

FRIENDS OF THE NAZARENE©

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“They Follow the Lamb No Matter Where He Goes”

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Nazarene Saints Publishing© is a Bible research group for a better Scriptural understanding. We are dedicated to the preservation and publishing of Christian writings which aid Friends of the Nazarene© to "follow the Lamb no matter where he goes." (John 15:14; 3 John 14; Revelation 14:4) The Friends of the Nazarene© are a spiritual community of Messianic Christians. We are apologists dedicated to the defense of the truth that "God is One" and not three. The Bible is our creed. We view this "God-breathed" Book as inspired alone, while the thoughts of men about it are not. We wish to show respect for our multitude of Christian brethren. (1 Peter 3:15)

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JESUS CHRIST IN THE 3RD MILLENNIUM

After 2,000 years Jesus the Nazarene has lost none of his glory. More people acknowledge some form of belief in him than at any other time in the history of Christianity. Christianity is the largest single religion on earth with two billion adherents, the majority Roman Catholic. Much of the to do about Y2K is based

on the birthday of that blessed babe in the manger. Of course, more than one person has noted that if Jesus' birth is dated from the year January 1, 1 AD why is his birthday celebrated on December 25?

On the day of his baptism at the age of thirty, Jesus called the first of a handful of disciples. Within a few days, he had gathered around him twelve "apostles." Within a year, he was able to send out 35 pairs of non-apostolic disciples, meaning there were at least 82 Jewish men willing to publicly "declare the good news of the Kingdom." By the end of his ministry, after his resurrection Paul states there were 500 Christians who were witnesses of this. [1 Corinthians 15:6]

Despite this fine growth in the three years of the Nazarene's ministry, it was in the few years after the Pentecostal outpouring of spirit that the Christian Church swelled into the thousands. [Acts 2:41, 47] And, then despite severe persecutions, tens of thousands. Now, after almost two thousand years, there are two billion persons on earth who profess to believe in Jesus Christ in some form, making Christianity the largest and most influential religion on the globe. Additionally, most "Christian" nations are more technically advanced and economically well off than those nations characterized by the old "pagan" religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam.

Few would argue that the person of Jesus Christ the Nazarene holds the hearts and imagination of more of humanity than ever before. Never before have more evangelists and missionaries of the teachings of the Nazarene been working around the globe. This manifests itself in huge printing facilities, television satellite stations, and the World Wide Web. Never has the Gospel been more widely available to anyone anywhere. There is no indication that the man from Galilee will lose his devoted throngs.

Judging from much of the communication media, as the 3rd Millennium begins, faith in Jesus Christ will continue to grow right into the next thousand years. This faith includes for many the promised Return of the Messiah. The Bible is not silent on what is likely to happen during the 3rd Millennium since the birth of Christ.

Whatever happens, or however it materializes, this faith in Jesus Christ is to be sorely tested in the future. At some point a Satanic entity is to raise its ugly heads in an all out attempt to destroy the end-time Saints. This foreboding prophecy is found in Revelation chapters 11, 12, and 13 as well some other places in the Bible. Read these accounts in the following combined paraphrase:

Revelation 11:2 The non-Jewish nations ... will tread underfoot the holy city [New Jerusalem] for forty-two months. Revelation 11:3 And I will give power to my two witnesses to prophesy dressed in sackcloth a thousand two hundred and sixty days. ... Revelation 11:7 And when they have completed their testimony, the wild beast that ascends out of the abyss will war against them, overcoming them, and killing them. Revelation 12:12 Woe to earth's inhabitants because the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath, aware he has but a brief period of time. ... Revelation 12:17 And the

dragon grew wrathful at the woman [the holy city New Jerusalem], and went to make war with the Remnant of her other offspring. These [end-time Saints] keep God's commandments and testimony of Jesus. Revelation 13:4 Earth's peoples rendered worship to the wild beast. Revelation 13:5 And there was given unto the wild beast a big mouth speaking haughty and blasphemous words. Also, it was given power to work his will forty-two months. Revelation 13:6 And its mouth poured forth blasphemies against The God, blaspheming His Name and His dwelling, including even the angels who reside in heaven. Revelation 13:7 And it was granted the wild beast to war against the [end-time] Saints, finally overcoming them. The wild beast was granted power over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. Revelation 13:8 And all earth's inhabitants will worship it. Revelation 13:9 Let anyone with an ear listen! Revelation 13:10 Those who permit imprisonment will themselves be led off into captivity. Those who execute with the sword will themselves be killed with the sword. Here is where the [end-time] Saints will need to endure and keep the faith. Revelation 11:8 And the corpses of [end-time Saints] will lay on the main street of the great city [Babylon]. And all earth's inhabitants will be joyful and be merry over their deaths. They will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented earth's inhabitants. [Nazarene Saints Rendering]

At that time it will be a most dangerous matter to identify oneself with Jesus Christ. For then will be the greatest oppression to ever strike the Church of Christ, the New Israel of God. Daniel 12:1 foretold – and Jesus quoted such regarding his coming Arrival – *“And at that time – the Great Prince Michael who is standing in behalf of the sons of your people -- will Appear! And there will be a [great] oppression unlike any since the nation [of Israel] came into existence. At that time your People will be rescued – everyone who is inscribed in the Book.”* [NSR, JPS] The Nazarene draws on this apocalyptic prophecy, and when giving his own commentary on Daniel 12:1, 2 amplifies its meaning: ***“But, immediately after the days of that oppression the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her brightness; and, the asteroids of the heavens will fall as the celestial dynamics are shaken. And then will be displayed the Sign of the Son of Humankind and all of earth's tribes will beat themselves in great lamentation. ... For on earth nations will experience embarrassment in perplexity at the sound of the Seas in their agitation. Humanity will faint in fear of those things coming upon the inhabited earth.”*** [Matthew 24:29, 30; Luke 21:25, 26 NSR, RHM]

Despite the ferocity of these visions, we rejoice to announce that those Saints who experience this period of time will be snatched out of harm's way at the most critical moment. With great joy we read: *“Now [the Saints] heard a loud voice out of Heaven saying to them: ‘Ascend up here!’ And then [the Saints] went up into the Sky in the cloud as their enemies watched.”* [Revelation 11:12, 13 NSR; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Matthew 24:30, 31]

Even in the face of these prophetic threats during the war with the wild Sea Beast and the end-time Saints, we now rejoice at the coming of the Lord Jesus. Like the apocalyptic angel, we sing, *“Amen! Come Lord Jesus!”*

==== END ====

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:** The Nazarene Commentary© on the Epistle to the Hebrews has been completed. It is now available by email attachment and will in time be posted on the *Friends of the Nazarene* web page. The work is a fresh, literal 104-page rendering with a commentary in 700 footnotes. Virtually every key phrase is cross referenced and compared with other versions of the Bible. The major Greek words of interest are linked to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* and explained. Each chapter carries a theme and every paragraph a main subject heading.
- **FIRST CORINTHIANS:** Current work has begun on 1 Corinthians and is now completed through chapter 3.
- **MEMORIAL:** The date for Memorial, or the Lord's Supper, in the year 2000 is planned for 7 PM, April 18th.
- **SPRING ASSEMBLY:** A four part spring assembly of *Friends of the Nazarene* is being prepared in southern California. Besides the Memorial it will include a baptism, elders' seminar, and public lecture on Sunday. Details will follow, but any who wish to attend this Memorial week please write to: Mark Miller, 250 D South Lyon #521, Hemet, CA 92543.

FAITH PERSPECTIVES

WISDOM OF MOTHER THERESA:

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered –
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, People may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives –
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true
enemies –
succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you --
Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight--
Build anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow –

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough –
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God –
It was never between you and them anyway.

SHOULD “HEBREWS” CONTAIN THE TETRAGRAM?

The “Tetragram” means the four letters standing for the Name of God in the Hebrew Bible יהוה or transliterated into English YHWH. The Tetragram is translated Yahweh, Yehowah, or Jehovah depending on the rendering one uses. [NJB, RHM, ASV, NSR] The Jews of the 1st Century CE did not pronounce the *noma sagrada* out of fear of violating the Third Commandment, “*You shall not profane the Name of יהוה.*” [Exodus 20:7] The 1st Century Jewish historian Josephus confirms this Jewish custom in the days of Jesus and Paul. Though these Jews did not utter the Divine Name they did not remove it from their sacred Scriptures as later non-Jewish Christians did. There is strong proof that the original Jewish Greek Bible of the 3rd Century BCE, the *Septuagint*, contained the Name of God in the Hebrew form יהוה. It is likely this is so because the Greek language was not capable of converting the Hebrew characters into Greek, for the Hellenist tongue did not use these four consonants.

Thus, the Bible, whether Hebrew or Greek, used by the inspired writers of the Christian Bible, contained יהוה though it would not be pronounced. Rather ELOHIM or ADONAY were used in its place. However, would, say, Paul, when quoting from these Hebrew Scriptures write out יהוה in his quotation? There seems some evidence this may have been the case. How do we know? Consider the word “Lord” as used in English translations of Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews. In Hebrews 8:8-12 Paul quotes Jeremiah 31:31-35 –

“Behold! Days are coming,’ LORD says, ‘and I will conclude with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah a New Covenant HE8:9 unlike the covenant which I made with their forefathers in that day when I took hold of their hand and led them out of Egypt. Because they did not remain in My covenant and so I showed no concern for them,’ says LORD. HE8:10 ‘Because this is the [new] covenant which I will covenant with the House of Israel after those days,’ says LORD, ‘giving my laws into their understanding minds. And upon their hearts I will write [My laws]. Then I will be a God unto them, and they will be a people unto Me. HE8:11 They will never teach each other’s fellow-citizen, nor each other’s brother by saying: “Know the LORD.” Because they will all know Me from the smallest to the greatest. HE8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins I will never remember.” [Jeremiah 31:31-34] [Hebrews 8:8-12 Nazarene Saints Rendering]

Note the four occurrences of the word “LORD” in the *Nazarene Saints Rendering* above. [Nazarene Commentary© CD-ROM] Though virtually all translations add the article “the” before the word “Lord” the Greek lacks the article in the first three examples. Thus, it reads literally as presented above. The lack of the article argues that the original of *Hebrews* would have contained the Hebrew name of God -- יהוה . The fourth “Lord” above reads in Greek GNOTHI TON KYRION, or “Know the LORD.” This is a rare exception where the article appears before “Lord” in Old Testament quotations by Paul. The Hebrew Text of Jeremiah 31:34 has יהוה thus reading, “*Know Yehowah.*” This seems to indicate that Paul has deliberately omitted the article “the” before many occurrences of the Greek KYRIOS [Lord]. The only way this quotation reads with any proper sense is to assume יהוה may have been in the original copy of *Hebrews*.

The same thing happens when comparing quotations Jesus made of the Hebrew Bible. For example, at Matthew 22:44 the Nazarene quotes Psalm 110:1. This reads according to the Hebrew Text, “*Yehowah [יהוה] says to my Lord ...*” In the Greek of *Matthew* this reads “EIPEN KYRIOS TO KYRIO MOU” – or literally, “Said Lord to the lord of me.” Most translators add the article “the” and so render the phrase, “[*The*] Lord said to my lord.” This absence of the article before the first “Lord” suggests the original contained יהוה here.

In view of the above, there seems good reasons to render some cases of KYRIOS without the article as יהוה in quotations and leave it to the reader to either pronounce YEHOWAH or LORD as so moved. [For more information read the article *What Was Jesus’ Preferred Designation for God?*]

===== END =====

PRIESTS IN “THE MORE PERFECT TENT”

A shadow is that shade cast by an object illuminated by some light. By seeing only the shadow it is possible to come to some understanding of what the real object looks like, and possibly identify it. Paul wrote to the Corinthian congregation about some of the limitations upon the early church: “*It’s like this: When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child does. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God knows me now.*” [1 Corinthians 13:11, 12 The Living Translation]

In a similar manner Paul writes to the Colossians regarding “shadows” and realities: “*For these rules were only shadows of the real thing, Christ himself.*” [Colossians 2:17 The Living Translation] It seems Paul has in mind certain

features of the Law of Moses that served as prophetic shadows of realities that would occur in the future.

In the entire Bible, there is no book that deals in more detail concerning these “shadows” than Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed, in Hebrews 10:1 Paul writes: *“For the Law is a shadow of good things in the future, but not the exact image of those things.”* [Nazarene Saints Rendering (NSR), Nazarene Commentary©] Other versions render this: KJV: for the law having a shadow of good things to come; GDS: the law foreshadowed the blessings that were to come; NOR: benefits in store; PME: the law possessed only a dim outline of the benefits Christ would bring; TCN: the law, though able to foreshadow the better system which as coming.

Paul uses another word to indicate such prophetic “shadows.” He calls these “types” and “anti-types.” Hebrews 8:4, 5 lays the ground work for such a teaching on tabernacle shadows: *“[These Jewish priests] who worship [God] are an example and a shadow of the heavenly things. It is just as Moses -- when he was about to finish the Tent -- was cautioned by God, **“See to it you do everything according to the type shown you in the mountain.”*** [Exodus 25:40] The Greek word here for “type” is TYPON.

Other versions render this: KJV: pattern; RHM: model; ABUV: example; BAS: design. The Greek is TYPON [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5179] is from a root to stamp as in cast a die from which “typewriter” is based. In prophetic matters a “type” is a pattern, outline, or shadow prefiguring something in general representation. Paul here quotes Exodus 25:40 as it is in the Jewish Greek LXX. The Hebrew Text has TABNIYTH [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #8403] which is literally “structure” but implies model, resemblance, figure, form, likeness, pattern, similitude. [Compare also Exodus 26:30] Numbers 8:4 has it as a “vision.” Stephen also quotes this in Acts 7:44 using TYPON. This is most interesting because Saul of Tarsus was present and thus heard this application.

Paul does this again at Hebrews 9:23, 24: *“Therefore, it was indeed a necessity the diagrams of the things in the heavens be cleansed. However, the heavenly things with sacrifices better than [those fleshly offerings]. For Christ did not enter holy places of human construction – which are anti-types of true realities – but rather into the very heavens, now to appear before the person of The God in our behalf.”* [NSR, Nazarene Commentary©] Here Paul uses “diagram” and “anti-types.”

The general context of these shadows, diagrams, types, and anti-types deal with a High Priest, a Tabernacle of Worship, and sacrifices. The bulk of Paul’s main thoughts are found in Hebrews chapters 9 and 10. Some call these “Tabernacle Shadows.” Let us examine these in brief just to get an overall view of these “hard” matters. [Hebrews 5:11]

An Ageless and Ever-living High Priest

Paul first writes about a new and better High Priest:

HE8:1 Now let us summarize what we have been saying: We [Hebrew Christians] have a High Priest, who ***sat down on the right hand of*** [Psalm 110:1] the Throne of the Magnificent in the heavens. **HE8:2** [He is] a priestly officiant to the people in the Holy Places of the True Tent which the LORD pitched and not any human. **HE8:3** For every high priest is ordained to approach [God] with a presentation of gift-offerings and sacrifices. So it was also necessary for [our High Priest] to have something to offer to [God]. **HE8:4** Now, if [Jesus] were still on earth he would not be a priest because there are already those [Jewish priests] who approach [God] with gift-offerings according to the Law. **HE8:5** [These Jewish priests] who worship [God] are an example and a shadow of the heavenly things. It is just as Moses -- when he was about to finish the Tent -- was cautioned by God, ***“See to it you do everything according to the type shown you in the mountain.”*** [Exodus 25:40] **HE8:6** However, now [Jesus] has acquired a much different priestly officiate in behalf of the people, as he is a mediator of a much better covenant, which is also lawfully based on superior promises. [NSR]

Paul writes, *“We have a High Priest, who ‘sat down on the right hand of The God in Heaven.’* Paul alludes again to Psalm 110:1. Compare the other occurrences at Hebrews 1:3, 13; 10:12, 13. This ‘sitting down at God’s right hand’ occurred upon Christ’s ascension to heaven. [1 Corinthians 15:25; see notes on Ephesians 1:20 in Nazarene Commentary ©2000 CD-ROM; Revelation 3:21] As Daniel 7:13 describes our Lord ascending to heaven to take up his own throne in association with *“the Throne of the Magnificent.”*

Thus, Paul declares that the glorified Lord became *“a priestly officiant to the People.”* That is, a heavenly minister [KJV], or administrator [BER] to God’s People. The Greek is LEITOURGOS [Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #3011] and means literally “a public servant (or, worker)” in matters related to temple worship. This priestly service was to take place *“in the Holy Places of the True Tent.”* Or, “real Tabernacle.” Paul hints then that the Tabernacle was a type of a heavenly sanctuary.

The word “tent” is to occur 10 times. [See notes on Hebrews 9:2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 21; 13:10.] In Hebrews 9:11 this is called the *“greater and more perfect tent.”* The reference is to the Tabernacle of Moses. In Leviticus 1:1 it is called “tent of meeting” where Israel assembled unto their God. It will be most beneficial to read Exodus chapters 25-27. Paul will go on to discuss these matters in detail in chapter 9. But, this tent or tabernacle here is one of a celestial kind as it was put up by God Himself. Paul writes, *“... which the Lord [YHWH] pitched and not any human.”* [Compare similar language on another subject at 2 Corinthians 5:1, 2.]

Paul now states that every Jewish priest is ordained to approach God with presentations of sin-offerings. [Hebrews 5:1] Compare Numbers chapter 18 for a description of these offerings.

In order for Christ to follow the shadow *“it was also necessary for [our High Priest] to have something to offer to [God].”* What this offering is Paul will go on to explain in chapter 9, though the idea was already introduced in Hebrews 1:3: *“[The Son] is the very reflection of His glory and the very imprint of His substance. [The Son] upholds the Universe by his powerful word. After [the Son] made a cleansing of the sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in exalted places.”* [NSR]

That this priestly service with its Tabernacle were shadows Paul so states when he says they were an *“example and a shadow of the heavenly things.”* Paul will go on to develop this idea in Hebrews 9:9, 24. He uses this same thought in Colossians 2:17, *“These are but a shadow of future things, the reality of the Messiah.”* [Compare notes on Hebrews 10:1.] Judging from these remarks the tent and priestly service are examples and shadows of “heavenly things” involving the services of the great High Priest Christ.

In contrast to the services of the Jewish high priest on Atonement Day, Jesus *“has acquired a much different priestly officiate in behalf of the people as he is a mediator of a much better covenant lawfully based on superior promises.”* [Hebrews 2:24 NSR; 1 Timothy 2:4] Why it can be called a “better covenant” is to be explained in Hebrews 7:22 and Hebrews 9:15. Paul has already discussed God’s oath and a better promise given in Psalm 110:4. [Compare notes on Hebrews 6:13-20 and Hebrews 7:18-25.] The “better promises” may also include the heavenly glory of the children of God. [See notes on Romans 8:17 in NAZARENE COMMENTARY©.] But what was this sin-offering and where was it presented?

A Perfect Sacrifice

Paul now goes on to draw a parallel between those animal sacrifices offered up by the Aaronic high priest on the Day of Atonement. He writes regarding Christ:

HE9:12 he entered -- not with the blood of goats and young bulls, but rather with his own blood -- only once into [the Tabernacle’s] holy rooms, having found an ageless ransom.
HE9:13 For, if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, upon those sharing in the communion sanctifies cleanses regarding the flesh, **HE9:14** rather how much more [will] the blood of the Christ -- who through an ageless pneuma approached The God with himself [as an] unblemished [offering] -- cleanse our consciences from dead works leading to sacred worship of a Living God?

Messiah’s blood was to be “poured out” [Isaiah 53:12; Hebrews 9:22] just as the blood of the ancient animal sacrifices. [Hebrews 13:11-13] Since Paul writes that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom” it seems fair to conclude that here in Hebrews 9:12 he means the value or purchasing power of his blood. In similar fashion the Jewish high priest only took a token of the blood of bulls and goats

into the Tabernacle to sprinkle it in the Most Holy. Note how Jesus omits “blood” in Luke 24:38.

Paul makes it clear that Christ only had to do this once. He also makes clear that Christ entered these anti-typical “holy rooms” -- indicating both compartments of the Tabernacle -- foreshadowed a heavenly arrangement involving Christ as both the High Priest and the Sin-Offering. This is described as “an ageless ransom.” [The Greek for “ransom” here is LYTROSIN, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3085. For details research LYTRO or 3085. Compare notes on Hebrews 10:17 and Romans 11:27. (Isaiah 45:17; Daniel 9:24)]

Concerning this sin-offering Paul writes, “*Sanctifies regarding a fleshly cleansing.*” That is the sanctity of those who serve as priests. The Williams translation renders this, “*make them holy so as to bring about ceremonial purity.*” [Numbers 19:17, 19] This offering was the purchasing power of “the blood of the Christ” by an everlasting, self-sacrificing disposition or attitude. [Philippians 2:5-7]

Thus, Christ, having entered the heavenly first anti-typical room of the celestial Tabernacle “*Approached The God with himself [as an] unblemished [offering].*” And by such an offering to God within the heavenly Most Holy, the priestly Christ “*cleansed our consciences from dead works.*” [Hebrews 10:2; 1 John 1:7] The conscience is one of the key elements to that forgiveness which results from the unblemished sacrificial offering of Christ. Evidently, the animal sacrifices did not satisfy the Hebrew conscience as to perfect forgiveness to the extent of clearing the conscience completely.

This paves the way for “a royal priesthood” to render “sacred worship of a Living God.” With this Peter also agreed, for he wrote: “*You are a holy priesthood – a royal priesthood, a holy nation – to offer up spiritual sacrifices.*” [1 Peter 2:5, 9; Hebrews 3:12; 9:14; 10:31; 12:22] Paul is to write more about these offerings in Hebrews 13:10, 15, 16 where he sees the Church serving, not in the celestial Tabernacle, but in the earthly Courtyard where the Altar and Water Basin were located. [Compare Hebrews 10:20; Revelation 11:2] So, what is this Tabernacle? Where is it located and who serves there?

A Celestial Tabernacle

Paul now continues to explain what the Mosaic Tabernacle shadowed or typified:

HE9:23 Therefore, it was indeed a necessity the diagrams of the things in the heavens be cleansed. However, the heavenly things with sacrifices better than [those fleshly offerings]. **HE9:24** For Christ did not enter holy places of human construction – which are anti-types of true realities – but rather into the very heavens, now to appear before the person of The God in our behalf. **HE9:25** And not that he should offered up himself many times, just as the high priest enters the holy rooms annually with other blood. **HE9:26** Otherwise it would be necessary for [Christ] to suffer [death] many times from the beginning of humanity. But now in contrast, [Christ] has become visible at the consummation of the period by abolishing the Sin through his own sacrifice. **HE9:27** Also,

accordingly, it is determined that humans die once, but after this [death] a judgment. **HE9:28** And just so, also, the Christ – having sacrificed himself once to bear the sins of many – will become visible a second time [apart from sin] to those earnestly awaiting for him unto salvation.

The Mosaic Tabernacle with its Courtyard of worship was a diagram, or a parable, type, shadow, of heavenly and spiritual matters pertaining to worship in the New Covenant and future beneficiaries in “the inhabited earth to come.” [Hebrews 2:5] These heavenly things have to be prepared, indeed, cleansed by sacrifices of much greater value than those animals slaughtered on the Jewish Day of Atonement.

The ancient courtyard, where Levitical priests functioned for many centuries, was a type of a place or arrangement where what Peter called the “royal priesthood” might function. In that ancient courtyard there were two means of “cleansing” – the blood from the Altar of sacrifice and the water basin where both the priests and the offerings were bathed.

Paul has previously mentioned the blood of young bulls and goats. Thus, he means these [plural] types which pre-figured the one Sacrifice of Christ. Though Messiah’s sacrifice is once of human blood shed on the Tree it has a plural value affecting, first, the Church, and then after, humankind in general. Note the “heavenly things” required their own “cleansing.” Not only earth, but also “heaven” needed a reconciliation or re-gathering as Ephesians 1:10 and Colossians 1:16 show. *“Christ did not enter holy places of human construction [like Moses’ tabernacle] ... which are anti-types of true realities but into the very Heavens themselves.”* The Greek is plural, thus “holy places” – meaning the first and second compartment. Jesus never entered these “during the days of his flesh,” as he was not a Jewish priest. [Hebrews 7:13; 8:2] This would seem to suggest that the entire Tabernacle with both of its rooms or compartments were types of heavenly realities.

On the original Day of Atonement the high priest Aaron first cleansed himself at the water basin in the courtyard. He then took the blood from the altar in this same courtyard and approached the Tabernacle proper. He entered the first compartment with its room covered by golden-threaded cherubim illuminated by seven candles. He approached the second curtain and with incense from the smoking altar preparing his way for entry into the Most Holy. Once inside that Most Holy room illuminated by the Shekiniah Light, he sprinkled the blood that he had brought from the courtyard.

Even so, Christ *“Now appeared before the person of The God in our behalf.”* The phrase “person of” is literally “to the face of the.” There is an echo of Daniel 7:13, 14 here that foretold the heavenly ascension of someone human-like: *“I continued to observe in my night visions, and, look! with the clouds of the Sky someone like a Son of Humankind was arriving. He was brought to the Ancient of Days. The angels brought him into the Presence of the One. And to this Son of*

Humankind there were given government and dignity and a realm, so that peoples, nations and languages should all serve him. His government is an everlasting government that will never pass away, and his realm one that will never be brought to ruin." [Compare the heavenly scene upon Christ's ascension in Revelation chapters 4 and 5.]

Paul argues that it was necessary for Christ to only do this once. Only once would he enter this Celestial Tabernacle to offer up a Sin-offering. Thus, Jesus Christ "*became visible at the consummation of the period,*" meaning that SYNTELEIA back there at the end of the last days of the Jewish Temple Age. [Matthew 24:3; Daniel 9:26, 27; Luke 21:20-24] This first visible appearance "*abolished [Adamic] sin through his own sacrifice.*" [Isaiah 53:12; Daniel 9:24; Romans 5:12-14] Though "*it was determined that humans die once*" because of this Adamic sin, Christ's one offering makes it possible for a resurrection unto judgment. [1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Acts 17:31; Matthew 12:36, 37, 41, 42; Romans 2:15, 16; Revelation 20:11-13]

Just so, Jesus "*sacrificed himself once to bear the sins of many.*" The wording in Greek is POLLON [many] and not "all" [PANTA]. The Nazarene himself taught that his ransom would benefit "many" and not result in "universal salvation." [Compare Matthew 20:28, POLLON]

Christ will become "*visible a second time*" Paul writes, contrasting the first appearance with the second. The first was with a "sin-offering" and the second without such. The Greek here for "visible" is OPHTHESETAI [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance # 3700 which means "to gaze with eyes wide-open at something remarkable"]. The *parousia*, or Return of Christ, will be visible and not invisible. Daniel 12:1 foretold this "appearing" [JPS *Tanakh*] of Messiah.

Jesus the Nazarene had taught the same thing, but also included the response of those not "*earnestly awaiting for him unto salvation.*" Jesus foretold: "*The sign of the Son of Humankind will become visible in the Sky, and then all earth's tribes will beat themselves in great lamentation. They will see the Son of Humankind arriving upon the clouds of the Sky with glorious power.*" [Matthew 24:30, 31; Titus 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8; 1 John 2:28; 3:2]

The glorified Lord comes now to gather to himself the true members of what Peter had called a "royal priesthood." These he raises or raptures from their previous service in that earthly courtyard, now to begin to officiate as heavenly priests! [Revelation 11:2, 12, 13; 20:4]

Heavenly Worship-Services to Benefit Humankind

Paul now points the way to other priests who would one day serve in association with the High Priest Christ. He writes:

HE10:19 Therefore, brothers -- possessing a boldness regarding the Way into the Holy Places by the blood of Jesus -- **HE10:20** which in our behalf he originated [in] a *'living and fleshly-slaughtered'* [Exodus 29:11] manner, by means of the *'curtain'* [that is, his flesh] --- **HE10:21** a great *'Priest over the House of The God'* [Zechariah 6:11-13] -- **HE10:22** may we continue to approach [The God] with a true heart in complete conviction -- our hearts having been *'sprinkled'* [Exodus 24:6] from a wicked conscience and our body *'bathed in clean water.'* [Exodus 30:18, 19] **HE10:23** May we continue holding firmly the confession of the Hope without faltering, for the One who promised is completely trustworthy. [NSR]

Paul had already mentioned this "Way into the Holy Places." That is, some future, celestial entrance into the two holy compartments of a "greater and more perfect tent." The "way" had never been revealed while the Mosaic Tabernacle functioned. [Hebrews 9:8] But, now he points the way -- and boldly so -- for those with the "heavenly calling" [Hebrews 3:1] to one day attain a position of priestly service into that "more perfect tent." Those who "possessed such boldness regarding the Way into the Holy Places" based such on their confidence in the "blood of Jesus."

Some would emphasize only the entrance into the Most Holy, however the Jewish chief priest must enter both the first compartment -- the Holy Place -- and then after into the Most Holy. That others, associate priests -- like the Levitical Priesthood -- would also enter the second compartment was never revealed to those who served in the original Tabernacle. [Hebrews 9:8] Now it is revealed that the Mosaic tabernacle was a type of celestial or heavenly matters -- a "more perfect Tent" with two holy compartments. Perhaps the fact that the exterior objects of worship are made of copper and the inner objects gold proves a separation between the two. There is something to follow which supports this view.

This entrance of way into these Holy Places by a priestly class, other than just the High Priest Jesus Christ, was *"inaugurated [through the blood of Christ] in a living and freshly-slaughtered [manner] by means of the curtain [that is, the flesh of Jesus Christ]."* The phrase "freshly-slaughtered" is from the Greek PROSPHATON [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance # 4372], that is something "previously (recently) slain (fresh)."] The language alludes to a newly slaughtered lamb and agrees with the vision in Revelation 5:6.

This hope of entering the celestial Tabernacle -- where Jesus Christ presently serves as High Priest -- is the result of his fleshly sacrifice. Paul compares this "prepared ... body" [Hebrews 10:5] to the curtain which opened into the Most Holy in the Mosaic Tabernacle. The Greek is SARCOS [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance # 4561, flesh]. Paul has already alluded to this action on the part of Christ at Hebrews 6:20. [On "flesh" compare John 6:51, 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 2:14, Hebrews 5:7, 1 Peter 3:18, 1 Peter 4:1, 1 John 4:2, 2 John 7.]

By means of this "great Priest over the House of The God" and his sin-offering, the enter body of the "royal priesthood" *"may continue to approach The God."*

Paul sees the Church on earth as serving within the anti-typical Courtyard. He writes, *“Let us approach with a true heart in complete conviction. Our hearts having been sprinkled from a wicked conscience”* – that is by that Christine Blood from the courtyard Altar. [Hebrews 10:22 NSR; Exodus 24:6; Hebrews 9:13, 19, 21; 1 Peter 1:2] Deep conviction in the blood of Christ as a cleansing power results in a completely clear conscience. [Hebrews 13:10, 15, 16]

Additionally, the Saints have been *“bathed in clean water”* from that anti-typical copper water Basin in the spiritual Courtyard. [Hebrews 10:22 NSR; Revelation 11:2] Paul alludes to the copper water basin in the Tabernacle courtyard where the priests cleansed themselves. He may draw on Exodus 30:18, 19.

These phrases demonstrate that the Saints now serve in the anti-typical courtyard where the sacrificial altar and water basin may be found. [Compare the notes on Revelation 11:2 in Nazarene Commentary©.] Upon their resurrection or rapture they will begin to serve as priests in the anti-typical holy compartments of a spiritual Tabernacle. [Revelation 20:4] Note in Revelation the numerous allusions to the Tabernacle. There are over 100 words drawn from the priestly services in the Tabernacle in the *Apocalypse*. [See *Nazarene Apocalypse*©]

With such a bold hope which “enters within the Curtain” [Hebrews 6:19, 20] Paul exhorts: *“Continue holding firmly the confession of the Hope without faltering, for the One who promised is completely trustworthy.”* [Hebrews 10:23 NSR; 3:6; 4:1; 6:12, 15, 17, 19; 11:9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 33, 39; 12:26]

Paul does not here in Hebrews go into that future blessing of such a heavenly priesthood serving within this *“better and more perfect Tent.”* He does allude to these blessed promises benefiting humankind at Hebrews 11:39, 40. It is left to the beloved Apostle John to describe the descent of a glorious City like a golden cube coming to rest on its beautiful foundation here on earth. From inside this City -- and that new “Temple” embodied in God Himself and His Son -- Jesus the Lamb will flow a living-giving River.

Ezekiel the prophet, in the context of giving the precise measurements of some future Temple of Yehowah, gave this inspired description:

¹Then the man brought me back to the entrance of the Temple. There I saw a stream flowing eastward from beneath the Temple threshold. This stream then passed to the right of the altar on its south side. ²The man brought me outside the wall through the north gateway and led me around to the eastern entrance. There I could see the stream flowing out through the south side of the east gateway. ... ⁷Suddenly, to my surprise, many trees were now growing on both sides of the river! [Ezekiel 47:1-2, 7; *The Living Translation*]

John echoes these words when he describes what comes from this Place:

¹And the angel showed me a pure river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ²coursing down the center of the main street. On

each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. [Revelation 22:1, 2 TLT]

This healing River of Life flows from the Temple embodied in God Almighty and the Lamb. [Revelation 21:22; 22:1] Our imagination is simply carried away when we try to envision the global results of these glorious blessings that come from the Heavenly Temple of God! [Isaiah 65:17-24] Surely all humankind will “learn righteousness”! [Isaiah 26:9] Surely, the “knowledge of God” will fill the globe like a great deluge! [Isaiah 11:9]

How blessed we are to now behold with our spiritual comprehension the “realities of Christ” as an ever-enduring High Priest. [Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:17] How blessed we are to now serve in the “courtyard” of that “more perfect Tent”! [Hebrews 10:19; Revelation 11:2] We bathe our bodies in the cleansing Waters from the Basin. Our consciences experience the Sprinkling of that Christine Blood. We approach “our Altar” with our sacrifices of lips spreading the glorious Evangel. To this Altar we bring our possessions as gifts of charity to the Saints! [Hebrews 10:19, 34; 13:10, 15, 16] O, how we long to be robed in white, crowned in gold, bowing before the Throne, ready to serve as priests in that “more perfect Tent.” [Revelation 1:6; 5:9, 10]

==== END ====

ANNUAL REPORT

MARK MILLER, Senior Editor of *Friends of the Nazarene* online magazine and Nazarene Saints Publishing

1999 was the 61st year of my life, 49 of those years as a dedicated Christian. I have now been associated with the *Friends of the Nazarene* for three years. I have the blessing of presently serving as the Senior Editor for the *Friend's* web site and the monthly online magazine.

1999 was a milestone year in which many different things seemed to all come together with rich blessings. The greatest of these was one of a personal kind: great healing took place between myself and my oldest daughter, April. We have drawn closer and closer by means of the Internet. I was happy to visit her and two of my grandsons on the island of Maui in December after five years of absence.

1999 was a year of great relief as I finally gained my disability status with the Social Security office and new medical coverage. This has not only relieved me, but also many Friends who came to my aid throughout the past two years. Words cannot express my gratitude to those known and unknown who demonstrated such kind charity in my behalf. God bless each one.

1999 saw many newly interested persons who visited the Friends of the Nazarene web page and later became close personal friends.

1999 was a bumper crop year resulting in a re-designed web page and the addition of a number of new publications and commentaries. This year saw the beginning of Nazarene Commentary©, soon to become a CD-ROM library for Biblical studies. The new additions included fresh new translations with footnote commentaries on portions of Daniel, Matthew, John chapter 1, Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, Second Peter, First John, Second John, Third John, and Jude. A Bible study lesson on Galatians, Philippians, and Colossians was prepared for those who wish to study the Bible without commentary.

God willing [*and the creek don't rise*] we hope to see work carried to a finish on First Corinthians, Colossians, and First Peter. It is hoped that some time during the year 2,000 the Nazarene Commentary© CD-ROM will be completed and made available to serious students of the Bible. It is also our goal during 2,000 to hard-publish *Nazarene Principles*. We have good reasons in believing that many articles will also be published in Spanish and German. We are presently working on some witnessing tracts [*Who Will Lead Mankind in the 3rd Millennium? Nazarene Principles, Do not Seal the Book, Follow the Lamb, and a booklet [Did Jesus Predict the End of the World?]*].

I can report that Ralph Slaney and family will be returning to England. They will then be in better circumstances to share more on the Internet. Also, the Padilla family is moving to southern California and will be of great help. I must thank Andy Weeks who continues to assist with his webmaster services. Our prayers ascending to the Father by means of the Name of Jesus Christ that the year 2000 will be most fruitful.

==== END ====

“IS CHRIST DIVIDED?” ***The Challenge of Church Unity in the 3rd Millenium***

Two thousand years after the birth of Jesus Christ there are an estimated 20,000 identifiable “sects” in what has been called Christendom. This is probably greatly under estimated as there are hundreds, if not thousands, of small, individual, disconnected community churches centered around a single pastor. Churches with names like “Church of the Holy Ghost Fire Baptism” or “Christian Love and Freedom Church of the Apostles.” These are often identified as “non-

denominational” as if to give the impression that they are disassociated from the “denominational.”

About thirty years after Jesus Christ the Nazarene revealed himself to Paul, that most zealous missionary asked an urban seaside church of Christians, “*Is the Christ divided?*” It seems likely that this former Jewish rabbi, who claimed to have had an appearance of Christ himself, knew that Jesus foretold the fermentation of the very Church that he had established. The man from Galilee had taught by two parables that predicted this very thing. Consider two of these illustrations:

"The Realm of the Kingdom can be compared to leaven that a woman kneaded into three parts of flour until the whole was leavened. ... The Son of Humankind is the Sower of good seed. The field is the whole social order of humankind. The Children of the Realm are the good seed and the Children of the Evil One [the Devil] are the weeds. ... So then, at the consummation of the Age the weeds will be gathered and burned in fire. The Son of Humankind will send out his angels and they will gather out of his Realm any person who is scandalous or lawless, and they will hurl them into the furnace of fire." [Matthew 13:33-42 NSR]

Thus, Paul would have known that the very Church [the Realm of the Kingdom] that Jesus founded would undergo a thorough fermentation with good seed growing among bad seed. This could only result in growing disharmony and disunity leading up to these 20,000-plus varied sects in Christ’s Kingdom [Christendom] as we enter the Third Millennium of Christ’s reign. Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 11:17-19 give a clear indication that he understood why sects or schisms were present in this seaside church:

“However, though I give you these injunctions I cannot praise you because when you meet in assembly it is not for the best, but for the worse. The main reason for this is because when you do gather in an ecclesia I understand schisms are in your midst. I partly believe this. It is a necessity that there be heretical opinions in your midst so that the those persons approved will become apparent in your midst.” [NSR]

These words almost echo the Nazarene’s parable of the wheat and the weeds, and the promise that the approved within Christ’s Realm will become manifest at the Harvest judgment upon the Return of Jesus the Nazarene. Paul himself writes about this *parousia*-judgment in two letters to the church in Corinth:

“Therefore, before the appointed time, do not become judgmental of others, until the Lord arrives. Then he will bring out into the Light the hidden things of darkness. He will make manifest the counsels of all hearts. Then every person will receive [appropriate] praise from The God. ... Because everyone of us will appear before the judgment-step of the Christ, so that we might all receive our proper payment for the things done regarding the body, whether these are good or vile things.” [1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10 NSR]

Given the above we ask, How did Paul respond to these problems of disunity within the Church of Corinth? What did he exhort or encourage? How, or in what areas of church life, did Paul write the Corinthians about achieving a degree of congregational unity and peace?

Speak and Think the Same Thing

Following his introduction, Paul goes right to the heart of the problem in the Corinthian congregation:

1Co1:10 I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. **1Co1:11** For it has been reported to me by Chlo'e's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. **1Co1:12** What I mean is that each one of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apol'los," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." **1Co1:13** Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? **1Co1:14** I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius; **1Co1:15** lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. **1Co1:16** (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.) **1Co1:17** For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. [Revised Standard Version]

Paul boldly speaks his appeal in the powerful name of Jesus Christ, that is, in the authority Paul received from the Lord Jesus to declare the Gospel to the non-Jews. He first tells the Corinthians that they should "*all ... agree.*" [RSV] Actually, the Greek is LEGETE [= say, or, speak] and so is rendered variously: KJV: all speak the same thing; TCN: to agree in what you profess; GDS: to agree in what you say. That is, the various members of the church should all speak the same thing. There cannot be a variety of different views so that if one spoke to one church member one would hear something different than another member. Paul writes similarly at 2 Corinthians 13:11 and Philippians 2:2 where he encourages thinking in agreement with the same mind on matters.

Paul then says there should be "*no dissensions among you.*" They should speak the same thing and be without any dissension. The Greek is **SCHISMATA** [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance # 4978, a split], so he means there should be no schisms. Other translators render this cliques, parties, factions. The context would mean no schism or split in what church members speak about those subjects to be discussed in this letter.

Paul then emphasizes this by adding, "*United in the same mind.*" [RSV] Others render this as: KJV: perfectly joined together in the same mind; BEC: understanding; TCN: one mind. The Greek is NOI [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance # 3563, intellect, thought]. A similar phrase appears at Philippians 2:2. It strongly suggests that not only must they speak the same, but they should also have the same mental inclination regarding important church matters. Thus, "*every wind of teaching*" should not be blowing through the congregation as if everyone was free to believe contradictory things. [Ephesians 4:14, 15]

Paul further adds they should all have "*the same judgment.*" Or as others render this phrase, they should all have the same opinion or viewpoint. The Greek is GNOME [Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1106, cognition, opinion, counsel].

Church members should all have the same opinion or viewpoint rather than holding to many different beliefs. If one asked a brother what the church believed it would be the same answer a sister would give. One should not find within the ecclesia a variety of opinions.

We will discover that Paul has received information, possibly by letter as well as eye-witness testimony, regarding the subjects at issue. It turns out there are about fifteen of these matters. It seems possible that these issues which caused quarreling were centered around certain personalities.

DIVISION CAUSED BY PERSONALITY CULTS

Before addressing those questions and subjects of debate in the Corinthian church, Paul pinpoints one of the key problems: personality cults. He writes, *“There is quarreling among you.”* These acts of strife, divisions, contentions, strifes, party feelings, or cliques center around certain personalities. There are likely differing opinions on the subjects Paul is to go on to discuss. Such ERIDES [ERIS], or strife, is a work of the flesh. [Galatians 5:20]

Paul lists four major personality cults: Paul, Peter [Cephas], Apollos, and Christ. It seems likely the latter – “of Christ” – are a self-righteous group, though claiming Christ, are really also part of the schisms. These different opinions claim a particular authority. Peter may have never visited Corinth but it is likely that some of those with a strong Jewish bent of mind leaned toward him. [Acts 15:1, 2] Apollos is described in the Corinthian context in Acts 18. He was “mighty in Scripture” though a neophyte Christian, and therefore likely not an elder yet. [1 Timothy 3:1ff]

It is almost a given that people tend to prefer one personality over another. The liberal prefer a liberal person. The moderates a moderate person. The conservatives a conservative person. Some prefer a gifted speaker. Paul is later to mention what the Corinthians said about him: *“His epistles are weighty but his presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.”* It may be some preferred Apollos, the polished, educated speaker from Alexandria, Egypt.

Though some men are shrewd enough to cultivate these very differences – it is called “politics” – others may deliberately avoid causing such. So, Paul is to relate later that he encouraged Apollos to visit the Corinthians but he declined. It may well be that the new Christian realized he was the cause of some divisiveness and wanted to avoid it for a time.

Some personalities naturally clash when they are similarly gifted or experienced. Church members may polarize around one or the other. This causes wider rifts in the congregation. How all of this can be healed or avoided Paul is to go on to explain when he discusses love.

Christ is Divided!

Paul now asks or states, “*Is Christ divided?*” Some scholars have this as a question while others as a statement: “*Christ is divided.*” Literally, the phrase is “has been parted the Christ” and may be rendered either way. Paul does not mean Jesus himself, but the Church – the Christ, or, the Anointed. Above we have explained why Paul said this was a “necessity” in 1 Corinthians 11:17-19.

Though Jesus the Nazarene established his own congregation, various schisms began almost immediately after his absence. One may read allusions to these in the record of Acts [Acts 15:1, 2] as well as in various epistles of the inspired disciples. Paul, Peter, John, and Jude all refer to these early heresies or schisms. [Read First Timothy and Titus, or see notes on such in Nazarene Commentary© CD-ROM] Primarily these centered around two factions: First, Jewish teachers who wished to preserve the Law and Moses as a focus in the Christian Church. Secondly, the Greek philosophies include Plato, the Epicureans, Stoics, and Gnostics. From these also emerged a powerful influence which strived to combine Jewish, Christian, and Greek dogma into one uniform religious empire. The later did become the dominate influence leading to the formation of the Universal [or, Catholic] Church.

This Universal Church first split into Eastern and Western and this schism still exists today in the Eastern Orthodox Church and Roman Catholic Church. Throughout the ages smaller groups came and went and during the Inquisition went “underground” for centuries. The two major factions of the Realm of Christ persecuted any new and different movements. The Protestant Reformation plunged the world into centuries of religious wars and conflicts. More groups came and went, some enduring into our own times. The Puritans and Brethren escaped to America to establish their own empires.

After Napoleon captured and imprisoned the Pope at the beginning of the 19th Century there was an explosion of new and flourishing sects, including the Mormons, the Adventists, the Christian Scientists, neo-Pentecostal, Unitarians, Campbellites, Russelites, Rutherfordites, and others too numerous to mention. Following the death of President Kennedy and the Hippie Movement, a new movement began called the “Jesus Movement.” This has resulted in hundreds if not thousands of new church groups. Some have world-wide followings while others never grew beyond their own neighborhood.

These developing new groups have fought for the airways and printing media to spread their Gospel around the world. This has all caused the current use of a new word, “Cult.” One group calling another group a “cult” because it did not share its views. Some former “Cults” – like the Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists and Worldwide Church of God – have grown more and more acceptable and mainstream. Even Jehovah’s Witnesses are often left out of lists of cults in the United States. This is due to a new development called “New Age”

which covers a wide range of apocalyptic sects which include survivalists, sects gathered around some “prophet,” or groups expecting extra-terrestrials from space-ships to deliver them.

In the year 2,000 the Internet has become a global means for unnumbered individuals and groups to develop a following. Browsing the World Wide Web one can discover any number of views which will appeal to some, but not to others. Cafeteria or Buffet Christians have developed who are like people passing a banquet of choices, picking this, rejecting that until they have created an individualized plate of religion. Today anyone, anywhere can find a movement which will satisfy them. Truly, “*Christ is divided!*”

Speak and Think the Same About What?

It seems a logical conclusion that some of the matters Paul goes on to discuss in his letter to the Corinthians touch on such things about which they should be in agreement. A brief overview of First Corinthians highlights some of these subjects that could have been causing the ungodly “divisions.”

1. WORLDLY WISDOM DIVIDES

We would expect that Christians coming out of the world of Greek culture may bring with them their former “opinions.” The real thinkers in Greek society were much familiar with Plato and Aristotle. Indeed, one not educated in these Greek philosophies could not be considered a “wise” person.

We are not surprised when Paul first tackles the Corinthian sectarianism by straightforward talk about worldly wisdom. When worldly wisdom becomes the source of Christian thinking then Christ is pushed aside. Consider Paul’s warning about such wisdom:

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart." Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. [1 Corinthians 1:18-21 Contemporary English Version]

Paul makes two things clear: a) God did not choose many wise persons; and, b) because of the Corinthian spiritual immaturity Paul decided to preach to them only one thing: Christ crucified.

For consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose

what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore, as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord." [1 Corinthians 1:26-31 Contemporary English Version]

Then the reason is given why when Paul visited Corinth he decided not to get involved in Greek philosophies, but stick to the simple theme of Christ's death.

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling; and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. [1 Corinthians 2:1-5 CEV]

This did not mean that Paul never taught anything else but the execution of Christ. The Corinthians had prove too worldly, too fleshly, too spiritually infant. He continues in 1 Corinthians 2:6, 7 and 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 to explain this:

Now to the [spiritually] mature we do speak in wisdom, but not the wisdom of this period of time, nor that [wisdom] of the leading [thinkers] of this present social order of humankind -- these have faded into the past. Rather, we speak the Wisdom of The God in holy mystery – the hidden wisdom that The God foresaw before the Ages for our own glory. ... And so, brothers, I was unable to speak to you as spiritual persons, but more like fleshly persons, like infants in Christ. I made you drink milk not eat solid food, because you were too spiritually weak. You were not strong enough then. Indeed, you are still not strong enough, because you are still fleshly. Since jealousy and strife still exist among you, are you not yet fleshly, acting like [sinful] humans? [NSR]

The Corinthians were not the only congregation of Christians where Paul warned of the danger of worldly philosophy. To the Colossians, he also writes:

Be careful that nobody spoils your faith through intellectualism or high-sounding nonsense. He may set forth some human tradition, or some theory about the nature of the universe, but not the teachings of Christ. [Colossians 2:8 New English Bible; O. M. Norlie]

Just so as it was in the early history of the Christian church, today at the beginning of the 3rd Millenium, the modern social order of humanity is filled with worldly wisdom that contradicts "the doctrine of Christ." Christian harmony and unity is maintained by avoiding what Paul calls "nonsense" and what God calls

“foolish.” Modern Saints do well to focus on Jesus the Nazarene and his simple and loving teachings. Those who think themselves wise, or who boast of worldly credentials do well to consider Paul’s exhortation in 1 Corinthians 3:18, 19:

Let no one deceive himself. If any one among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile." So let no one boast of men. [CEV]

Paul further wrote to the Corinthians: *“If any person is thinking he knows something, he does not yet know as he is obligated to know it.”* [1 Corinthians 8:2 NSR]

2. SCRIPTURAL AND APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY UNIFIES

Since the Corinthians had become sectarian and formed cliques around certain personalities, Paul also discusses this problem of personality cults. He defends the authority of the apostleship in chapters 4 and 9.

If there is one principle that both Paul and the charismatic disciple Apollos agreed on, it is one that has not faded with the centuries. Note this in 1 Corinthians 4:6, *“We want you to learn from us the principle, ‘DO NOT GO BEYOND WHAT IS WRITTEN!’ so you may not be arrogant champions of one teacher against another.”* [NSR, WEY] By sticking to the Scriptures church members will not follow men, or man-made organizations.

There has been nothing greater that has resulted in the disunity of the Church than these two things: a) disrespect or disregard for Church authority; and, b) going outside the Scriptures for ideas and opinions which cause dissension. There is another old rule that is still workable: *“Where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.”* Various speculations, based not on Scripture, but on human reasoning, have led to a variety of doctrines that can only be described as “unscriptural.”

At the beginning of the year 2,000 one complaint cries out against the Christian Church like the jeremiad of an Old Testament Prophet: *“My People have rejected My Word!”* [Jeremiah 23:36-40] It can be stated without fear of contradiction that 99.99999999% of all members of all the 20,000 sects have not studied their Bibles well enough. This includes even those supposedly famous for their Biblical knowledge as “Bible students.”

The Church may return to unity and harmony when it bases all that it does on “what is written.” *“Every wind of teaching”* will vanish when Jesus becomes the authority and his inspired disciples the commentators. Also, trusting in godly elders who have been appointed according to the Scriptural requirements will aid in maintaining unity. [Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-8] Paul counsels the

early Hebrew Christians with the words: *“Be mindful of your guides who spoke to you the Word of The God. As you behold their behavior, imitate their conviction. ... Be obedient to those guiding you and yield [to them]. For these very men remain sleepless while watching over your souls -- because they will have to render an account – so they do this with joy and not groaning, for that would cost you. [Hebrews 13:7, 17 NSR]*

Paul continues in *First Corinthians* to address other issues and opinions that have divided the Greek church.

3. UNITED ON MATTERS OF MORALS AND MARRIAGE

Judging from 1 Corinthians chapters 5 through 7 there seemed division on matters of morality within the Church. Perhaps different ones had contradictory opinions on what should be done with habitual sinners; or, the reasons for any shunning of sinning church members. Paul discusses a case of incest that has been brought to his attention. He then states the Biblical reasons to remove the wicked from the congregation:

But rather I wrote to you not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber--not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Drive out the wicked person from among you." [1 Corinthians 5:11-13 RSV]

Here Paul states six reasons for such action. He repeats this injunction in chapter 6 where he amplifies some of these reasons:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. [1 Corinthians 6:9, 10 RSV]

Thus, the Corinthians would be united in those matters that would require shunning habitual sinners who refuse to repent, and therefore, endanger the “spirit” of the congregation. But, what about other matters of a more personal nature between members of the Christian congregation? Say, financial matters, or matters of business? Paul urges the Corinthians not to go to worldly courts with their problems. He counsels they work these out before those men appointed to judge within the congregation. [1 Corinthians 6:1-8] So, even in private business matters they could be in unity and of the same opinion. This, of course, would require they put their trust in the decisions of the elders judging the matter.

Paul also answers a question presented by the Corinthians regarding whether a person should refrain from marriage, or intimate relations between married couples. He recommends celibacy, however, he states that marriage is no sin.

Here Paul makes clear he only gives his own opinion, though he does so based on the Pneuma's pressure on him. [1 Corinthians 7:25, 40] So, opinions regarding these subjects may vary to a degree because there is "no commandment from the Lord" on these matters.

4. UNITY AND THE CONSCIENCE

The conscience is that faculty of mind that judges human action. The judges of Nuremberg declared that there was such a thing as "a universal human conscience." Paul writes that the non-Jews will be judged by their conscience. [Romans 2:15, 16] The word conscience in English means with+knowledge and this is the same meaning of the Greek word SYNEIDESIS. Paul uses the word "conscience" more often in First Corinthians than all writers of the Bible together. Most of these occur in chapters 8 and 10. [1 Corinthians 8:7, 10, 12; 10:25, 27, 28, 29] It is interesting that the associated word "knowledge" also occurs often in chapter 8. [1 Corinthians 8:1, 2, 7, 10, 11]

The conscience can be a divisive element when it is not trained properly with Biblical knowledge. Hebrews 5:14 describe the "conscience" as a sense organ: *"However, solid nourishment belongs to mature persons, those who through the use of their sensory organs have been trained like an athlete to be able to distinguish between what is good or bad."* [NSR] Particularly new Christians – as well as those who have not studied the Bible well – may tend to have a "weak" [or, overly sensitive] conscience. These may tend to label certain attitudes, speech, or conduct as "bad" when, in fact, they may not necessarily be so.

Paul deals with the example of meat purchased in a market that has previously been offered up to an idol. Though Jews and Christians were told to abstain from blood and things sacrificed to idols [Acts 15:20], Paul states, *"Everything that is sold in a meat market keep eating, making no inquiry [of the butcher] on account of your conscience."* [1 Corinthians 10:25 NWT] If a Christian was invited to a banquet by an unbeliever [1 Corinthians 10:27] he was not to ask if the meat had been offered up to an idol.

However, if the host [or, another person present] pointed out that the meat on the table had been offered to an idol, Paul recommends, in order not to offend another's conscience, that the Christian refrain from partaking of the meat. [1 Corinthians 10:27-29] Paul's directive is to always do what is for the highest good of one's neighbor. Consider 1 Corinthians 10:23, 24, 31-33:

Some of you say, "We can do whatever we want to!" But I tell you that not everything may be good or helpful. We should think about others and not about ourselves. ... When you eat or drink or do anything else, always do it to honor God. Don't cause problems for Jews or Greeks or anyone else who belongs to God's church. I always try to please others instead of myself, in the hope that many of them will be saved." [CEV]

When we honor the conscience of others, even though they are weak and overly sensitive, we work for the unity of the congregation. It is the “strong who must bear the burdens of the weak.” [Romans 15:1; read Romans chapter 14.] Paul gives his own example in these matters of conscience:

Don't cause problems for someone with a weak conscience, just because you have the right to eat anything. You know all this, and so it doesn't bother you to eat in the temple of an idol. But suppose a person with a weak conscience sees you and decides to eat food that has been offered to idols. Then what you know has destroyed someone Christ died for. When you sin by hurting a follower with a weak conscience, you sin against Christ. So if I hurt one of the LORD'S followers by what I eat, I will never eat meat as long as I live. [1 Corinthians 8:9-13 CEV]

Though meat offered to idols is not a modern problem in Western nations, it seems fair that the principles in Paul's inspired counsel can be applied to contemporary matters. For example, some Christians [such as those in the southern United States] come from a background of abstinence regarding alcoholic drinks. Others from European or Mediterranean cultures drink wine and stronger drinks on most occasions, and most meals come with such fare. Christians aware that their guests might be sensitive about drinking alcoholic beverages might lovingly choose to refrain on such occasions.

Similar decisions could be made regarding dress and grooming, entertainment, dancing, card games, manners, language, types of work, conduct with the opposite sex, and other matters. There are few people without an opinion. There are fewer people who think these opinions wrong. However, for the sake of unity among the fellowship, it is not always necessary to speak these opinions. Indeed, people who express their opinions on every subject under heaven are often shunned in polite company. Such Christians are often observed, when responding to the thought of another, with the word, “No” and then offering a differing opinion. Such ego-centric persons are never the solution to Christian unity, but rather the cause of it.

5. UNITY BY ORDERLY MEETINGS

Paul does not give his personal opinion on meetings in his epistle to the Corinthians. Rather, he gives what he calls “the Lord's commandment.” In chapters 11, 12, and 14 he gives counsel on meetings that are orderly after God's own character. He describes Him: “*For He is a God, not of disorder, but of peace. . . . Therefore, let all things take place decently and by arrangement.*” [1 Corinthians 14:33, 40 NWT]

In this regard he considers several related subjects:

- Proper observance of the Lord's Evening Meal. [1 Corinthians 10:16-22; 11:20-34] Christians should be of the "same mind" on the Memorial.
- Unity despite varied gifts and offices within the Church. [1 Corinthians 12:1-31]
- How congregational meetings ought to be conducted. [1 Corinthians 11:17-19; 14:1-32]
- The place of women in the congregation. [1 Corinthians 11:1-16; 14:33-37] On this matter Paul anticipated divisive opinions for the Jews had one custom and the Greeks another. He gives his counsel and then assures that this is "the Lord's commandment" and not just his personal opinion.

For further details on early church order see the online publication *Nazarene Community* in the Nazarene Commentary© CD-ROM or on the *Friends of the Nazarene* web page.

6. UNITY REGARDING DOCTRINE

Of course, the subject of doctrine -- and how a variety of opinions lead only to disunity -- no doubt moves Paul to discuss at least several features to one doctrine -- the resurrection. It is clear some had different opinions. The Greeks did not believe in the resurrection but rather the immortality of the soul. It comes as no surprise, then, that some Christians in Corinth had a strong opinion that "*there was no resurrection.*" Rather they may have believed Christians continued alive after death as their souls were immortal. Paul discusses this subject in detail in 1 Corinthians 15:1-57. Indeed, he calls the person who rejects the resurrection -- no doubt in favor of the soul's immortality -- a "fool." [1 Corinthians 15:36]

In his other letters Paul is consistent in his condemnation of those who teach contrary to the doctrine received under the Pneuma's guidance. To the Galatians, he writes: "*However, even if we -- or even an angel from heaven -- were to proclaim to you a gospel other than the one we proclaimed as the Gospel, let such a person become anathema! Just as we spoke, I say it once more: Who ever the person is that declares to you a gospel beyond what you received -- let such one be anathema!*" [Galatians 1:8, 9 NSR] To Timothy, Paul wrote about those who preached that the resurrection had already begun and compared their teaching to gangrene. [2 Timothy 2:17, 18]

Surely Christians should not be divided on such a subject as the resurrection? Careful and thorough study of the Bible will make clear that both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures teach on this subject. [For more details see the online publication *Where Are the Dead?* on the *Friends* web page or in Nazarene Commentary© CD-ROM.]

Love as the Cure of Disunity

No doubt with his original theme in mind – “*speak and think the same*” – Paul devotes some time to the subject of that quality which can cure disunity – LOVE. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 he writes about this subject. As you read it consider how your application of such love can lead to more harmony within the Christian community.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, ^[2] but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. [RSV]

Unified in “One Faith”!

Paul writes to the Ephesians that there is only “one faith” in the Christian Church. Indeed, the Nazarene asked the question, “**When the Son of Man arrives will he really find The Faith on earth?**” [Luke 18:8] This faith contains a wide array of doctrines and teachings. Through Bible study -- in association with a genuine Christian community – along with love and humility – an acceptable degree of unity and harmony will be maintained. Baptized Christians, both men and women, will speak the same thing in agreement, have the same mental inclination, and the same opinion on clear matters of doctrine and church order.

Note how Paul exhorted to oneness, to unity, to harmony when writing to the Ephesians:

And so, as the prisoner of the Lord, I beg you to conduct yourselves in a way worthy of that invitation by which you were called. Do this in all lowliness and meekness, persevering in tolerance for one another in loving concern. Earnestly endeavor to observe the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace. There is only one Body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling. There is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of everyone. ... These “gifts” given to humans include apostolic representatives, prophetic spokesman, missionaries of the good news, pastoral shepherds of congregations, and teachers within the Church. The purpose of these “gifts” is to readjust and perfectly equip all the Saints for the work of service to others; and, for the upbuilding and strengthening of the whole Body of Christ. And this until all

of us attain a perfect unity of faith and a heightened relationship with the Son of God. Until we all together grow into perfect maturity measured by the full stature of the Christ. So we no longer remain babies, tossed here and there by (doctrinal) waves, carried aimlessly by every wind of teaching -- by the deceptive slight of hand always engaging in methodical plans. Rather, these "gifts" aid all of us to maintain loving truth, constantly growing in Christ in every way. Christ is the Head, the one from whom the whole Body is perfectly joined and fitted together by means of every connective muscle and tissue. Thus the entire Body is furnished by an inner energy according to each member's gift, each one a part contributing to the Body's growth and maturing as it is built up in loving concern for one another. [Ephesians 4:1-5, 11-16 NSR Paraphrased]

==== THE END ====

JESUS' PREFERRED DESIGNATION FOR GOD *How did Jesus address God?*

Jesus the Nazarene used a variety of names or designations for the Almighty. A study of these proves interesting.

"Father"

Most know that Christ addressed God as "Father." In the Gospel of Matthew he uses the designation "Father" 44 times, most often as "my Father" and then also "your Father." He uses "Father" in his prayers. For example, compare one of the public petitions in Matthew's Gospel:

*"I publicly praise you, **Father**, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intellectual ones and have revealed them to babes. **26** Yes, **O Father**, because to do thus came to be the way approved by you. **27** All things have been delivered to me by **my Father**, and no one fully knows the Son but the **Father**, neither does anyone fully know the **Father** but the Son and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him. [Matthew 11:25-27 NWT]*

However, by contrast, in the Gospel of Mark Jesus uses "Father" only four times. [Mark 8:38; 11:25; 13:32; 14:36] The disciple Mark has Jesus using a rare word which is a heightened form of "Father" – that is, *Abba*. The word is something like the European *papa* and was among the first words learned by an infant. Paul uses *Abba* twice. [Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6]

In Luke's Gospel Jesus uses "Father" 17 times, the first when he was but twelve years old. [Luke 2:48] The same public petition we read in Matthew also uses

“Father” in Luke 10:21, 22. At his death Jesus used “Father” twice [Luke 23:34, 46], and after his resurrection once. [Luke 24:49]

It is well known by Bible students that the Gospel of John contains the most uses of the designation “Father” of all the Gospels. Jesus uses “Father” 120 times in the beloved apostles Gospel. In his Passover prayer with his faithful apostles, the Nazarene used “Father” five times. [John 17:1, 5, 11, 21, 24] In so doing he also calls God “Holy Father” and “Righteous Father.”

So, including all four Gospels, Jesus is discovered to use the designation “Father” 185 times. However, what other designations did our Lord use?

“The God”

It is no surprise that Jesus also uses the word “God.” In Greek this is THEOS. In Matthew’s Gospel Jesus uses “God” 32 times. It should be observed, however, that this is virtually always with the article, such as TON THEON [Matthew 4:7; 5:8], TOU THEOU [of the God; Matthew 5:34], or HO THEOS [Matthew 6:8]. This is true in all of the Gospels. Though almost all translators drop the article “the” in English versions, this is not correct or accurate. In a world filled with the worship of a pantheon of gods [1 Corinthians 8:5], it is most appropriate that it be clear which God is being referenced. “The God” is a much used designation by Jesus and his inspired disciples, thus differentiating the Absolute God of the Jews and Christians from those of the pagan world. The Arabic *Allah* is very similar to the Greek HO THEO – The God.

The other Gospels also show Jesus using HO THEOS often. Mark has Jesus using “God” 32 times, usually “the God.” Luke has Jesus using “God” about 26 times. John, 42 times. As in the other Gospels this is virtually always in the form HO THEOS, The God.

So, in all the Gospels Jesus is observed using the designation “God” [or, more correctly “The God”] 132 times. This contrasts with the 185 times he used “Father.” Judging from this study we can state that our Lord’s preferred designation for the Almighty was “Father,” with “The God” a close second.

“YHWH”

Several times in his ministry Jesus mentioned the Name of God. Consider the occurrence of the word “name” as it relates to God in Matthew and Luke. [Mark does not use the word.] “*Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified.*” [Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 NWT] And, “... *baptizing them in the name of the Father* ...” [Matthew 28:19 NWT] However, the word “name” is used scores of times, more often in relation to the “name” of Jesus.

John’s Gospel alludes to the “name” of the Father most often: “*I have come in the name of my Father.*” [John 5:43 NWT] “*The works that I am doing in the name of my Father, these bear witness about me.*” [John 10:25 NWT]

On one important occasion the petition of Jesus regarding God's Name received a response: *"'Father, glorify your name.'* Therefore a voice came out of heaven: *'I both glorified [it] and will glorify [it] again.'*" [John 12:28 NWT] Also, in his final Passover prayer in the Gospel of John – without actually using YHWH – Jesus mentions the Father's "name." Note the following: *"I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me. ... Holy Father, watch over them on account of your own name which you have given me. ... When I was with them I used to watch over them on account of your own name which you have given me. ... I have made your name known to them and will make it known."* [John 17:6, 11, 12, 26 NWT] But, did Jesus actually use YHWH?

It is most fitting to ask whether Jesus the Nazarene used the Name of God as it occurs in the Hebrew Bible in the four sacred letters YHWH [Yod He Wod He]. This designation for God occurs nearly 7,000 times in the Old Testament. Most versions of the New Testament do not have Jesus uttering the Divine Name, or *noma sagrada*.

The Jewish historian Josephus makes it clear that in Jesus' day the Jews did not pronounce or utter the Divine Name in the Tetragram YHWH. It was the custom when reading the Hebrew Scriptures in the synagogue to not pronounce YHWH when coming upon it in its 7,000. Rather, the reader said ELOHIM [God] or ADONAY [Lord]. It is now known that even the Jewish Greek *Septuagint* [LXX] ancient contained YHWH untranslated within the Greek text.

For example, consider the account when Jesus was reading the Bible in the synagogue in Nazareth:

16 *And he came to Naz'a· reth, where he had been reared; and, according to his custom on the sabbath day, he entered into the synagogue, and he stood up to read. 17* *So the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, and he opened the scroll and found the place where it was written: 18* *"Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor, he sent me forth to preach a release to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away with a release, 19* *to preach Jehovah's acceptable year."* **20** *With that he rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were intently fixed upon him. 21* *Then he started to say to them: "Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled." [Luke 4:16-21 NWT]*

Now, the *New World Translation* by Jehovah's Witnesses above has the Divine Name in Jesus' reading of Isaiah 61:1, 2 where the Hebrew characters יהוה do appear in the ancient Hebrew texts. If Jesus read from the *Septuagint* it is also possible יהוה appeared in that copy. Did Jesus utter יהוה when he came to

those two occurrences? Several Hebrew editions of Luke do include יהוה in their versions.

Now, if Jesus had read Isaiah 61:1, 2 in Greek as the Gospel of Luke records it, he would have seen --

πνευμα κυριου επ εμε ου εινεκεν εχρισεν με ευαγγελισασθαι πτωχοις απεσταλκεν με κηρυξαι αιχμαλωτοις αφεσιν και τυφλοις αναβλεψιν αποστειλαι τεθραυσμενους εν αφεσει κηρυξαι ενιαυτον κυριου δεκτον

However πνευμα κυριου is literally “spirit of Lord.” This is a strange reading, for the “Lord” [KYRIOU] is without the article. This would normally read “[The] Lord’s Spirit ... “ as most modern versions render it. However, the article “the” is absent. What is wrong?

The Hebrew Text of Isaiah [even according to the Dead Sea Scrolls] reads: יהוה ארני רוח , or “The Spirit of the Lord Yehowah.” On the other hand, the Jewish Greek Septuagint of the 3rd Century BCE reads exactly as Luke 4:16 above. The only way this makes sense is if the copy of Isaiah 61:1 in the Nazareth Synagogue read πνευμα יהוה , or “Yehowah’s Spirit ... “

When Jesus came to πνευμα יהוה did he utter the Divine Name? Some would think that he would. On the other hand we note the response of this Jewish synagogue is favorable to the Nazarene’s reading and comment, for the account states: *“And they all began to give favorable witness about him and to marvel at the winsome words proceeding out of his mouth.”* [Luke 4:22 NWT] Judging from Josephus, this does not seem the response of Jews who considered the utterance of YHWH as a violation of the Commandments.

We know from the Gospels that Jesus and his disciples were condemned for breaking the Sabbath, but nothing is ever charged against Jesus for using YHWH. This may point to the fact that Jesus did not utter the Name in either Old Testament quotations or everyday speech. We do know that in John chapters 13 to 17 Jesus never used YHWH in either his sermon or prayer.

We have another example of the possible occurrence of the Divine Name in the Christian Bible in an earlier account in Luke 4:8, 12. In these verses Jesus quotes from Moses where יהוה occurs in the Hebrew original. However in Luke’s Greek account these phrases read: [verse 8]

κυριον τον θεον σου προσκυνησεις

That is, “LORD of the God you shall worship.” Most versions add the article though this does not occur before KYRION. The KJV reads, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God.” It is possible the original read: יהוה י' τον θεον σου, or “Yehowah the God of you.” [“Jehovah your God ... “]

Another example may be Jesus’ quote of Psalm 110:1 in Luke 20:42, “LORD said to my lord ... “ [NSR] Here the article is missing before KYRIOS. In the Hebrew of Psalm 110:1 it reads: נאם יהוה לאדני or “A statement of Jehovah to my Lord.” It is interesting that though new editions of the Jewish Greek *Septuagint* of Psalm 110:1 reads EIPEN HO KYRIOS TO KYRIO MOU, or, “The Lord said to my lord,” neither Matthew or Luke have such a rendering. Rather, the Greek of Luke 20:42 reads, EIPEN KYRIOS TO KYRIO MOU [= “Said Lord to my lord ... “ It is without the article in Luke. Thus, it seems possible that the original read ειπεν יהוה τω κυριω μου. This makes perfect sense as, “Yehowah said to my lord ... “ Therefore, the possibility [POSSIBILITY] that Jesus did use YHWH must be considered. Even so, it seems strange the Jews never rebuked or accused Jesus of breaking what they considered a violation of the Third Commandment, “You must not profane the Name of YHWH.”

This interesting possibility [POSSIBILITY] is also evident in some of the letters of Paul where Paul omits the article “the” before LORD in Old Testament quotations. [Compare the Nazarene Commentary© on Romans and Hebrews.]

Jesus may [MAY] have used YHWH in Old Testament quotations. Out of ten thousand Greek manuscripts there is not a single case, even among the oldest copies, of the use of YHWH in the Christian Bible. However, based on those Hebrew translations of the Gospels mentioned above, did Jesus ever use YHWH outside a quotation in normal conversation?

In the New World Translation by Jehovah’s Witnesses there are only two cases where Jesus uses “Jehovah” outside of a quotation from the Hebrew Bible. These occur in Mark 5:19 and Mark 13:20. The former reads in Greek APANGEILON AUTOIS HOSA HO KYRIOS SOI PEPOIEKEN [= “report to them as many things as the Lord to you has done” (KIT)]. But, here, unlike some of the Old Testament quotations of Jesus, the article does occur before “Lord.” Thus, there is no indication that would favor YHWH appearing here. Additionally, the parallel passage in Luke 8:39 uses, not “the Lord” but HO THEOS, “the God.”

The second place Jesus is supposed to have used “Jehovah” in everyday speech is Mark 13:20, “*In fact, unless Jehovah had cut short the days ...*” Here the Greek is different for it does not have the article: KAI EI ME EKOLOBOSEN KYRIOS TAS HEMERAS [= and if not shortened Lord the days ...” (KIT)]. However, some ancient manuscripts use HO THEOS here making the use of YHWH without authority. Despite this, the wording above could have YHWH where “Lord” occurs without the article. [Compare Benjamin Wilson’s *Diaglott*]

In summary, it is clear Jesus' preferred designation for God is "Father" and then "The God." It is likely YHWH did occur in Hebrew and Greek editions of the Old Testament from which Jesus quoted. Additionally, there is the possibility, judging from the several occurrences of "Lord" without the article, that YHWH could have occurred even in the Christian Bible.

The Jews were never responsible for the removal of God's Name YHWH from their Scriptures. It seems unlikely the first Jewish Christians would also not have removed YHWH from their inspired writings when quoting the Old Testament. It would be later Christians who would have removed YHWH from both the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. For these and other reasons the majority of present day Bible translations by Christians lack YHWH in either the Old or New Testament, with but few exceptions.

Based on the above information as well as other details, the Nazarene Saints Publishers of the Nazarene Commentary© on the Christian Bible will include יהוה in those places where the Greek word for LORD is without the article in all Old Testament quotations. It will be left to the reader – as it was to Jesus and the 1st Century Jews and Christians – to either utter the Divine Name or use "the LORD."

"At that time those in fear of Jehovah spoke with one another, each one with his companion, and Jehovah kept paying attention and listening. And a book of remembrance began to be written up before him for those in fear of Jehovah and for those thinking upon his name." [Malachi 3:16 NWT]

[For more details on this subject see the work *Nazarene Principles*© in the Nazarene Commentary© CD-ROM.]

==== END ====

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