



Sunday, June 5, 2022



Main Text: Luke 24:46-49—(46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: (47) And that repentance and remission of sins should be **preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.** (48) And ye are witnesses of these things. (49) And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye **in the city of Jerusalem**, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Introduction: Wouldn't it be impressive if Christian organizations around the world came together in unity of faith? Satan would be mortified! But how could it happen? While suggestions abound, a giant step in the right direction would be to retrace our faith back to the birthplace of Christianity; back to Jerusalem. Why Jerusalem? Jesus promised to build a church; not a building of wood and stone, but a global, living organism of believers. Under Jesus's instructions the first one hundred twenty members of that church had their first meeting in Jerusalem. After His resurrection and before His ascension, Jesus told His disciples "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). The disciples were to remain in Jerusalem until they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Most, if not all, Christian denominations agree that Jerusalem was the birthplace of today's New Testament church, and that Jerusalem was its birthplace. What better way to start the walk toward unity than for delegates of each denomination to meet in Jerusalem where the Holy Ghost filled the first Christians, and the apostle Peter preached the first sermon to a crowd of over three thousand people on the Day of Pentecost. If unity is our desire, Jerusalem should be our starting point and a cry for a refilling our revival cry.

The Significance of Jerusalem: Micah 5:2, Isa. 2:3

Micah 5:2—(2) But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Isa. 2:3-- And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Note: Nearly every person on the planet recognizes the significance of Jerusalem. Since its' first mention in the book of Judges 19, Jerusalem has been a special place. Even today it is revered by the three major religions in the world: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. It was the capital city of Israel's greatest monarch, King David. Old Testament prophets like Isaiah and Micah prophesied about the Messiah, both Matthew and Luke confirm that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Jerusalem. During the Millenium when Christ rules for a1000 years, Jerusalem will be the religious capital of the world. Isaiah prophesied about that period saying, "the word of the Lord would go forth

from Jerusalem.” With all this special attention, it should not come as a surprise that the birthplace of Jesus’ church would also be in Jerusalem.

Jesus Promised to Build a Church: Matt. 16:17-19, Eph. 4:6, Col. 1:18

Matt. 16:13-19—(13) When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? (14) And they said, Some say *that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.(15) He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? (16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. (17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.(19) And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Eph. 4:6—(4) There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; (5) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Col. 1:18-- And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Note: Even the most novice Bible students know that Jesus Christ promised to build a church. Jesus’s church would be built on the revelation of who He is; the revelation which was given to Peter and the rest of the apostles. Jesus said, “...the gates of hell shall not prevail against...” His church. When the smoke clears, the Church Jesus built will not only still be standing, but be victorious over the enemy. Jesus did not mean He would erect a colossal brick and mortar structure that would prevail against Satan, but a global, living, organism of believers. Furthermore, Jesus said He would build “a” church, not “churches.” The apostle Paul declared that there was one body...one Spirit...., (and) ...one faith” (Eph. 4:4-6). In the book of Colossians, Paul clarified what the “body” is when he said that “he (Jesus)...is the head of the body, the church...” (Col. 1:18). The church which Jesus founded and built is the “body” and it is one. According to surveys, there are 45,000 Christian denominations world-wide. The word “denomination” means “a recognized autonomous branch of the Christian church.” For example, Baptists, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, Methodists, even Non-Denominational. The word “autonomous” means independent, sovereign, or separate. Therein is the challenge. With such autonomy assigned to Christian denominations, is there any wonder why Christian churches today are disunified? A question that we should continue to ask is “Where is the church Jesus founded?”

Jesus Told Us Who Would Belong to His Church: John 10:16, Romans 1:16

John 10:16—(16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Romans 1:16—(16) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and to the Greek.

Note: In the Old Testament salvation was of the Jews; meaning the Judaism was the faith God recognized. People of other nationalities could be saved by converting to Judaism and accepting circumcision and the Law of Moses. But when Jesus came, He announced the inclusion of the Gentiles into God’s fold. The Gentiles were the “other sheep” which Jesus would bring, that is,

reconcile to God through His death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus promised that there would be “one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16). What Jesus meant was that the Jews and Gentiles would both be beneficiaries of the same Gospel. Paul said, “the gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16). Paul did not mean that Christ loved the Jews more than Gentiles, but that Christ preached the gospel to them first. The great news was that both Jew and Greek (Gentile) would receive the same salvation by grace of God through faith (Eph. 2:8-9). Both Jews and Gentiles would be members of Jesus’s church.

Jesus Told the Apostle What Doctrine to be Taught: Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:44-50

Matt. 28:18-20—(18) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Mark 16:15-16—(15) And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (16) He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Luke 24:44-57—(44) And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. (45) Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, (46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: (47) And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Eph. 4:6—(4) There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; (5) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Note: Prior to His crucifixion and after His resurrection, Jesus gave His disciples (the apostles) a blueprint for teaching doctrine in His church. Repentance and baptism were both essential elements of the doctrine taught. Baptism was to be administered in a specific name; a name that represented Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. After Jesus’s resurrection, He reiterated the significance of repentance and baptism being preached in His name—the founder of the New Testament church. In Luke 24, Jesus instructs His disciples where to begin the church—in Jerusalem; what to teach—repentance and remission of sins in His name; and to whom they should teach—all nations. In Matthew, Jesus also told His disciples to teach others to “observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...”

Where to Begin: Luke 24:48 – 50, 52-53, Acts 1:12-14; Acts 2:1-4

Luke 24:48-50, 52-53--(48) And ye are witnesses of these things. (49) And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. (50) And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. (52) And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: (53) And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Acts 1:12-14—(12) Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. (13) And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother

of James. (14) These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 2:1-4-- And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Note: Prior to His ascension, Jesus commanded the apostles to “tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). The apostles were not to leave Jerusalem until they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Immediately, they returned to Jerusalem from Bethany and were in the temple each day praising and blessing God. But the twelve apostles were not alone. With them were one hundred and eight others who were excited about the coming promise of the Holy Ghost. Jesus’s own mother, Mary, was among them. Finally, on the Day of Pentecost the long-awaited Holy Ghost was poured out upon them, and they spoke with tongues under the anointing of the Holy Ghost; tongues that were understood by representatives from seventeen different regions. Pentecost is an Old Testament feast that was also known as the feast of weeks or the feast of harvest. The word “Pente” means fifty. Therefore, the feast of Pentecost was held fifty days after Passover. It was a celebratory time of thanksgiving and presenting offerings for the new grain of the summer wheat harvest. During the feast of Pentecost, all the Jewish males were required to appear before the Lord. That is why thousands of Jews were present when the Holy Spirit was poured out for the first time on the Day of Pentecost following the Lord’s resurrection. That Pentecost Day was the founding of Jesus’s church, which is also known as the New Testament church—today’s church.

The First Sermon Preached in Jesus’ Church: Acts 2:36-42

Acts 2:36-42—(36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (37) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men, and brethren, what shall we do? (38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (39) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call. (40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. (41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. (42) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Note: It should come as no surprise that Peter, who received the revelation of Jesus Christ; the one first given the keys to the Kingdom of God, preached the first sermon in Jesus’s new church. After reassuring the crowd that they (those one hundred and twenty who received the gift of the Holy Ghost) were not drunk, Peter preached what Christ commanded him to preach. The message of salvation he preached mirrored Jesus’s instructions to Nicodemus recorded in John 3:1-8. We should note that the first message sinners heard about Christ after His resurrection was a message on the new birth; what was required for them to enter the kingdom of God. It was a message of repentance, water baptism in the name of Jesus (Matt. 28:19-20, Acts 2:38), and the infilling of the Holy Ghost. Later, that message would go out to thousands of others. The apostle Paul would be given that same message upon his conversion and preach that message to Gentiles he led to Christ. Today there are 45,000 denominations, but not all can say that they are still preaching what the apostles preached in the first century church. However, if unity is what we desire, it must start with the first Pentecost Day

feast in the New Testament in the city of Jerusalem. If Christians want to unite, let us start there and work our way back into one body; “One Lord, One faith, and One baptism.”

Summary: Sadly, most Christian organizations in the world are not unified. But if unity is going to be achieved, a giant step in the right direction would be for each organization to send a delegate back to Jerusalem, the birthplace of Christianity. Both the Old and New Testament writers prophesied that the Messiah would be born and crucified in Jerusalem. During the Millennium, Jerusalem will be the religious capital of the world and once again “the word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:3). During His ministry, Jesus promised to build a church (a global body of believers) that would unite Jews and Gentiles. He promised a church with one sheepfold, one Shepherd, and one plan of salvation. Jesus taught His disciples His Master plan. Before His ascension, He instructed the disciples to return to Jerusalem and preach believing, repentance and remission of sin, water baptism and the infilling of the Holy Spirit in His name (Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:47-53, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:37-41). Fifty days after our Lord’s resurrection, the church was founded (in Jerusalem) on the Day of Pentecost with an explosive gathering of over three thousand ethnic and proselytized Jews. The book of Acts records the first 30 – 40 years of growth in Jesus’s church, during which time both Jews and Gentiles were added to the church just as the Jews were on the Day of Pentecost. By the year A.D. 95, all the letters (epistles) of the New Testament and the book of Revelation, had been completed and canonized (included as scripture). At that time, the churches which had been established in Jerusalem, Judea, Rome, Greece, and Asia still taught the doctrine of the apostles. Nowhere in the epistles written to born-again believers, did the apostles alter or leave the teachings they received from Christ. Today, the apostle’s doctrine, which is the doctrine of Christ, still applies to our modern-day New Testament church. If Christians want to walk together in faith, we can. But the first step is to return to our roots which sprang up from Jerusalem two thousand years ago and commit ourselves to believing and teaching what the apostles taught when the church was founded.