleshly enslavements* that trace back to our origins as a human family.

So, it is for this original desire for *wholeness* that likely draws the *paralytic to Jesus*. See, he draws near to Jesus with a faith expecting restoration. So confident is he that Jesus has the power to restore that he convinces four men to carry him to Jesus (2:3).

The result? We are told that “Jesus saw their faith” (2:4). The faith that is “seen” by Jesus is a *focused* faith, because this man has found no relief anywhere else so place his expectation entirely and exclusively on Jesus as Mashiach. There is no plan B with the Pharisees, then C with the scribes, then perhaps D with the idolators. No, this man is driven *with great focus* to Jesus. And, his faith is an *active* faith—he and they are so convinced that Jesus alone restores that they are willing to take extreme actions spurred on by their faith. Such active faith, willing to go far to make contact with Jesus, is rarely seen today. For, without preaching Jesus as the Restoring Mashiach, without expecting his real power to free, cleans, and release from bondage, people today have dim views of Jesus. And little reason to hold firmly to him. As a result, the paralytic’s active faith uncovers the tepid nature of modern faith and its faint hope for relief and its dim view of Jesus.

So, you who seek to draw the broken of this world to the Lord Jesus Mashiach, preach Jesus in the surround truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom. That this Mashiach alone has the *right* and the *restorative power* from God to deliver from the enslaving darkness to deliver into the Father’s rule of light!

Driven by such a singular focus on this restorative Mashiach, the four men dug through the roof and presented the man directly before Jesus!

2. Accepted by Faith into God’s Family. 2:6-7

Again, in the story of the kingdoms of darkness and light, faith is the relational connection which humbles us before the Lordship of Jesus

that gains our *rebirth* as children into the realm of God's blessing and protective Lordship. So, the humbling act of faith also prepares us for our humbled life in the Kingdom as children of God, children who honor the Father and subject themselves under the Family rule of God. So, when this man *places his faith in Jesus as his Mashiach and restorative Lord*, such relational faith secures for him a relationship with Jesus in his family, so Jesus addresses the paralytic as "Son."

The paralytic is a "son," because Jesus Mashiach, the Son of God—the heir of the family of God, has seen this man welcome Jesus and his restoring power; he has stepped into a *restoring relationship* with Jesus. And, since Jesus is the Kinsman-Redeemer, sent to redeem his own kin, this man is now "family," so Jesus addresses him as "Son." His faith has been seen and rewarded by the Spirit's "rebirth" into the family of God (1:8).

3. Authority to Restore: Rest. 2:8-12.

When Jesus looked down upon the paralytic, he saw a person whose condition was not much different than anyone else. Yes, his bodily paralysis was not common. But, in the spiritual reality, the *deadness* of this man's spirit due to sin was no different than anyone else.

In this way, we are like the surrounding crowd. We rely on our visual acuity to assess the condition of our fellow humans, but these visual cues only scan surface appearances. So, assess *vitality* based entirely on bodily appearance, mistaking mere bodily life for a more holistic reality of life or death.

But, Jesus Mashiach sees with spiritual eyes, having been clothed with the Spirit of "wisdom and understanding" that sees to the reality of the paralytic's condition. The man before him lies dormant, crippled, and lifeless as the infinite debt of his sins weigh on him, separating him from God, and defiling his heart and soul. So, Jesus Mashiach chooses to

heal this much more consequential debilitation first, saying “Your sins are forgiven” (2:5).

What *right* does Mashiach, the Son of Man possess, to make such a pronouncement? When the Lord God promised the “Seed-Zera” of the woman raised up to crush the “Head” of the cursed Serpent, the first power to be destroyed is “sin,” the very act of rebellion which robbed us of our lives with God.

Who knows? Without being forgiven by the Lord of his sins first, this paralytic may have still been crippled by the weight of his sin-debt. So, Jesus forgives his sins first.

But, when challenged, the Lord also releases this man from his *paralysis*, showing that the Son of Man’s has authority to help those who come to him by faith.

While everyone has *sinned* and has fallen short of God’s glory, needing forgiveness (Romans 3:23), some, like the paralytic, have bodily conditions which weigh upon and hold captive their very souls. These in bondage to their bodily conditions need relief. So, the Lord Jesus will often heal those with afflicting conditions to show them the Kingdom’s power, that they may then turn to the Lord for salvation as well. He does not simply heal diseases to replace medical care but for the purpose of freeing their “souls,” giving them the respite they need to turn to Him.

Case Study: Praying for Mental Illness.

After having our two children, my wife’s chronic depression and self-harm/suicidation returned. At one point, she was hospitalized for about a third of the year for several years. During this time, her bodily condition, which included her mental health, was so broken that it overwhelmed her. The brokenness she splintering her mind was all she experienced, and she was isolated in this prison of depression. At that time, she turned away from God and abandoned faith, seeing nothing but her affliction.

Of course, we prayed for her. The children prayed for her “sleeping” sickness or her “wobbly hands.”

By God’s grace, the Lord lifted this affliction from her, and she regained her sense of “self,” have the capacity to respond to the Word of God and humbly return to the Lord by faith.

Question:

Further Discovery:

2.5.C(12).The Son of Man Restores Rest as the Lord of Shabbat. Mark 2:23-38.

Read Mark 2:23-28.

²⁷ And he said to them, “The **Sabbath** was **made for man**, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So **the Son of Man** is **lord even of the Sabbath.**”
Mark 1:27-28

Background:

Sonship or Service: Why was man made?

Earlier, it was discussed that *earthly religions* imposed upon God an identity that emerges from human experiences and expectations. For, our fleshly nature eschews uncertainty, mystery, or intimacy when it comes to our deities. So, the mystery that starts out the first chapter of the Bible, “b’reishit bara Elohim et hashamayim v’et ha’aretz” is a grammatical conundrum, for *Elohim*- the name of God, is morphologically a plural form of *Elohe*, singular “god.” Yet, this plurality of “God” creates—bara—as a perfect oneness. So “God created” is an act of a Plurality creating as One.

So, Judaism’s teachers have openly seen this a mistaken usage, suggesting that it would better align with their sensibilities if Elohim were actually revealed as “Elohe.” If this “plural unity” we see in the Bible is our standard for what we would call a “Biblical monotheism,” than Judaism would prefer something different, a “monadism” when thinking of the Godhead. A singular, detached, and peerless deity, unapproachable and resistant to any influence. Such a solitary being, from the beginning ever alone, would create human beings as mere tools to serve a purpose.

Such an extreme “monadism,” resisting even the labelling of God as *echad*, “one,” preferring instead the solitary isolate “yachid” to describe God’s holy isolation. Such a monadism agrees with Islam in this view of God, for the word the Muslims use to call on God is a term akin to *elohe*, the Arabic word *allah*. As the Quran states, “God has no son, nor does he beget.” In saying this, Muslims share in the reasoning of Judaism that God exists in unapproachable detachment, undefiled by human contact.

Both positions impose upon God a very utilitarian and functional purpose for man’s creation, and a detachment closer to a toolmaker’s feelings for his tool than the Biblical picture of God who exists eternally as a Father, saying to Mashiach: “You are my son. Today, I have begotten you” (Psalm 2:) and to David concerning the Seed to be raised up as Mashiach, “I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me” (2 Samuel 7:14).

For, the Biblical monotheism seen in Scriptures presents God not as an unapproachable and forever-alone and sterile being, but rather as a Father who shares his name and nature with even “man,” first sharing with humanity his “image” and “likeness” as a family resemblance, given to those who would receive his Father’s blessing, and even breathing into the founders of his chosen line his very “breath” (Genesis 2:7) that they might even be called the “sons of God” (Genesis 6:2). In fact, he says of those who are the family of His coming Mashiach, “You are *Elohim*, sons of the Most High” (Psalm 82:6).

Thus, for the *monadists*, God makes man to serve his higher purpose, in the same way that a toolmaker fashions a tool to work toward a set end. For Judaism and Islam, this *end* is to *serve* a religious system and sets of laws he has ordained. Man is meant to serve and obey these laws perfectly, with those failing in this service receiving the most merciless of punishments. This is the way of human religion, a heartless dispensing of punishments and penalties service to the system wanes.

Now, consider the rationale behind Biblical Monotheism. If God-Elohim is indeed a Father, originally to Mashiach as his Firstborn Son, then to the next and other sons to be born of him, he does not subjugate and demean in sons as mere *tools* in the service of a *dehumanizing religious system*. Rather, he treats his sons as he would his Firstborn Son, as heirs to be lavished upon with his grace and inheritance.

For, fathers and sons are meant to identify and know one another. Family is not meant to be avoided, shunned, nor neglected. Rather, a God-Elohim accustomed to saying, “Let us” (Genesis 1:26) is a Father who creates “good” for his people rather than ruin, who expects to *share* in his holy rest and peace (Genesis 2:3) with his sons rather than use it as leverage to punish and subjugate them.

As Jesus and the Pharisees dispute the Sabbath, their underlying view of God is revealed—did God make man as a tool meant to serve a religious system, or did God make man to share in his life and nature, as those who would one day join the family of his Son as fellow heirs?

Focus:

1. Enslaving Rules: Fallen World.
2. Entering House of God: Spiritual Reality
3. Enjoying Original Grace and Rest: restores plan

Consider:

As we look into this interaction between Jesus and the Pharisees regarding the Sabbath, let’s view this as glimpse into life in the Kingdom

of God as it differs from human religion. For, as disciples of Jesus Mashiach, we likely have all come from some family or religious tradition. As heirs of the Kingdom of God, we might see these religious past experiences as, Paul would say, a “tutor” that leads us forward to Christ and his Kingdom. But, once in the Kingdom, we acclimate to a new-found freedom and grace, being no longer under the authority nor subjugation of these old religious systems.

1. Enslaving Rules: Fallen World. 2:23-24.

The command calling for the honoring of the Sabbath was given to the Israelites to ensure that they share with the Lord God the “holy” and “blessed” time (Exodus 20:11) which the seventh day was created for (Genesis 2:3). Originally, God created Shabbat to be a “blessed” time that would be “holy” because he would share this rest with those who were his very own “holy” people, his *sons* whose “generations” would inherit the “heavens” and the “earth” (Gen. 2:4) with His Firstborn Son and Heir, the Son-*Elohim*.

So, when we are reborn into the Kingdom of God as God’s “sons” (Galatians 3:26), our lives in the Kingdom are immersed in this Shabbat rest, for we live in the Kingdom in fulfillment of God’s promise to bring his people into His Rest, his “holy” and “blessed” eternity of Kingdom peace and rule. When the promised Kingdom overtakes the rule meant to foreshadow and prepare, then there is no need for the partial.

Instead, the Torah commands regarding “refraining from work” are meant to lead to *faith in Mashiach* by avoiding *fleshly work that* replaces the Lord’s redemption with a human Self-righteousness. But, having already been redeemed by the Lord Jesus Mashiach, these disciples are not bound by Torah Law (Galatians 3:24-25).

Moreover, the Pharisees do not even cite the Biblical command to cultivate faith in the disciples but rather to impose rules to obtain compliance and control. For, of all the things in the world which are

used to *enslave* people and keep them out of the Kingdom, whether sin, disease, or spiritual oppression, fleshly religion is likely the most insidious, because it disguises itself in religious terminology. But, unlike the original commands, given to *promote faith* in the “Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Exodus 20:20).

So, as a disciple of Jesus Mashiach, recognize the need to seek the *freeing* of people from this world’s bondages—whether chains of the soul forged from the trauma of our broken bodies; the defilements of sin which war against our souls; or actual demonic oppression. But, of all these forms of bondage, it is bondage disguised in the righteous language of the Bible which is the most stubbornly resistant.

Consider how in the appearance of Godliness the monadic religions keep people from needing the redemption of Mashiach, whom the Lord God promised as the only one raised up to be “Yahweh Tzedekenu,” the **Lord our righteousness** (Jeremiah 23:6). For, only the One born as “The son of David” (2 Samuel 7:12) **and** “The Son of God” (2 Samuel 7:14) could redeem us with an infinite ransom for our infinite sin debt.

Yet, these monadic religions assure their people that “God does not have a son, nor does he beget” (as does Islam) or Mashiach is simply a human descendant of David (as does Judaism), despite the Scriptures addressing Mashiach: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever... so God, your God, has anointed you” (Psalm 45:6-7). Rejecting this God-anointed Redeemer, these religionists instead tell people to *fast* as a way of attaining a Self-righteousness of their own works, because they are well capable of Self-Redemption.

These adherents of Self-Redemption are Jews and descendants of the Israelites crushed under Pharaoh’s rule so that they would not even listen to God due to their “broken spirits” and ‘harsh slavery’ (Exodus 6:9), yet these generations are so emboldened that they boast of a

redemption by their own hands and a victory over a foe mightier and more impossible to defeat, being of spirit, the cursed Serpent (Genesis 3:15).

The Bible warns these self-redeeming monadists that there will be a day when they will be at the mercy of powerful enemies. Will they still claim Self-redemption and rely on a frail, flesh and blood Mashiach made in their own image, a Mashiach to assail their enemies with Talmudic wisdom and a barrage of tractates? What “wall of fire” could such a Shneersen muster for them, as the hellfire of missiles and the weight of a million boots march through their streets?

So, as disciples of Jesus Mashiach, we must never consider life in His Kingdom merely an add-on to fleshly religion. Yes, the Kingdom fulfills what religion promised, but once we are reborn into the Kingdom Family of God, putting ourselves in bondage to our former traditions, habits, or customs is incompatible with the freedom we are called to under Mashiach’s rule. If we live in the fulfilled realm of *shalom* and *rest*, how can we choose to labor under the fleshly control over those ruled by religion?

2. Entering House of God: Spiritual Reality. 2:25-26.

Responding to the Pharisees and their claim that religious rules are inviolable and immutable, Jesus refers to David and his companions, who ate bread dedicated to God in the “house” of God (2:26).

The Lord Jesus mentions David to show that the Lord’s *anointing*, whether it is recognized by the people or not, gives the anointed one authority from God. At this point in his life, David had already been anointed by Samuel (1 Samuel 16:13) but had not been anointed over Judah or all of Israel.

So, if this anointed predecessor had God’s blessing to *survive*, how much more does the Anointed One to inherit humanity’s original

mandate and blessing from God, the Son of Man, have the right and freedom to act in life-sustaining ways?

This is a teaching opportunity for the Pharisees to learn that God prioritizes and authorizes his Anointed One and the Kingdom's life-saving mission. What matters for everyone, including the Pharisees, is to be redeemed and restored into the Kingdom. Ultimately, it is debatable that picking grain constitutes "working" on the Sabbath, for it is not unlawful to eat on the Sabbath, to pick a piece of bread off your plate and put it into your mouth. So, while Torah commanded people not to "work" but take time to "rest" in the Lord, anything beyond that is a man-made rule, rules which would eventually be compiled into books competing with the Torah's divine authority.

So, it is clear: it is better to accompany the Lord and have the sustenance to serve him, than follow out of fear man-made rules and abandon him in the mission!

3. Enjoying Original Grace and Rest: The Lord of the Sabbath. 2:27-28.

To make his point even clearer, Jesus states: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (27). To make the point most broadly, the Lord's original purpose, which takes priority over all else, is that He created "man" to be made holy, adopted to share in God-Elohim's most holy nature, to enjoy an eternal state of *blessing* and *rest* in his family, sons sharing the inheritance with his Firstborn Son and Heir, Mashiach.

God is not *Elohe* (or Allah), a forever detached and lonely deity who constructs man a mere tool to serve a greater religious apparatus.

Rather, God is Elohim, a forever family unity of Father, Spirit, and Firstborn Son, who creates man to bear his image as a family resemblance (Gen. 1:26) that one day the sons of Adam might be *Redeemed* from their bondage of sin and death to finally become the "generations" of sons inheriting the "heavens" and the "earth" (Genesis 2:4).

Thus, in this Redemptive Mission to populate the Kingdom with sons, Mashiach has the right to ensure that his companions are provided for. For, they are entering the long-promised “Rest” which the Shabbat was meant to be.

Finally, to leave no room for doubt, Jesus plainly states: “So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath” (2:28).

The mission of Mashiach to restore men to the Kingdom of God is *authorized* by his rights as “the Son of Man,” humanity’s Firstborn Heir, who has the *redemptive right* to “crush” all the enslaving devices of the *cursed serpent* (Genesis 3:15) and restore God’s children to their original birthright of true “rest.”

Now, it is a good time to examine your life as a disciple of this Son of Man. Have you been freed of all the *enslaving devices* used by our enemy to entice and enslave your flesh, keeping you from the true *Shabbat* which is your birthright?



Yes, the Lord Jesus Mashiach has freed me from the bondages of the world:

- ☐ **Free and Forgiven of Enslaving Sin:** I am not walking in sin. When I do sin, I confess it immediately and repent, removing any objects of stumbling from my life
- ☐ **Brokenness enslaving my Soul, Heart, or Spirit.** I have sacrificed to the Lord and asked him for his healing any areas of brokenness, hardness, or unforgiveness that would enslave me in soul, heart, or Spirit.
- ☐ **Unclean and Oppressive spirits.** I have rejected and rebuked any unclean and oppressive spirits.
- ☐ **Fleshly Religion and Falsehood:** I have left fleshly religion and human-designed rules in order to live in the Fullness of the Kingdom!

Question:

Further Discovery:

2.6.Ca(10).Physician: Calls Sinners to Repent. Mark 2:13-17.

Read Mark 2:13-17.

¹⁷ And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are **well** have no need of a **physician**, but those who are **sick**. I came not to **call the righteous, but sinners.**” 2:17

For God did **not** send his **Son** into the world to **condemn** the world, but in order that the world might be **saved** through him. John 3:17

Background:

To understand the reality of life in a particular realm, we must start first by knowing the heart of its king. In this story of Jesus encountering a new group of friends who are seen by the world as sinners and outcasts, we see in the heart-felt, warm welcome he give to these outcasts the true nature of this coming Kingdom of Heaven.

Watching Jesus welcome these sinners and outcasts, the religious leaders scoff at the welcome he is wasting on these low-status misfits.

As we consider in this passage the crucial question: who is the kingdom for? And, “what must I abandon” in order to live and assimilate into life in the Kingdom?

This passage highlights the core difference between the Kingdom and fleshly religion. Between the welcoming heart of its eternal king and the condemning hearts of Israel’s religious leaders. The latter, seeking to preserve the sanctity of their religious community, seeking to keep the unworthy on the outside.

However, the Lord Jesus has an entirely different goal for the House and Kingdom he is building. In his House, sinners are welcomed and the

weak are embraced as long lost children returning home! Sinners are welcomed into this new House and Kingdom, but they must first repent and forsake their own lives

In contrast, the *Judaism* practiced by these religious leaders was exclusive. It separated the world into the “good” and the “unworthy,” based on the standards of Jewish standards and customs. This exclusion allowed them to serve as the gatekeepers, identifying the “good” people and judging others as falling short, unclean, and kept apart.

Thus, we see that Jesus Mashiach has an entirely different goal. Realizing that *all* people need to be redeemed and released from their enslavement to sin, he freely welcomes all who are broken and burdened to come to him for relief and new life!

As we shall see, this model is what the Kingdom of God is meant to be—life given to all freely to populate a kingdom of the Living.

Jesus, as the epitome, the Firstborn Son of the Jewish people, incarnates who Israel is meant to be—not race of fault-finding gatekeepers turning away the masses, but the picture of the Jew beloved and trusted by all the world, the picture of the renowned Jewish doctor. Skilled, life-saving, and welcoming with open arms all who need to be relieved of their burdens!



Focus:

1. Welcomes Needy: sinners and outcasts. 2:13-15
2. Wellness is Goal of Physician: not judgment. 2:16
3. Walking with Lord in wholeness: Calling. 2:17

Consider:

This story that you will read starts with Levi's conversion. Levi, a tax collector and presumably of the tribe of the Levitical priesthood, starts to follow Jesus as his Mashiach and does what comes naturally—he throws a dinner for Jesus and invites all of his associates and friends to meet Jesus! What a vivid picture of the Kingdom as a place of discovering new life—who can help but to share this goodness with those most beloved in our lives?

Tellingly, this celebration of new life provides a clear contrast between the natural, free, *home-coming* vibe of the Kingdom as it baffles accustomed to fleshly religion. And, this contrast revolves around the uncomfortable question, “What do do with the sinners?”

The Kingdom's response is easy, because the wisdom of God reveals the true state of the world. In this world of “darkness” and “the shadow of death.” The cursed serpent dominates all the earth's people as *sin*—the selfish actions of the flesh opposed to God—ensnares their lives and keeps them from God's rule and kingdom. Some sins are blatant in their lawless flagrancy, and the lives of Levi's guests were clearly *defiled* by their obvious sinning. But, some sins hide well in good company, taking root in the heart, and these sins grow mainly from our *fleshly nature of unbelief*- to seek to control and Self-rule our lives, even couching our resistance to God's presence and Lordship using the very language of Torah Law. So, when these religious leaders rely on their own Self-righteousness in the presence of these flagrant sinners, they also, like Job, are guilty before God of the insulting falsehood to think that man can be righteous by his own works apart from the redemption and mercy of the Lord God.

1. Welcomes Needy: sinners and outcasts. 2:13-15

What is the attitude of Jesus Mashiach toward these “tax collectors” and “sinners” (2:15) whose lives were clearly not honoring God at the moment? Notice that Jesus does not tolerate them nor put on a pleasant face but inwardly burn with disgust and contempt and these “sinners”? Rather, as “the Son of Man,” the One of all of us who can really help our brokenness, Jesus instead actually “reclines” with them to share a meal—a humble and trusting act that shows the true welcome of *hospitality* and *friendship*.

To explain why the Mashiach, sent by God into the world, behaves this way, we must understand the purpose of his mission. God did not send Jesus into the world as a kind of *auditor*, compiling a record of offenses which would justify some later judgment. As the Scriptures say, God did not send his Son into the world to “condemn” the world but to “save it” (John 3:17).

Yes, Jesus understands the *defiling sin* which has left its crippling mark on these sinners now sharing a meal with him. But, his purpose is not to entrap and cast them aside but to heal them. It is this hope of healing, this promise of a future kingdom thriving with the *spiritually alive*, which moves the heart of Jesus.

As a disciple of this Mashiach, be sure that your heart beats with the same purpose as his. Knowing that the only fellowship you will share in the Kingdom is with brothers and sisters who were dead in their sins but are now alive, who were lost in their own Self-important delusions but now see clearly to gaze gratefully upon the face of their Savior. There is grace and healing for all, for all were once dead in sin, whether or the people around them realize the depravity or not.

2. Wellness is Goal of Physician: not judgment. 2:16

So, as Jesus and his disciples eat with their friends, this Kingdom hospitality strikes the eyes of the religious leaders as shameful

impropriety. They whisper, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

Again, as disciples of the Kingdom of God, we must no longer view sin from the eyes of our religious tendencies. Human religion, by design, uses the label of “sin” as a means of control. The justification to belittle and dismiss our fellow human beings. To persecute. To abuse and manipulate. To create different categories of people—the “holy” and the “damned.”

But the Kingdom only sees people as either the “alive” or those “needing life.” Those “free,” and those “needing to be freed of their sin bondage” that they too may enter the Kingdom. As “brothers” and “not yet brothers.”

So, Jesus explains how he, as the World’s Redeemer, as the Firstborn Son sent to bring *all* the children safely home, sees this “sin.” Not as an opportunity to boast over the unfortunate, but to view them as their *needed physician* (2:17).

Jesus speaks as what we would later recognize as the prototypical Jewish doctor. For some reason, Jewish doctors are known and preferred not necessarily for their *sharp insight, their intolerance for substandard care, nor for their exemplary skill*. Rather, collectively, Jewish doctors seem fierce advocates of life itself, and they will *doggedly fight* for the life of their patients, as if holding a personal grudge and *generational feud with death itself*.

This is how Jesus, the physician, feels toward these sinners. He will fight for their lives, even losing his that they may live. To say they are sinners is simply to state an obvious truth. They are indeed “sick” in their sins, so they need a doctor to “call the sinners” to leave death and come to life (17).

May we be such advocates for life. I personally look forward to the day when the Jewish people leave their “religion” for the life of the

Kingdom, and legions of Jewish “doctors” of the Kingdom are unleashed on the world’s sick masses!

3. Walking with Lord in wholeness: Calling. 2:17. At this point, you may be thinking that Levi had an advantage over us, who are separated from the Lord’s physical presence by two millennia. However, by faith, know that it is we who have the advantage. Now that the Lord Jesus has been raised, he sends out his disciples as if we are trauma teams sent out into this world’s carnage. We bring the presence of our Lord with us, for when “two are three are gathered in my name, I am there with them” (Matthew 18:20) he says to us. Like Levi, may we gather our needy friends and family as if to specialized wards of a hospital. For those brutalized by sin, let them gather in *places of urgent care*, being comforted and forgiven as they meet with our Lord. For those battling brokenness, suffering from diseases needing excision, or afflicted by invasive virulents, let them all come to Jesus for healing and life!

Case study: Levi-dinner.

In graduate school in Hawaii, my fellow disciples and I decided to host free dinners to invite anyone would come. We posted signs simply saying, “Come and eat!” We had no agenda for these dinners. But, as children of the Kingdom, we simply thanked the Lord for the food given to us and prayed that He bring his blessings and kingdom to everyone who joined us! We did our part, and the Lord Jesus showed up! In conversations across the years, the Lord started to work in hard hearts, to reveal needs that we would pray for, and make himself known. A dozen became disciples and dozens repent of their atheism to believe in God! One woman, a staunch atheist and doctoral student in the biological sciences at first refused to eat with us. But, sitting with me after a few months, she simply asked, “So what is this Jesus-thing all about?” She became a disciple soon after!

Have dinner, invite your friends, and pray for the Lord Jesus to join you! We had one rule: come and eat, but for your first time, you are not allowed to bring any food. We just want you to be blessed! Our friends would eventually bring food, and they’d bring other friends too!

Question:

Further Discovery:

The Jewish people have long been enthralled by their Judaism, a religion which they admittedly formulated through their own “oral Torah,” as if God’s Word was not sufficient in itself.

The Scriptures are clear. One day, Israel will look upon Jesus Mashiach, and immediately, they will abandon their Judaism for the reality of the Kingdom (Zechariah 12:10-14).

But, Israel’s greatest unspoken fear will never materialize. Their distinct position before God will not be erased. Rather, once Israel embraces its place in the Kingdom of Jesus Mashiach, its people will realize that the Kingdom does not obliterate their life as a family, it honors it by placing them first among the nations.

The Lord God has never abandoned the family of Adam, the generations of Noah and his sons. Rather, his plan has always been to Redeem all his family home to himself through his appointed Firstborn among the families of the nations. As God’s Firstborn Son of the other families of earth (Exodus 4:22), Israel has:

- Become the House from which the Mashiach is raised up as a Seed of David for the world’s redemption.
- Received the Right and Responsibility to bring Redemption to the world. As a result, it has suffered a period of testing and alienation from Mashiach that all the other families of the Earth might come into the Kingdom first.
- Been Tested through all its generations, as Job was tested, that it would be freed from the insidious ruin of *fleshly religion* and *Self-Righteousness* so that it will forever be the Seat of Jesus

Mashiach's eternal rule. This is why the Church was always temporary, not having been tested so that the roots of fleshly religion eventually terminated the Church Age.

Once Israel takes its place as the Firstborn Son of all the families of the Earth in the Kingdom of God, it will be honored as the World's Redeemer.

But, as long as Israel clings to its own Fleshly Religion, Judaism, it will stand alone as it separates from all of earth's nations.



2.7.Cb(11).Bridegroom: Mashiach center of Kingdom's Celebration. Mark 2:18-22.

Read Mark 2:18-22.

¹⁹ And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while **the bridegroom** is **with them**? As long as they have **the bridegroom** with them, they cannot fast. 2:19

Background:

When the human family was once simply three main families, the three sons of Noah and their wives, we all shared in the knowledge of the true God, *Elohim*. But, at the tower of Babel, the Lord God judged humanity and sent its families to populate the entire earth. The family of the eldest brother, Shem, occupied the lands of our origin, settling in the Middle East. Shem was destined to be the one brother to be a spiritual dwelling by which the other families would return home, so he retained the knowledge of the true God, *Elohim*. The other families of Ham and Japheth spread through the whole earth. Having lost their original language, they soon forgot God as *Elohim*, and their quickly fading memories of God became splintered, in each family, into its own religious tradition. This family memory and character, what we now call "culture," shaped this distant memory of the true God, so that religious traditions focused on what each of the families valued. And, these religions and their cultural focuses multiplied and became as varied as the number of tribes and cultures covering the earth.

But, before this great "forgetting," all the families heard God-*Elohim*'s promise of a promised Son, a chosen "Seed-Zera" who would bring us all back home to God one day (Genesis 3:15). And, this promise

lay dormant in each family memory, in many ways getting grafted and retold in the language of that family's tradition and religion. But, like a long dormant thought ready to be remembered, the hope of Mashiach is older than each of the world's religions, buried in the memory of what it means for us to be human.

There is a often-repeated but half complete saying, that "All religions lead to God." This is false, because Jesus Mashiach is the only Redeemer of our family, being the only Son of God and the Son of Man to bear sins, and he stated clearly: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6). While all religions do not lead to God, we might correct this to boldly say: "All religions lead to Jesus Mashiach, and Jesus is the only way to God."

One day soon, the Christian Church will be taken by Jesus Mashiach so that the age of denominations will come to an end. Then, all that will remain is Israel and the nations. On that day, Jesus Mashiach will belong to all the families of the Earth. The families of the earth will realize that their traditions and religions set them on a path that ends with Jesus Mashiach in the coming and earth-spanning Kingdom of God, but they must choose to complete this journey of faith. Understanding that their early steps do not dictate or define the Kingdom, they just merely prepare them for the journey forward. The worship and devotion to Allah does not mean that Elohim is Allah. On the contrary, as we have already considered, Allah is a mere foreshadowing, an incomplete shadow that should drive the worshipper to understand and know the fullness of the true God-*Elohim*, of which Allah, or Zoraster, or Zeus, or Vishnu are distorted and misremembered ideas which should point to the true God in his glory and Lordship. In this way, as you read this clash of the adherents of religion with the disciples of the Kingdom, you will see the clear difference separating

them is one of focus. Religion focuses its adherents on what is most culturally relevant, whether it is “Law” or outward religious observance as we see here. But, the Kingdom is unlike every religion; it is the original reality which first defined life with God for us and is soon to overtake the entire world, covering it in the rule and shabbat and shalom of Jesus Mashaich himself. And, the Kingdom’s reality and focus, its sun-source and center, is always the Mashiach, the Heir of Heaven as the Son of God and the Heir of Earth as the Son of Man/David. He is the glorious center of the Kingdom and its source of celebration. So, Jesus Mashiach as creation’s Heir, is the center of its unending, joyful celebration. Listen to this explanation of Mashiach’s preeminence:

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the **kingdom of his beloved Son**, ¹⁴ in whom we have **redemption**, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation**. ¹⁶ For by ^[f] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created **through him** and **for him**. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1:13-20.

The Lord God, naming Jesus Mashiach as His Heir, is pleased to give all creation as his inheritance so that “all things” are made “through him” and “for him.” And, not only to inherit what exists now, the current

creation, but the Kingdom to come, the new age which is characterized not by this age's *bondage to death*, but the next age's *freedom from death*—for the founder of the next Age of the Kingdom is the One, the only one, who has died and has *risen from the Dead*. It is this Mashiach, risen from the Dead, who will inherit all of the coming Age of the Kingdom, the Age of Resurrection, as well. And, to think of this Age when the past and the future are *wedded*, and all God's people are no longer alienated but brought home, and when Jesus Mashiach, as the Heir of heaven and earth, finally receives to Himself his people as He takes for himself his own House among the many houses of his brethren, even receiving territory in Israel. This culmination of the ages is depicted as the "Wedding Feast" of the Kingdom!

Focus:

1. Celebrating Mashiach as Heir of Kingdom. 2:18-19.
2. Center of Kingdom Joy: Jesus Mashiach).2:20
3. Containing New Life: Sacrifice old life). 2:21-22

Consider:

² "The **kingdom of heaven** may be compared to a **king** who gave a **wedding feast for his son**, ³ and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come.

Matthew 22:2-3

As a newly born disciple of the Kingdom of God, it is important that you not view the Kingdom as if it were just another human religion. Though the stories of religions may involve great and unseen forces, their practices are invariably rooted in base human experiences and agendas. So, in this encounter when Jesus was asked why his disciples did not *act*

in recognizably *religious ways*, he answers that the Kingdom is a *realm* rather than a *religion*.

And, at the center of this realm, is the unlikely and unfathomable interaction of God- *Elohim*. As the first chapter of Genesis shows us, God exists as Elohim, a family unity of Father, Son, and Spirit. Or, as the story of Genesis reveals, God as Head (that is, Father of Family Oneness- Genesis 1:1, 6), God as Obedient Maker (that is, Son and Heir of this Family Oneness- Genesis 1:7), and God as Spirit (that is, Spirit of Elohim, of the Family Oneness-- Genesis 1:2).

So, to understand this realm, understand that the Lord of this Realm, God- *Elohim*, is like a Father intent on honoring his Son with a “wedding banquet” (Matthew 22:2). For, there will come a Day, when the Son accomplishes the Redemption of Family, bringing the *lost children of man* back home to the Father. So, there will be a glorious consummation of all that had been promised, as the Father honors His Son and rewards him with great celebration.

As disciples of the Kingdom of God, we are honored guests of this celebration, for we labor with our Lord Jesus to bring about the redemption of the world. That the Father may honor the Son of God.

This is the central focus of our Kingdom, the celebration of the Son of God as the beginning and worthy recipient of all the riches and goodness of the coming Kingdom. This is our focus as disciples, because it is the focus of our Father God—to celebrate the Son of God as our Kingdom’s Redeeming Mashiach.

To understand the fullness of the Father’s lavish Kingdom celebration planned for the Son’s honor, consider the Last Days picture of the Kingdom, which promises in Ezekiel 45:7 the “prince’s portion” in the land, actual territory assigned to the House of Mashiach—that is, Mashiach and his heirs. And, understand that Mashiach’s rule is not over a temporal but a global and even heavenly realm spanning the

“heavens” and the “earth” (Genesis 2:4). This eternal throne is portrayed in Psalm 45:6, a picture of the glorious Kingdom of the Son of God and David who rules forever, giving his “sons” places of honor and rule in this eternal Kingdom (Ps. 45:16).

Note: Eternal Eunuch or Kinsman-Redeemer?

The idea of the Mashiach as an actual “Bridegroom” and reproducing actual sons and daughters, *princes* and *princesses* for his house, is offensive and incomprehensible to the Christian *religious* mind. For, Christian theology abstracts and sanitizes its objects of worship to make them inert objects of veneration. One young disciples was horrified to think Jesus Mashiach would ever have a “queen” (Ps. 45:9) or children. “What about us?” she wondered in fear. Christian theology is Self-involved, reducing Mashiach to an *eternal eunuch* for its own self-serving purposes.

In this respect, the Jewish view of Mashiach as Kinsman-Redeemer who is responsible for continuing the line of David by raising up sons to continue the house and receive an inheritance is closer to the picture of Mashiach in his Kingdom. Suffice to say, the Bible’s last days prophecies often allude to procreation and houses continuing and expanding. For me, it is comforting to know that the coming Kingdom of Mashiach will not be a sterile and abstracted mausoleum as anticipated by Christian philosophers. Male and female identities, procreation, families and lineages, are aspects of creation that will not be abolished but glorified in the New Age.

1. Celebrating Mashiach as Heir of Kingdom. 2:18

According to Jesus, *fasting*—to forego food and drink to earnestly seek God-- has a place in the Kingdom. But, it is the timing of *fasting* that distinguishes his disciples from those of the Pharisees.

The disciples of the Pharisees fast to express yearning, to pray for fulfillment of what God has promised in his Word. Religion yearns for God’s answer to questions and needs still pending.

But, the Kingdom finds its fulfillment in Jesus Mashiach. For the disciples of the Kingdom, your greatest needs have been fulfilled in Jesus Mashiach and the New Life of the Kingdom he brings to you.

When you are *reborn* of the Spirit, you have been made *alive by the Spirit* (John 1:12-13) and are now tasting and participating in the Kingdom's Reality which the prophets and saints in the past ages could only imagine. When the Holy Spirit slakes your *soul-thirst* with Living Water (John 7:37), this is a life in you which will never die but only grow.

As disciples of the Kingdom, we have everything in Jesus our Mashiach, "who has become for us wisdom from God, that is, our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). For these first disciples, the Kingdom had come fully in the person of Jesus Mashiach, who dwelled among them.

2. Center of Kingdom Joy: Jesus Mashiach).2:20

So, the timing of *fasting* and the emotional ebb and flow of the Kingdom all depended on the person Jesus Mashiach.

For, Jesus is not only the Redeemer of his people, but he is the Heir and Bridegroom, whose inheritance becomes our inheritance and whose celebration is the source of our joy!

As we read in Matthew 22:2-3, our Heavenly Father himself organizes the Kingdom around the honor and celebration of his Son. So, when the Mashiach's presence is near, when we see Him working among us in power, then we celebrate his power and work! But, when he was taken from the earth to ascend to the throne of God, we now fast as we yearn for his revealed presence among us, his work, his sovereign rule, in our lives in this world of testing.

3. Containing New Life: Sacrifice old life). 2:21-22

Clearly, experiencing and advancing this glorious Kingdom of God on earth, living in the holy presence of the Lord Jesus Mashiach, and experiencing a joy and celebration that derives from the Father's own

celebration and honor of his Son, the Mashiach. This Kingdom of God that is within our experience is our inheritance as the Sons of the Kingdom (Matthew 5:3). Clearly, this Kingdom is incomparably valuable. But, what does it take to experience the Kingdom now?

Jesus Mashiach leaves us with a final warning. The Kingdom is not a religion—to reduce Kingdom living to mere religious practice will strand you in this material world’s limitations and human-constructed practices and rules. Sadly, the Kingdom in the Church Age was eventually overcome by the degrading influence of *fleshly religion* and its comforting and predictable practices. People flocked to this predictability, abandoning the sacrifice and the need to take hold of a Kingdom that is only known by faith and which demanded one’s all.

Therefore, Jesus warned that the active *life* of the kingdom and its expansion and life-changing power would ruin any *religious confinement*. The Kingdom must never be seen as simply Judaism + or even Christianity +.

Instead, the “new wine” of the Kingdom’s New Life, the Kingdom’s joyous celebration of its Bridegroom, such sheer joyous libation must only be put in “fresh wineskins.” (2:22). What is a “fresh wineskin” made of? A newly sacrificed animal. Only “sacrificial” worshippers, ready to abandon to old to take hold of New Life in Jesus, can contain the Kingdom’s celebration!

Question:

Further Discovery:

2.8.CP(9).Praying for Healing and Cleansing: Kingdom Restoration. Mark 2:29-34.

Mark 1:32-34

³² That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were **sick** or **oppressed** by **demons**. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ And he **healed** many who were **sick** with various **diseases**, and **cast out many demons**. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. Mark 1:32-34.

Background:

The offer of New Life in the Kingdom of God seems like a compelling and irresistible offer. Who wouldn't choose as their Lord the good and Self-sacrificing Jesus as their Mashiach? Rather, the people of this world's current darkness choose to stay enslaved under the harsh and life-stealing reign of the Dark Serpent. What is stopping people from rushing into the Kingdom of God for New Life?

The Bible is clear. People are not free agents choosing in a completely neutral spiritual vacuum. Instead, they are under the *dark power* of this world's current ruler who, from the beginning of our human story, has used the brokenness of our sin-damaged lives to keep us captive.

In the parable of the Sower (Mark 4:2), the first condition of life resistant to the Word of God's life-giving growth is a life resembling a *worn path*, hardened by constant trampling underfoot. In such hardness, the Word is easily snatched by the enemy. In this way, our lives have been "trampled underfoot" by forces that we are helpless to

stop. Whether it is *sin, sickness, or spiritual-demonic affliction*, our lives are abused even to our *very souls* held captive. We see our deepest self as damaged, powerless, and helpless to even believe that anything can change. In this way, think of how the entire nation of Israel was held captive by Pharaoh's oppression, to the point that they would not even listen to God nor Moses due to their "harsh slavery" and "broken" lives (Exodus 4:22).

In these conditions, the Anointed One, the promised "Seed" of the Woman, the Son of Man, must act powerfully to free these captive souls from whatever binds them.

So, as you learn to walk with the Lord Jesus Mashiach in his healing authority and power, learn how to pray that the people in your life are *freed* of whatever captivates and enslaves them! Consider how to pray to see the Lord's healing liberate those held captive in your life!

Focus:

1. Tell Jesus Need. 1:29-31.
2. Take needy into Presence of Jesus. 1:32-33
3. Takes away Bondages for Service. 1:31, 34.

Consider:

When Jesus Mashiach exercises His power to heal and cleanse from unclean spirits, he is not simply demonstrating his irresistible power. Rather, he is fulfilling Scriptures by living out the anointed role for which he was sent.

To understand the reason for his works of power, remember that the promise of Mashiach far-preceded the promise God gave to David when he talked about Mashiach as the ruler on David's throne. Rather, the first promise of this chosen One traces back to the very first need of our

family when the sin of Adam and Eve cast us out from the Family Life with God prepared for us as the “generations” of the “heavens and the earth” (Genesis 2:4). At that time, the Lord God promised that the chosen “Seed-Zera” would “crush” the Serpent’s head, thus restoring his family to the :”Shalom” promised to us in our primal garden existence (Genesis 2:3). Thus, it is this “Seed of Woman,” the Firstborn Son of the family of Man—hence, “The Son of Man”—is responsible as our family’s Kinsman-Redeemer to restore us our original Life with God, living in his blessings and resting in His peace, “shalom.”

Thus, walking with Jesus Mashiach, you are to see and experience His restoring power as *the Son of Man*—healing people of the bondage and oppression that keeps their souls enslaved. But, restoring them from *sin’s ravages* (Mk. 2:10) and to bring us into the Lord’s *shabbat* (2:28).

So, let’s see how the first disciples learned to work with Jesus Mashiach as the Son of Man to see people healed and cleansed of unclean spirits!

1. Tell Jesus Need. 1:29-31.

The simplest form of praying for people is just to “tell” Jesus about their need, as Simon did when his mother-in-law was “ill with a fever” (1:30). Now, how does this Mashiach, who is the *Son of God*, respond to the report that someone close to Simon was “ill with a fever”? Would this Lord, accustomed to problems on global or cosmic scales, dismiss as *trivial* the suffering of this woman with a fever? Would he simply work his power from a distance to not be further bothered by such a personal problem?

Walking with the Lord on this ordinary occasion, the disciples saw the *deeply personal* way that Jesus Mashiach responded to the report of Simon’s fevered mother-in-law.

Clearly, this woman mattered a great deal to Simon. So, when he tells Jesus of her condition, Jesus took a personal interest in her too.

What a powerful lesson these disciples learned. That by telling Jesus about the people on their hearts, they could *direct his heart* that the Lord of all power would become *personally interested in them too!* The people who matter to us matter to the Lord as well, for he *cares for our relations*.

And, not only does Jesus share your personal concern, he draws near to privately free them of their affliction. Not dismissively, as if the ailment was just another problem to deal with. But, Jesus Mashiach draws near to this ill woman privately, being sure to “take her by the hand” (31) so that she could know his care and attention. And, giving her his full focus, he then “lifts her up.” She is not anonymous at that point but seen and cared for.

This is your Lord Jesus Mashiach’s heart response when you tell him about the people on your heart and what holds captive their souls. Your prayers move your Lord first to be *personally involved* in the people that matter to you. His heart inclines and his attention focuses on them. Then, so moved, he attends to them personally. Coming to them, making his presence and care known, and then lifting them from their burden.

Test out your prayer life in this way, and see how the Lord Jesus answers you! You will see the *kingdom’s life-giving work spread throughout your net of relationships!* As a disciple of the Lord Jesus Mashiach, pour out your heart’s burdens for the people in your life. Move his heart in their direction, to consider them and act.

2. Take needy into Presence of Jesus. 1:32-33

Not only did the disciples tell Jesus about the people in their lives who needed his touch. But, they and the crowds *brought to Jesus* “all who were sick or oppressed by demons” (1:37), helping the needy come in direct contact with the Lord Jesus and his healing power. As expected, he “healed” the sick and “cast out” the unclean demons (34).

Now, how would that translate today, to bring the needy *into the presence* of the Lord Jesus for healing? For both cases, prayer from afar or prayer in his presence, the oppressed or needy one should want to be healed. That is, disciples should ask if they would like to bring their needs to Jesus the Lord. They should be willing participants in this prayer. For, by turning to Jesus and placing their faith in him, they must necessarily repent of their *defiling Self-reliance*. Self-reliance dishonors God and his Mashiach, because it highlights the *defiling ungodliness at the "Tree in the Garden"*. Self-reliance spurns God and his redemption, seeking instead fleshly self-redemption. Such an isolator should expect to receive nothing from the Lord.

But, when an outsider agrees to receive the Lord's help, they must look to Jesus with expectation and trust. Such faith Jesus rewards with his saving touch and relief from their oppression.

So, agreeing to receive prayer for their area of need, they wait expectantly for the Lord. Here is the difference. When one is prayed for and touched from afar, the answer to prayer is a demonstration of power which points to the Kingdom's reality. However, when they are in the presence of Jesus and are healed, then the power is a sign pointing to Jesus himself. Especially if the disciple is able to share accompanying words or promises from the Bible which the Spirit may also provide.

Case Study: Praying for Restoration:

In my experience, the person's level of faith may determine the type of prayer experience they are willing to undergo.

#1: K, an atheist. In my early years at the university, a German friend of mine, K, was clearly unfamiliar with Jesus and his Kingdom. But, as she would eat at our monthly dinners and see how we blessed the food and our guests, she became less skittish. However, all of this talk did not intersect her real life experiences, until one night when she stayed late to clean up after a dinner. I noticed that she had a pained look on her face. When I asked her if I could pray for what she described as a months-long

tooth infection, she looked perplexed. How could prayer do anything in this real world of dental crises? But, she finally consented. A few months later, as we talked on the beach, she asked if I had the power to heal. “When you prayed for me, I was healed!” she admitted. I said, “No, I have no power. The Lord healed you to show you that he loves you!” That, I hope, brought her one step closer to the Kingdom.

#2. A, a disciple. After a long counseling session, A realized that her father’s abandonment when she was a little girl still affected her. I asked her if she’d like to pray and invite the Lord to be with us as she sought his healing. As we prayed, the Spirit started to work in her heart to show her how the trauma was still a weight that she needed to surrender to Jesus. As she step-by-step gave to Jesus the pain, the fears, and even the stubborn unforgiveness, the Lord gently removed and healed her heart. It was all very powerful and intimate.

It was A’s highly level of comfort of knowing the Lord which encouraged her to come into his presence. The Spirit also worked so that the interplay between prayer, hearing, and speaking, happened seamlessly. Some spiritual seekers may be open to this, but I would check to see that they have at least some faith, some expectation or curiosity to know the Lord.

3. Takes away Bondages for Service. 1:31, 34.

Finally, notice how this removal of this *debilitating sickness* which held Simon’s mother-in-law captive led to her start to “serve them” (1:31). In this way, the Lord Mashiach’s unmistakable responses to prayer are often the open door of the Kingdom. Freed of the enslaving obstacles, people have a stronger Kingdom inviting them to “come home.”

Remember that the Lord reminds Israel that He is the only “Lord our God” who brought them out of “the House of slavery” (Exodus 20:2). Redemption, the powerful action to free the captives, always precedes *obedience, worship, or service*. Without the first commandment, to submit to the Lord God’s “redemption,” to his Kingdom power to

overturn the works of the world and its ruling Serpent, there can be no obedience. For, until the Lord frees us, we, like Israel, are “broken” in our lives and by the “harsh slavery” of the world (Exodus 6:9) so that they nor we can even hear, much less believe, the Words of God. Israel had to be freed from Pharaoh’s power before the people could serve God and worship him.

Question:

Further Discovery:

Mission	1.Beget New Life	2. Bond	3. Build Family	4. Build Faith	5. Build Kingdom	6. Build House/ Homeland	7. Bear Sins
Disciples Stage	Reborn	Infancy: young child	Childhood: Older Child	Adolescence: Young Adult	Adulthood: Mature Adult	Parenthood: Young Parent	Eldership: Raise Parents
Growth	Receive Life (faith) Reject Death (repent)	Walk with (follow)	Plant Word- Teach Together	Represent Responsibly- Partner	Shepherd	Proclaim	Sacrifice
A. Raised up as David's Seed: 2 Samuel 7:12	The Son of God: (life-giver) 1.Son of God. 1:1 (life-giver) 2. Lord 1:2-3 (prepare)	The Son of Man 6. Authority: sp. Power/ life change. 1:21-34. 13. Grieved. Hard Heart. 3:1-12	Lord/ Head of House of Kingdom 14. Head of House Appoints Members. 3:13-21	Lord of the Harvest 23. Authorized Represent/ Proclaim: 6:7-13.	The Son of Man, Suffers to Serve (cross/ resurrection). 32. The Son of Man/ Mashiach Suffers to Serve. 8:27-32 40: Son of Man Serves: Gives Live a Ransom- true glory 10:32-45.	Raised up Seed. The Son of David/ The Son of God. 41. The Son of David. Merciful King. 10:46-52	Passover Lamb/ King of the Jews 57. Anointed for Sacrifice. Fulfilling Passover 14:1-9
B. Builds a House for God and David 7:11, 14	Baptizes (Rebirths) into House 3. Bapt. Rep. 1:4-6 4. Faith/ Bapt. Spirit: 1:7-8	Frees and Heals by His Power. 8. Moved with Pity. 1:40-45.	Appoints, Equips Members in House/ Kingdom. 14	Send out Teams to Bless Households. 24. Responsible Teachers: Report/Rest in Jesus. 6:30-33	Calls Disciples to Surrender to Serve: 32a. Servants Share Suffering: Lose life. 8:32-38	Revealing Himself as King to Children 42. Children welcome King and Kingdom. 11:1-11.	Lays life down Give Life to Household (Lord Supper) 58. Betrayed by Friend. 14:10-21 59: Bringing Life to Household by Sacrifice. 14:12-25. 60. Shepherd Struck: sheep flee. 14:26-31
B. Living in House: 7:11	Receive (Faith) and Reject (repent). 3-4	Following and Bonding with the Lord. 5. Follow Jesus. 1:16-20 11. Bridegroom: Kingdom celebrate.. 2:18-22.	Unity/ Encouraged to do Father's Will. 14a. Living Together in Household Faith. 3:22-30. 15. Family Relations. 3:31-35	Shepherding Needy. 24a. Responsible Shepherds: 6:34-42 30: Compassionate Heart. 8:1-10	Giving Kingdom to Little Children. 35. Kingdom Unity: Focus on Lord not differences for advantage. 9:38-41 36. Kingdom Innocence: Children pure. 9:42-50 37. Kingdom Faithfulness. Marital Unity 10:1-12 38: Children enter Kingdom. 10:13-16 39. Rich Ruler Blocked from Kingdom. Follow Jesus. 10:17-31	King Revealed to Israel. 43. Fruitless Fig Tree: Rejected 11:12-14 47: Seed Raised up for David. Willful Blindness. 12:18-27. 48. Law brings Near to Kingdom: Fear God. 12:28-34 49. Dual Sonship of Seed raised up: Son of David/ Son of God. 12:35-37	62: Crowd rejects Mashiach: 63: Sacrificial Witness. Testifies He is the Son of the Most High God" 14:53-65 64: Peter denies Jesus. 14:66-72 65. King of Jews Crucified. Hidden Kingdom Reality. 15:1-20 66. Crucified on Cross to Save Others. 15:21-32 67. On Cross takes on Dark Sin and Death. 15:33-41 68. Buried in Tomb. 15:41-47
Bp. Prayer 7:13	Confess Sins 3	Devote Self: 7. Devoted Prayer. 1:35-39..	Bind Up Strong man/ Hearing 14b. Prayer: Binding up Strong man. 3:27-30 17b. Prayerfully Hear Word to Testify. 3:21-25	Accountable for Mission. 25. Responsible Prayer: Resting/ Review w/Father. 6:45-51	Praying to cast out unclean Sp. 34. Prayer for Spiritual Cleansing: Kingdom Conflict. 9:14-29	Kingdom-moving prayer. 44. Kingdom Moving Prayer: Israel to be displaced. 11.20-25	Pouring out Soul to do Father's Will. 61: Pouring out Soul in Prayer: Doing Father's Will. 14:32-42
C. Establishes Throne 7:14-16	Testify in Baptism of New Life. 4a. Anointed as Mashiach/ Son: 1:9-11 4b. Earth- Tested as Son (1:12-13)	Bring Needy to Jesus for Healing. 9. Faith: Forgiven/ healed.2:1-12 6a. Restoring Prayer/Presence. 2:29-34. 10. Physician Calls Sick. 2:13-17.	Cultivate Faith/ resist unbelief. 19. Fear/Lack of Faith. 4:35-41. Who 21. Family Faith: Overcomes Fear. 5:21-43 17. Fruitful Faith in Word. 4:10-25 18. Kingdom Grows Naturally. 4:26-34 22. Unbelief: Fleshly View. 6:1-6	Confronting Hard Hearts to choke Faith. 27. Distant Heart: unbelief voids Word. 7:1-13 28. Defiled Heart. Corrupts person. 7:14-23 31. Hardened Hearts. Blinds Perception/ Misleads. 8:11-26	Models/ raises up Servant Leaders: Surrender Life to Serve. 35. Kingdom Service: Great Position Last to serve all. 9:30-37. Kingdom Faithfulness. Marital Unity. 10:1-9	Confronting Israel's Unbelief/ rejecting Ma. 43a. Israel's Future: House of Prayer for Nations defiled by religion. 11:15-19 45. Authority as Mashiach Questioned. People pleasing. 11:27-32 45a. Dispossessing Heir: oppose Mashiach 12:1-12 50. Sacrificing Life: Offering to please God. 12:38-44	Seated on Throne after Resurrection 69: Women Hear of his Resurrection. 16:1-8
CR. Rules a Kingdom Forever 7:16	Multiply Sons for Family of God. 4c. Proclaim Kingdom (1:4-15)	Release from Dark Bondage. 12. The Son of Man. Restores. 2:23-28.	Plant Word of God for Kingdom Growth/ Build Faith 16. Sowing Word: Kingdom Growth. 4:1-9. 20. Free Unclean Spirit. 5:1-20	Restore worshippers of the Father. 26. Touch: Focused Faith: waits for Lord's Answer. 6:53-56. 29. Humbled Heart. Healed. 7:24-37.	Kingdom Power Revealed. 33. Revealing Kingdom's Hidden Glory. See Jesus alone. 9:1-13	Establishes the Kingdom in Israel 46. Spiritual Kingdom/ Earthly Kingdom: Serving God. 12:13-17 51. Last Days Prophecy: Kingdom Established in Israel. 13:1-4 52. Birth Pains: False Messiahs after Church Ends. 13:5-8 53. Israel Proclaims (3.5 yr.) 13:9-13. 54. Tribulation (3.5 yrs.): Time of Antichris. 13:14-22	Disciples Sent to preach Gospel to Nations: 70. Risen Mashiach sends Disciples to Proclaim Gospel: to the whole world. 16:9-20

						55. Son of Man Comes. 13:24-27 56. Fig Tree Ripens before Birth Pains: Jews to Jesus. 13:28-36	
Topics:	1A. Sons Heaven/Earth 1B. Promised Mashiach	2A. Sacrificial Faith: 2B. Daily Devotion	3A. Praying by Holy Spirit 3B. Households of Faith	4A. Kingdom Partnering 4B. Holistic Ministry	5A. Hidden Kingdom Glory 5B: Redemption Cycle	6A. Raising Up Seed for David 6B. Redemptive Timing	7A. Resurrected Life 7B. Kingdom Come.