

THE UNHIDDEN CHRIST

Text: Mark 7:24

INTRO: This interesting passage gives us insight into the humanity of Jesus. Tired & weary, He sought time to rest & relax. But in the very nature of things, He was needed, & there was no time to relax. The principle that he who seeks & knocks & asks shall find, outweighed Jesus' human desire for relaxation. The Lord may be hidden from those who are not seeking Him, but for those who seek Him, "He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27). Jesus is needed, & He will not & cannot be hidden.

- I. AGES BEFORE HE EVER CAME TO EARTH, THE PROPHETS OF GOD BEGAN LITTLE BY LITTLE TO SHOW BRIEF GLIMPSES OF HIS COMING GLORY.
 - A. The Seed of woman, Gen. 3:15;
Gal. 4:4, 4000 B.C.
 - B. A descendant of Abraham, Gen. 12,
2000 B.C.
 - C. A prophet like Moses, Deut. 18, 1400 B.C.
 - D. A descendant of David, 2 Sam. 7:12,
1000 B.C.
 - E. Born of a virgin, Isa. 7:14, 734 B.C.
 - F. Born in Bethlehem, Micah 5:2, about 730 B.C.
 - G. Put to death as a sin offering, Isa. 53:10, 714 B.C.
 - H. Ascension to heaven to occupy throne, Dan. 7:13, 552 B.C.
 - I. Every O.T. prophet from Samuel to Malachi, Acts 3:14.
 - J. Truly, this One could not be hidden.
- II. WHEN THE FULLNESS OF TIME HAD COME, JESUS WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA.

A. Bethlehem was a small village about 5 miles south of Jerusalem. Nothing of significance had happened there since the anointing of David more than 1,000 years earlier, but the scribes knew, perhaps the Jews in general knew, that the Messiah was to be born there, Matt. 2:4-5.

B. When the time came, there was no throne, no scepter, no royal robe, not even a cradle for the new born King. Jesus was born in a stable & bedded down in a cattle trough.

C. But He could not be hidden. The prophets had foretold it, scribes & priests had understood it, angels announced it, shepherds received it. Wise men took note of it. Jesus could not be hidden.

II. HE GREW UP IN NAZARETH, ANOTHER OBSCURE TOWN. THE TOWNSFOLK KNEW HIM AS A CARPENTER AND THE SON OF A CARPENTER.

A. Nazareth had gained a bad reputation. When Nathaniel heard about Jesus his first response was, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" (JN 1:46).

B. When the enemies of Christ wanted to insult His followers they referred to them as the "sect of the Nazarenes," Acts 24:5.

C. During His time in Nazareth, Jesus grew to manhood--mentally, physically, spiritually & socially, LK 2:51. We sometimes call those the silent years, but soon, there came a young prophet throughout the land of Judah proclaiming,

"He who is coming after me is mightier than I... Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (MT 3:2, 11). And Jesus could not be hidden.

IV. AFTER ABOUT 3½ YEARS, THE RELIGIOUS ELITE WHOSE FEAR & HATRED OF JESUS HAD BEEN BUILDING ALMOST FROM THE BEGINNING, BECAME CONVINCED THAT JESUS COULD BE DESTROYED BY DEATH & HIDDEN IN THE TOMB. AND SO THEY PLOTTED & CARRIED OUT HIS EXECUTION ON A ROMAN CROSS.

A. Did you ever walk thru a cemetery & read the words engraved on the stones that mark the resting place of someone's remains? And wonder who this person was, what was his occupation? How did he die? Was he rich or poor? Did he leave any great accomplishments behind him? Surely, if Jesus could have been kept in the tomb, by today He would have long since been forgotten.

B. But the tomb could not hold Him. As foretold by prophets 1,000 years before the event, His soul did not stay in Hades, His body did not corrupt in the grave. Dead & buried on late Friday afternoon, by early Sunday morning He was again walking among His followers. The tomb could not hide Him. The stone could not keep Him. The soldiers could not subdue Him. Jesus could not be hidden.

V. WHY, THRU THE CENTURIES HAS IT BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO HIDE JESUS? Why did all such efforts fail? The manger couldn't do it. Nazareth couldn't do it. The grave couldn't do it. Skepticism, persecution, false teachers, etc., cannot do it. The sincere seeker who refuses to abandon the search will always

find Him. Why? Let us return to our original text in Mark 7.

A. Read verses 24-30. Jesus could not be hidden because He was needed.

B. Even today, where men & women realize their need for Jesus, & like the Gentile woman in Mark 7, are willing to worship at His feet, Jesus cannot & will not be hidden. His invitation rings clear after 20 long centuries--MT 11:28; JN 6:37; Rev 22:17.

CONCLUSION: While God grants us life & breath, Jesus is never far away. Come in faith, repenting of your sins, confess His name & be baptized into Him for the remission of your sins.

Exton, PA, June 24, 1990

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 12, 1997

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Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, March 19, 2006