

## Christ's Final Journey, Pt. 2

Ronald Weinland

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Today, we are continuing in the series entitled *Christ's Final Journey*, with this being *Part 2*.

Toward the end of *Part 1*, we had covered how Christ told the disciples that they were going to Jerusalem (He made it clearer to them), and that He would be delivered up to the religious leaders and then turned over to the Gentiles, the Romans, to be killed and then resurrected on the third day. And even though He told them several times as they were on this final journey down toward Jerusalem, it seemed like they didn't really get it or to understand the reality of what was coming, of what He was really saying.

So, anyway, kind of difficult to grasp all that and when He's telling them what's going to take place, but there are some things that just weren't clicking in their mind and perhaps God withholding it from them so they couldn't fully grasp it yet or just a matter of something they didn't grasp on a spiritual plane of what He had to fulfill and what He was going to fulfill. And so again, quite an incredible story, and especially in this period of time.

So, last Sabbath, we covered some of the travels of Christ and His disciples that were leading up to, again, His final journey that He would make to Jerusalem, and so this has been a continuing story now of that, this time around (because I did this several years back), but I wanted something more up to date for the website concerning Christ, and indeed up to date as far as the present truth is concerned, because there has been a lot revealed over the years here, and continuing to be added to what we know.

And this timeline is a little bit better than the last time when we went through a specific timeline because of certain things that have been given and finding out as putting this story together. Because it really isn't all that easy when you go through the four gospels there and putting this entire story together, because they each give things from their different vantage point and at different times as to what they would include and what they didn't include.

And so, it's not an easy task and there have been many harmonies of the gospel, if you will, different gospel writers or different ones who have put together the four gospels, tried to give a continuous, steady, accurate flow, and yet some have done a very good job, some haven't done so good because there are things they just haven't understood about what Christ was doing, about the truth that God was giving at that time through Him and so forth, and more importantly, the timing of events.

So, again here, this is about that story here, and so much that He taught that's recorded that took place in the last few weeks, and we've been going through some of that.

So again, what we covered was the short time span of around a couple of months at the most when we first started the different sermons here, leading up to this point in time, and Him getting ready to go

down toward Jerusalem, and even in covering what He did and what we did in going through those things, we didn't go into many of the things He taught during that period, of which there is quite a bit. And so again, there are things we're going through here in part, but not covering everything.

And so, then we come now to the final few weeks left in His ministry, where He will begin, again, moving down closer toward Jerusalem. And so, this is a steady thing that He's doing out of the areas of Galilee and farther south, and then finally over toward Jerusalem itself.

So again, this series is entitled *Christ's Final Journey, Part 2*.

Now, as they had gone through the eastern side of Samaria. So again, we have our maps here. Some of you like the maps, some don't. But again here, talking about the region of Samaria, it's just below the area of Galilee before you get down to the regions of Judah to the south, and where Jerusalem is. So, they were always up to the north there, and generally near the Jordan River between the Sea of Galilee and on down toward the Red Sea but crossing over to the area of Jericho to the south.

So again, areas we're kind of familiar with there now, a little more familiar with than the areas farther north. We don't tend to be as understanding or have as much knowledge of some of those areas. We read them, just like Nazareth, and where it was located up there in Galilee. Sometimes, it's good to have some of those things in the mind to realize what they were doing, why they were doing it, and so forth. It adds more to the story.

So, they went back across then, the Jordan River, once they had gone far enough south to then head west toward Jericho. So, we've been following this journey here, again, down through Galilee, down along the western side of the Jordan River, down into Samaria on that side as well, and then crossing over into the eastern side of the Jordan River and going on down. Then, finally, crossing again and heading toward Jericho. So, this is the flow of the story and the things that were taking place.

So again, they were going into the area now where John the Baptist had done so much, and so much of his preaching, as well as that of baptizing so many that he did in the Jordan River. And so, this had to have incredible meaning to Joshua as it was just over 1,400 years earlier that the Israelites had crossed over the Jordan River into the promised land. So, knowing all that He did... Sometimes, when you're in certain areas, and you know things that people did, it tends to have a life of its own in the sense of coming to life more when you read some of those things about what took place and having that knowledge.

But certainly, here He is now fulfilling this in a greater way, Joshua, His name being Joshua, what He was going to fulfill on a spiritual plane now coming into that region, into that area for the final time to fulfill what He was to fulfill as Joshua in the sense of the Passover. And yet 1,400 years earlier, the Israelites had come into that region, crossed over into that area where Jericho was, and the walls came down. And again, what an incredible story and the meaning this must have had to Him.

So, let's pick it up today starting in Luke 18. We're going to jump all the way down here now to verse 35. **Luke 18:35—Then it came to pass that as He (Joshua) was coming near to Jericho...** So, He wasn't there yet in the story but was drawing near to going into it, meaning He was still on the other side of the Jordan River just east of the area of Jericho, obviously.

**Verse 35—Then it came to pass that as He was coming near to or approaching** as the word, **going toward Jericho that a certain blind man sat by the road asking for donations.** Now, some of this becomes confusing at times because there are some other blind men, some blind men later on on the other side of Jericho. He's on this side of Jericho.

So, anyway, **verse 36—Then hearing a multitude...** So again, hearing people coming, again being alert to that, because otherwise that's the only way you have senses of anything because you can't see. **Then, hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it was about.** So, those who were near to him, he flagged down in whatever means he could and asked them questions.

**So, they told him that Joshua of Nazareth was passing by. Then he cried out, saying, Joshua, Son of David...** So again, different ones along the way at different times. Farther north, this wasn't as much of something that people understood and grasped. But by this time the news was going around even more so of all the miracles that had been taking place just in the two to three weeks before this, and it'd travelled this way, and the things being said, some saying that He was indeed the Messiah.

Because this is what he is saying here, He is the Messiah, He is the Son of David. And so, they were looking for that. And certainly, this is something that was moving to him, and God was working with him as well, moving with him because there were things that had to be done, that were to be done, that Joshua was to fulfill here.

So, **Then he cried out saying, Joshua, Son of David, have compassion on me! Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet.** Typical human nature. Some thinking they're doing a good service by keeping certain ones away and not bothering Him and whatever, and yet not realizing that this is what Christ was going to do, that this was important to Joshua.

...**but**, it says, instead of being quiet, **he cried out all the more so.** Because he can't see exactly where He is. He's trying to get His attention. He wants to get His attention because he has hope of being healed, just like all the other stories he's been hearing. **But he cried out all the more, Son of David, have compassion on me!**

Then **verse 40—So Joshua stood still and charged that he should be brought to Him.** So, He went and asked others to bring him over to Him where He was. **Then, when he had come near, He asked him, saying, What do you want Me to do for you? And he said, Lord, that I might receive my sight.** So again here, this movement that was taking place of so many things that were taking place before this, of the

miracle of the loaves and the fish on the two different mountains here and then all the different people being healed. These things were spreading fast, because this isn't...

You know, news travels, things happen, but this really travelled fast because this was incredibly exciting to everyone, of what was taking place, and wondering what all this meant, and was He Elijah, was He John the Baptist, had he come back, who was He? Was He one of the prophets, Jeremiah? Some of the things they were thinking. But more and more making it clear as things were being said relating back to that area, especially, of what John the Baptist was doing in that area, because he said the Messiah was coming, the Son of David, the descendant of David. And all these miracles that were being done, if you had something as so many did, they travelled long distances to bring people to Him, even up around the Sea of Galilee, and they brought many people up to Him to be healed. All kinds of things, as we've already gone through and see in these series that we're going through.

**Verse 42—Then Joshua said to him, Receive your sight.** Just very simple, **Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.** In other words, "You believed. You heard these things, and you believed who I am, that I am the Son of David," in essence, "the Messiah." Without saying those things, that's what He was saying, "Your faith," in essence, "has made you well." So, faith is a matter of what you believe and then putting it to practice. And that blind man was doing it. He believed the stories he'd heard about all the healings, and he desired that he would be healed of this man of God, who had come from God.

So, it's incredible here that there were people who could see certain things and acknowledge certain things, and believed because of the miracles that were done—because no man can do these things—and to know this has to be of God. And yet you see this exact opposite in the Pharisees and the Sadducees trying to trip Him up, trying to find fault, trying to find something that they believed was doctrinally wrong. They were accusing Him of all kinds of things because they didn't understand the spirit of the law in the first place.

**Verse 43—Then immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, praising God.** Thanking God, praising God for what had happened. Here you are blind, and all of a sudden you can see again. I can't imagine what that would be like. It's hard for us to grasp that, to grasp what it might be like to not be able to see, and then all of a sudden, after so long a time, your sight is restored or given to you.

Awesome!

**Then all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.** So, others, when they knew (they knew of this man), so many had seen him there, and the story moved around quickly then, "This man was blind, and now he can see!" Awesome! Very moving.

So again, they did the same thing, the right thing. They thanked God that this man could see. There were those thanking God because they believed that this man, this Joshua from Nazareth, was of God. And some were beginning to believe and see and understand now, and hope in, that He is the Messiah.

So, it appears the next account is at this juncture, at the point following this blind man receiving his sight, where Joshua then receives the following message. This is in John 11. So we're going to go over to John 11 now, piecing these things together, the flow of this. So it was somewhere at this point in time that this took place very near this as they were still heading down toward the river portion to cross over toward Jericho, outside Jericho a ways, because it's really close right there, obviously.

**John 11:1—Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who had anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair.** So, he's referring to then what took place later, referring to who this person was as he was writing. This isn't the sequence of events; this is just telling people who are listening, who are hearing this, that this is that particular Mary who does this later on. So, again, this hadn't taken place yet. Again here, incredible here.

Let's see if this shows this on the map here, if I had that on here. Yes, if you look on the one map, map 1 here, down from Jericho a little way, you come down to Bethany, and then back up just a little bit, just a couple miles apart there, Jerusalem and Bethany. These are all very close, not far at all.

So again here, and if I remember rightly, Bethany and Jericho, somewhere in this area, this region here, it's only about 15 miles. So, again here, this is the area we're talking about. That's where they're from, in this town of Bethany.

**And it was this Mary, in essence, better said, who had anointed the Lord or did anoint the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.** So, this was that particular Mary. **Therefore, his sisters sent for Him, saying, Lord, he whom You love is sick.** So, they were close. They had this relationship going back. It doesn't say how far. But they knew each other well.

And going on here, then in verse 4—**When Joshua heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death.** So, just made a flat statement, "It's not unto death." And yet he was going to die. Joshua knew that, but He knew what else was going to take place. He already knew these things. So, just basically saying here, "This sickness is not unto (toward, pertaining) to death." So, that's not what it was all about. Because he's going to die, but there are other things that God has already planned and purposed. So again, the sickness was going to lead to death, but it did not pertain to death itself but to what God and Christ were going to do as a result of it.

Going on: **but for the glory of God.** So, He goes on to say here, **but for the glory of God, that the Son of Man may be glorified...** It's the word "by" or "through," "*dia*," like diameter, going through something. And so **that the Son of God may be glorified through it,** through this account. So, that's what this is about. So, He's telling them that this is more than that. It's not a concern right now, it's so... He tried to quiet, to calm them, in that respect, not to worry, not to have concern because this has greater importance in the fact that he's sick.

Because He knew that he was going to die, he's going to be resurrected from the dead. This is already in His mind. He already knows this. He's saying it here, in essence, without telling the rest of the story, this is that God be glorified and that His Son, speaking of Joshua Himself, was going to be glorified through this. Because how often through time has it ever been recorded that someone was resurrected from the dead? Awesome, what took place here.

**Verse 5—Now, Joshua loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus.**

So again here, **verse 6—So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.** So, He stayed in this area right there before going on into the city and going through it as it does, but stays there at this point in time. And it tells some more of the story here in a moment.

**Then, after this, He said to the disciples, Let us go to Judea again.** So again here, they're not yet in Judea. They're still on the other side waiting to go across the river into Jericho. And so, they stayed on the other side where they'd come across the blind man, and he was healed, and then now He's telling them it's time to go into Judea. Well, the disciples weren't as excited about going in that direction or toward Jerusalem at all because of all the things that were going around and being said about Christ...or about their friend, Joshua, if you will, whom they now believed to be, as Peter mentioned earlier, that He was indeed the Messiah.

So, it says, **Then after this, He said to the disciples, Let us go to Judea again. And the disciples replied to Him, Teacher, lately the Jews have been seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?** So, it's a dangerous place.

The leaders there, the Sadducees and Pharisees, had already been coming up there and trying to trip Him up and find fault, and they knew of that spirit and that attitude and the things that Christ said about them. But now they're also hearing things coming out of the areas of Jerusalem and Judea, of how they're looking for Him and they want to put Him to death. That's what they're talking about, stoning Him, putting Him to death. And so, he's saying, "And you want to go there again?" So, it wasn't something they were excited about. Knowing human nature, who would be?

So, it was here that Joshua proceeds to continue on and then enter into Jericho, which again, is in Judea on the other side, on the west side of the Jordan River.

Next, we read of Zacchaeus, who was a tax collector and very rich, who wanted to get a good view of Joshua when He came by as He was coming into Jericho, so he climbed up into a sycamore tree, as it says here. And so, we're going to read this story now in Luke 19. So, here they've come across the Jordan River, they've come into Judea now, and now they're going into the area of Jericho, and then there is this Zacchaeus, who is a tax collector and a very wealthy man.

**Luke 19:1—Then Joshua entered to go through Jericho.** So, He entered into it in order to go through it on toward Bethany. **Now, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and**

**he was rich. Now, he sought to see who Joshua was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was short in stature.** So, he was smaller, couldn't see over the heads of people, he wanted to get a good view of Him as He was coming into town.

A lot of people, a lot of people were gathered there. The stories that have gone before, several thousand had already come out to see Him at different times in different areas, trying to follow Him, and especially for healing and so forth, as they brought people along for that.

**Verse 4—So, he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.** So, people were lined up along the way, of the way you would come into town there and passing on through.

**Verse 5—Then when Joshua came to the place,** in other words, where Zacchaeus was up in the tree, he said, **He looked up.** So, He saw him up there, and again, drawn to him. ...**and saw him, and said to him, Zacchaeus.** So, calling him out by name. Incredible things that Christ did, that Joshua did, things that were in His mind, the things He knew that God just gave to Him. Incredible relationship; beautiful in every way.

**Zacchaeus, hurry and come on down, because today I must abide in your house. So, he came down quickly and was happy to receive Him. Then, when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He,** speaking of Joshua, **was going to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.** "How can you...?!" "If you're a man of God, if you're doing these things...?" So, there are different ones then of a certain mindset. They wanted to see who He was.

So, there is this mixed crowd of people with different ideas and thoughts, and certain ones of them then finding fault, most likely, again, influenced by people who had minds like the Sadducees and the Pharisees and their critical, condemning, judging attitude and spirit that they had toward anyone else who was different. So, now finding fault, "He's going to go and stay with a sinner? If you're a righteous man, how could you do such a thing?" Incredible.

So, He was going to be "a guest of a man who was a sinner." So, Joshua then used this occasion to give the parable of the pounds, and as He was speaking about, again, the coming of the Kingdom of God. So, it has a lot of meaning in it for that moment in time, but it has a lot of meaning in it for the things that it teaches.

So, going on here. **Luke 19:8—Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.** So, "This is what I do. This is the way I strive to function. I strive to live this right way, to live a right way and not take more as some might in this position." But he's making it very clear here, "I give half of my goods." He's a very wealthy man, and so he spreads wealth around to others who need it, to the poor, and if he has taken anything and it comes out that it was done so falsely (because he has different

people working for him, these things are going to happen, there are going to be mistakes made), and so, he says, if that happens, then what I do, I restore fourfold to them. Awesome!

So, he already had a reputation of sorts in that respect, and as far as striving to live by what is right, doing a far better job than so many others, and obviously, the ones who are criticizing and finding fault, living what he should be living.

So, He went on to say, then, **Today salvation has come to this house.** Joshua. The salvation of God, in essence, had come to him, and he was moved by this. He said, **Salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**

**Now, as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was nearing Jerusalem and because they thought that the Kingdom of God would appear immediately.** So again here, different ideas that people had, and Christ is telling them and teaching them certain things here, and He's making it very clear here that salvation has come to them, that His own name, as He just said here, "Joshua said to him, 'Salvation has come to this house.'" So, Zacchaeus is moved by this, and the people who hear these things, who have a right mind and a right spirit to receive certain things of a man of God, who are believing these things.

And then He tells them this, "Salvation has come to this house now, and it's here in front of you." Now, He wasn't just talking about what's going to happen to the people, He was talking about what He is going to fulfill and what is taking place and why He is coming here, why He's going to go on down toward Jerusalem. He doesn't explain all those things, but that's what this is about.

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." And so, you think of all of mankind. All of mankind is lost. Until God draws them, they're in bondage to sin, and this is what it's all about. It's about a period that would follow of 3,100, nearly 3,100 years of time yet.

**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Now, as He spoke these things, He spoke another parable because He was nearing Jerusalem and because they thought the Kingdom of God would appear immediately.** So, this is what people thought and have thought through history, through time, that if the Messiah is going to come, He's needed now, the Romans are here, the oppression has been taking place, people are being killed, people are... and all the things that were going on. And so, this to them was a kind of a physical kind of salvation, that the Messiah would become a King who would rule and the Romans would no longer have rule over them. That's what they were looking at, or for, if you will.

And so, they thought that if the Messiah is coming, then this should happen right away. That's why when He was put to death, a lot of people were dashed because their hope... It's like, "This is what we believed was going to happen." This was what was in their mind.

So again, they thought the Kingdom of God would appear “presently,” as the word means, “straight away,” immediately, if you will, or straight away, “soon.” Different words can be translated from it.

**Then He said**, speaking of Christ, **A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. Then he called ten of his servants and delivered to them ten pounds, and said to them, Carry out business until I come.** So again here, no way they could understand all this, and even through the past 2,000 years there aren’t that many who have really grasped this deeply and fully, even within the Church. But to know then what He was talking about, He was talking about a future time that would come, and that, it says here, “That a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then to return.”

That’s what Joshua has been doing for the past 2,000 years. Gone far away into another region, into another area, and then to return after that time to receive that Kingdom, that He is to be King of kings of, in essence.

So, “He called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten pounds, and said to them, ‘Carry out business until I come.’” In other words, it means to, in essence, to put to work, to produce. That’s what we’re supposed to do. We don’t just go through the motions of things like Laodicea did deceiving itself, thinking that it has all that it needs, in essence, that it’s received such riches and doesn’t grasp that there is a need to continue to grow, to continue to be fed and nurtured and excel and never leveling off, in that respect, never being lukewarm, kind of on the fence post and getting in that position. Lukewarm. That’s what that’s like.

And so, in essence here, instead to be producing, which is a matter of a relationship with God, a matter of growing spiritually. And so again here, this is part of what this parable is all about, obviously.

**But his citizens...** Literally meaning here, the word literally means “fellow citizens.” We have fellowship. We’re in this together. We’re a part of a Body. We’re the Body of Christ. And the entirety of the Church... So, it’s about the Church and what would take place within the Church over the next 2,000 years, in essence.

So, it says, **But the citizens** (so it goes on to say here) **hated him**. So, fellow citizens? Well, first of all, if you look at Judah and see what they did, those who were fellow citizens on a physical plane rejected Him. And candidly, all mankind has, even the rest of Israel that was scattered. It’s always been the history in the rest of the world altogether because of human nature, have all rejected Joshua.

And yet it talks about this spirit here of those who went so far, as it says here, “hated Him.” The word means “to detest,” or even it’s used “to love less by comparison.” We know the example here going back to Luke 14, when it uses that expression there that if we don’t love father, mother, sister, brother, and so forth. It says “hate,” but it’s a word that means “to love less by comparison.”

In other words, Christ, God Almighty, should be first in our lives. And that is where our love should be first of all. Because if that love is there, then everything else will fit in in a proper way when trials and hardships and tests come along and others make wrong decisions and bad decisions or try to pull at us to go a different way or do something different, that we don't compromise. Because God is first. That's what it means. God is first. Joshua is to be first in our life in the sense of our High Priest.

So, it says here that **There are those who detested**, "to love less by comparison," if you will, others, **and sent a delegation after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.** And so, this is what the actions of some reflected. Again, primarily of Judah because this is what happens first as He goes into Jerusalem and some of these things become very obvious, how certain ones felt and how the religious faction, especially, how they felt. And the religion that's established in the world now, how it looks. They don't believe. They don't believe a book that's coming out. They don't believe the things that are in it. Their minds are going to begin to be opened up to it. They're going to begin to see certain things. But what an amazing thing here.

So, again here, telling this story that goes over a long period of time, of how human nature is and those who are of this attitude. Because the majority of people who have been called into the Church, this is what they've done spiritually, "We will not have this man to reign over us." That's what they're saying. When they leave, when they cheat, lie, whatever it is, whatever it is they want something different that's in the world, commit adultery, fornication, whatever it might be, want something else that isn't lawful, and want to keep God's money, whatever it is that's in the human mind that people turn away from, that's what they're saying. They're in opposition to. They love far less God, Christ, than they do what they want in their life. Self comes first for them.

And so, in essence here, "Will not have this one," if you will, "to reign over us." That's a choice everyone makes. Do we want? Is that what we want with all of our being? As a whole within the Church, that's what we want. We've chosen that. We want the Kingdom of God, and we understand the government of the Kingdom of God, and we want that way of life to reign in our life. We don't want it to reign by selfishness and human nature; of politics and all the evil systems that man has devised. We reject all that. But this was still said.

And so, He goes on to say here, then, **verse 15—Now, it came to pass that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants to whom he had given the money, to be called to him so that he might know how much each had gained by trading.** So, need to understand who received anything in that 2,000 years? Only people in the Church. So, you can look at this in the beginning part here on a physical plane, understanding how Christ was rejected, but the worst and the greatest of it is what happened then as the Kingdom of God came to them, in essence – because that's what a calling is about, when our minds are opened up to the truth and what we have opportunities to begin to live and to enter in into. Yes, in a begettal stage, not yet born, but the process begins then. And so, this is what's being talked about here.

And we think about what then happened to the majority of the Church. Many have been called but very few out of that have ever been chosen, very few have continued on; very few have continued making the right decisions, making the right choices that they indeed want God's Kingdom to reign over us, for Christ and His rule to reign over us, God and His rule to reign over us, to be in subjection to His rule and law, not our own, not mankind's.

And so, He says, "He called those to him, that he might know how much had gained by trading." And so, we begin to see those who grew and those who didn't grow. So, it goes through the story.

**Then came the first, saying, Master, your pound has earned ten pounds.** So again, all given God's spirit, and God's spirit produces fruit. So, nothing is gained by being lethargic, Laodicean. There is no growth in that. Lukewarm; there is no growth in that. There is no strong, meaningful relationship with God at all in that whereby one can continue to grow spiritually. And yet that is a must in our lives. We must continue to grow spiritually. That's why Laodicea was such a hideous thing that took place within the Church, an example for all time to follow.

And so, again here then, those who have responded and those who put more into it, there is an automatic...there is a blessing that goes with that. It's a part of the process.

**Now, he said to him, Well done, good servant; because you were faithful over a very little, have authority over ten cities.** So, just using a very physical analogy here to get a point across that the more that an individual applies God's way of life in their life, the greater they're going to be blessed. It's just a part of the process. Everyone doesn't get everything equal. It's not that way. Sometimes there are people who get this concept that everything has to be equal, an equal playing field in that sense; everybody is the same. No, they're not! It's not like that. There is order. There is a reason for all of that.

**Verse 18—Then the second came, saying, Master, your pound has earned five pounds.** They're just reporting that. Of course, God knows what we do and what we don't do and what we produce. In part, we know. We don't know how much. Again, we know whether we're throwing our self into God's way of life and striving to put Him first all the time, continually, and desiring to grow, or whether we're a little slower about doing that.

**Likewise, he said to him, You also be over five cities.**

Then, **verse 20—Then the other came, saying, Master, here is your pound, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man.** So his outlook, this person's mindset, was "You are rough. You are rigid. You are demanding, and so, I was fearful, and so I hid it so that I could give it to you when you came back." Well, there's a lot more to this part of it.

But it says here, **You collect/take up what you do not lay down.** They give us everything. God, Joshua, God's way is to give us everything in a sense so that we can... everything we need in order to conquer, and overcome, and to grow. But it comes down to our work, what we put into it. And yet when someone

doesn't put anything into a particular matter and kind of goes through the motions of it because maybe being fearful of the outcome if... and because they feel... They just see more of the law and do's and don'ts, and "The Church makes me do that," and "The Church makes me do that." I used to hate those things, and still do if I ever hear them. ...rather than someone standing up and saying, "This is my choice. After receiving certain counsel, this is my choice based on what I've heard, and this is what I want. This is my choice," rather than making these kinds of excuses. Because that's that kind of a mindset, you know, this fearful kind of mindset.

So, it's this kind of a judgmental type thing, is what it is, and a wrong vision, a wrong understanding of God and Christ, and that everything is there for us. But we're supposed to work. We're not supposed to be lazy, you know, kind of just trying to get through it just to get through it because we're afraid of something that might be, you know, the outcome if we don't. Kind of go through the motions and have that show in our life.

That's why the Apostasy happened. People were going through that show in their life and trying to present themselves in a certain way, and yet... Anyway, incredible, human nature.

**You collect/take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.** Everything is God's. That's a different mindset. This person has a wrong mindset. "It's theirs, and I'm going to suffer because I have to do this or do that," or, you know, "I really wasn't able to tithe because I had this expense and that expense." You know, anyone who comes along and comes into the Church has to make big changes in their life when they first... Because they can't work seven days a week anymore, they have to take off at certain times. And they learn to rejoice in those things. Some people don't learn to rejoice in some of those things.

And to realize there are tithes to be set aside, first to be given to God, second for the Feast. And people can have battles with some of these kinds of things and have more fear of not doing that than to realize the blessing of doing it and being a part of it, and thankful that God has given us such a system.

Because everything is God's anyway, and if we do our part, we'll be blessed. It may not be immediate. It may not be in the first few years. As time goes along, we grow, we produce, and God blesses us. And we have to have a mind that sees those blessings. So, it depends on the mind, doesn't it?

So, here is a person whose mind isn't quite right, obviously.

**Then he said to him, Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant.** Attitude was all wrong. Finding fault with others, finding fault with the Church, because a person is trying to justify themselves and not acknowledging the fact that they have problems, that they have weaknesses that they need to address. The problem isn't in others, it's in them. So, it's a different mindset. And so, God just calls it what it is, Christ calls it what it is, "a wicked servant."

You think about some that have been in the Church like that, if it's whatever percentage that is, ninety percent, I don't know, that has left over time? And you think, "Wicked servant!"

**You perceived that I was an austere man, taking up what I did not put down, and reaping what I did not sow.** In other words, didn't do that portion of the work. But that's how it works. God gives the power, the ability, the help, the guidance, the direction, the way, and we just have to put one foot in front of the other to walk that way. It's all there for us. He gives us the help we need.

And so, this is about a totally different mindset. Yes, God gives us everything, but we have to do work. We have to want to do work. We have to see the value in doing work and being a part of something so great.

**Why, then, did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest? And he said to those who stood by, Take the pound from him, and give to him who has ten pounds. (But they said to him, Master, he has ten pounds.) But I say to you, to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even that which he has,** thinks he has, in essence, **will be taken away from them.** So, generally, in time, everything comes to the surface. But there are some who continue on, I believe, obviously even to death in that wrong state of mind, in that wrong thinking, and resurrections, judgment will prove it because that's how God works.

That which is genuine and true before God, it will be blessed. That which has not been genuine and true and is put on airs and wanted to be lifted up and looked at or looked to or whatever it might be and resentful when others don't treat them in a certain way... Whatever goes through the human mind when it's screwed up like it is. Because that's the kind of thing that happens, and we've seen so much of it.

And so it says, **But bring here those enemies of mine.** Because that's what a wicked servant is. It's one who is against. They will not have Christ to rule over them. What a horrible thing to make such a choice, to turn away from the very one who is on this journey to go through what He went through to become our Passover and our High Priest, and then to come back to receive that Kingdom then as King of kings. Awesome!

So, **Bring here those enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them.** See, it's a spiritual thing. It's by our actions and our thinking, when it's wrong, and what we're actually saying to God if we don't love this way of life and strive to, again, put them first because we love them above all else and love that way of life above all else. Then, we have a mindset we have chosen for God's way to reign over us, for God and Christ, and God's way of life to reign over. We want that to rule in our lives. Anything else is the way of man or Satan.

So, it says, again, **Bring here those enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.** Well, that's the outcome at the end of that final hundred years. If people don't repent, don't change, and don't get their minds and attitudes right... It amazes me sometimes how

people can have certain attitudes who are in fellowship, supposedly, then, in the Church, who find fault with the ministry, the way things are done.

It still exists. Not as much, there's very little of it, but it's still there. And God will bring it all to the surface in His time. We have every opportunity to live this way of life to the fullest with good attitudes, with good spirit. There are some who are just never satisfied, never happy. That's their fault because everything is there for us to be happy, to be fulfilled, and it's in obedience living God's way of life in spirit and in truth. And if we're doing it otherwise, then other things happen, and they aren't good.

Then their journey continues on their way to Jerusalem. So, we're going to pick that up now in Matthew 20, going over to Matthew 20 as the story continues here in verse 29.

**Matthew 20:29—Now as they went out of Jericho...** So, now they've come through there, stayed with Zacchaeus a couple of days, and then going on through. And this is that story. We pick it up here. ...**a great multitude followed Him.** So, if He stayed in one spot very long, the news is travelling, more people are coming, and more are following. That's what was happening all through this last month or so here, what was taking place.

**And behold, two blind men...** So, now we come to **two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Joshua was passing by, cried out, saying, Have compassion on us, O Lord, Son of David!** So, they're acknowledging Him as being over them, the Son of David. Again, expression used as belief in the Messiah, the descendant whose going to fulfill these things that they have wanted for so long.

**Verse 31—Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet.** Same old thing. Just human nature. **And they cried out all the more, saying, Have compassion on us, O Lord, Son of David! So Joshua stood still and called them, and said, What do you want Me to do for you?** So, in this case here, it wasn't sending someone over to bring them to Him; now He just talks to them directly and says, "What is it you want Me to do for you?"

**And they said to Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Joshua had compassion and touched their eyes. Then immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.** So again here, more healing taking place, more people seeing these things because a large crowd is there, and more people are witnessing these things than ever before.

So, after performing some of these miracles and coming to teach many along the way, and many things that He was teaching along the way as well, Joshua began to move forward to Bethany here. So, He's moving on down toward Bethany where Lazarus is, and how He received that notification as they went up there and told Him that he's sick and, in essence, near death. And so, He's heading that direction now, to Bethany, and focusing on what was going to take place with Lazarus.

Now, again, Bethany is about 2 miles (3¼ km) outside of Jerusalem, and again, about 15 miles (24 km) there from the area of Jericho. And then we come to John 11. The story continues now in John 11.

**John 11:11—He said these things, and after that told them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I am going so that I may awaken him out of his sleep.** So, this is something He tells the disciples on their way there and telling them why they're now going toward Bethany itself, and brings out that this is a friendship they all have had, and saying, "Our friend, Lazarus, sleeps, but I am going so I might awaken him out of his sleep."

They didn't grasp what was being said. They didn't know yet what was being said. They didn't learn that until much later, until after the Day of Pentecost, when they could begin to understand these kinds of things and why Christ spoke in the way that He did.

**Then His disciples said, Lord, if he can sleep, then that will be good for him.** "If he's doing well, sleeping, he's been sick, and now he can sleep, then that's good." **However, Joshua was speaking of his death, but they thought that He was talking about him being able to rest and sleep.**

**Then Joshua plainly said to them, Lazarus is dead.** So, knowing they didn't understand and perceive, these things written, said in this way for our learning, for learning for people later on in time, and seeing the marvel of this kind of thing when your mind is that on a spiritual plane in what's taking place and that which happens when it's on a physical plane and what the mind can't see or understand. And so, now He tells them this isn't about sleep, and He just makes a statement, "Lazarus is dead."

**Now I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you might believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him.** So that He wasn't there to have worked with him, to have healed him while he was sick, but so they can see something far, far, far greater. That's what He's talking about.

**Then Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him.** Apparently, speaking of Joshua here now in this case, because they think if He keeps going toward Jerusalem, that He's going to be stoned and He's going to die. So, he's talking in these terms, "So let's go and follow Him."

**Now, when Joshua had arrived, He found that he already had been in the grave four days.** And so, He told them that he was dead, and now it's said he was actually dead for four days here now.

**Now, Bethany was near to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs** (again, about two miles). **And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.** So, before Joshua had arrived, there were already a lot of people there to comfort them.

**Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Joshua was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.** So, didn't hear that Joshua had arrived, was coming, and was arriving there, and so she went out quickly and didn't tell her other sister, and so the other sister, as it says here, Mary was still in the house.

Then **verse 21—Then Martha said to Joshua, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.** So, she had strong enough belief to know or have that sense in believing that He had the power, the ability through Him to heal someone of any kind of sickness. Because all these stories of things they already believed, that they'd been hearing there as well, about all these people that Joshua was healing and saying, "He wouldn't have died if You'd been here."

**But I know that even now whatever You will ask of God, God will give it You. And Joshua said to her, Your brother shall rise again.** So, she has a great response. She says, **Martha replied to Him, I know that He will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.** Didn't understand what the Church understands now, but there was this thing about judgment and about a resurrection and a future resurrection once again to life, and there were certain things on a very slight scale, if you will, that they had been taught, that they believed.

**Joshua said to her, I am the resurrection...** What a powerful thing! Something they couldn't grasp but would grasp later, saying, "I am the resurrection." That's how it happens, through Him. ...**and the life.** The life that's going to come. The life that you can receive, it's through Joshua. That's the way God has established it.

**And He who believes in Me, though he were dead, yet will he live.** And so those who have that within their life, they're going to live again. And that can be in different aspects here. Don't need to go into that now, but obviously, the most important one of all and the greatest one of all is to be called into the Church to have that opportunity and then to be resurrected in that first great resurrection.

**And whoever lives and believes Me will never die.** Speaking of the second death. So again here, what an incredible story here of what's taking place, because He's telling a lot of things that have taken a long time, or God has chosen to progressively reveal these more and more through time, and at certain times (we don't know all that was taught in certain eras), but as a whole, especially toward the end here, even more so.

"...and though he were dead, yet will he live. And whoever lives and believes Me will never die." So, it's not talking about first life, it's talking about that which has to do with a second life and not dying a second death.

**Do you believe this? And she said to Him, Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Messiah** (the Christ). That's what she told Him. ...**the Son of God, who is come into the world.** So again, just as with Peter, this was given to her by God to see that, to know that, to have that. And though Christ asked Peter about that earlier on, that we read about, Christ made it very clear to him, "You didn't know this by your own reasoning. It was given to you by God to know it." And so, there were people who were coming to know this, to believe this because of all the things that had been taking place and because of God drawing them with His spirit as well for this special occasion in time of preparing for Christ's coming into Jerusalem to die, to be resurrected, but also Pentecost that was following right behind.

**Verse 28—Now, when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary, her sister, saying, The Teacher has come and has called for you. And as soon as she heard that, she rose up quickly and went to Him. Now, Joshua had not yet come into the town but was in, or still in, if you will, still in the place where Martha had met Him.** So, He stayed in that spot for whatever purpose, perhaps teaching, perhaps doing other things. But whatever it was, still coming from Jericho, coming up to Bethany but not yet there at their home, so they went out to meet Him. Martha took Mary then back to where He was.

**And the Jews then, who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly, went out and followed her, saying, She is going to the grave to weep, or to cry, to mourn there** in other words. So, that's where they thought she was going, not realizing why she'd gotten up so quickly to leave the house. And so, the others don't know what's going on about Joshua is coming, but she wants to go out to meet Him now.

**Then, when Mary had come to where Joshua was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.** So again, that deep feeling of knowing that He is able to heal, yet not understanding it to the degree that they're going to see it and understand it shortly.

**Now, Joshua was troubled by their response.** So, it was troubling to hear that, both of them, "If I had been here..." or "If you'd been here," that's what they were saying to Him, "he wouldn't have died." So again, a carnal, normal, human type of reaction to something, yet believing in who He was, believing the power that was there, but not fully yet, not completely by any measure. And anyway, more could be said there about dying and death and so forth and how people react to it at times, and yet... So again, it was troubling to Him, that response.

So, it went on here, it says then in **verse 33—Therefore, when Joshua saw her weeping/crying, and the Jews who came with her were also weeping and crying, He groaned in the spirit.** Because they didn't grasp fully. They didn't grasp the plan of God. They didn't... Even though they believed in things about a resurrection, and yet not grasping, not able to see who He was fully by any measure. And again, this was troubling to Him because of all the things He had already done, all the things that had been done through Him, all the things that He had taught and said. And yet there is this carnal mind and spirit that's out there that's troubling of what we are like as human beings.

**He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. Then said, Where have you laid him? And they said to Him, Lord, come and see. Joshua cried.** That's just what it says, "Joshua cried." Two words in that particular sentence, that verse, and it's from the Greek word that means "with tears." So, it wasn't about Lazarus being dead; it was because of the people and knowing the timing and where He was and what was going to come to pass, all these things flooding through His mind.

**Then the Jews said, Look how He loved him! Then some of them said, Couldn't this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused it so that even this man would not have died?** So, finding fault. You know, human nature is complex and so lacking, it truly is, the human mind and how it works, how it functions. And it's missing God; it's without God. That's the problem. And that's the only solution, that it has God, the mind of God, the way of God, the truth of God in it in order to have soundness, peace, comfort, regardless of time.

**Verse 38—Joshua, therefore, again groaning in Himself...** In other words, because of their inability to see Him through all that He'd already taught and all that He had performed as far as miracles were concerned. So, it says, He, **groaning within Himself, He came to the grave.** So, basically, it says here it was a "cave" or a "den" if you will, **and a stone was lying upon it.** So, down in the ground there, and the stone upon it.

**And Joshua said, Take away the stone. Then Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, Lord, by this time he's stinking.** There is that smell. I don't know how many people have grown up on a farm. Past three days, by the time you're at the fourth day, there is definitely going to be a smell as the body begins to decompose. Don't want to get more graphic than that, but it's not a pleasant thing.

**By this time, he is stinking because he has been dead four days. And Joshua said to her, Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?** So again, He's reminding her of what He said. But they couldn't grasp it, they couldn't see it, they couldn't receive it yet. That would come later.

Then **verse 41—Then they took away the stone where the dead was laid,** where Lazarus was. **Then Joshua lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.** Now, He did this for their sake in all that's being said and done here, and He's letting them know... He's in essence telling them about this relationship that He has with His Father and saying these things out loud.

**I thank You that You have heard Me. Even I know that You always hear Me.** That's a beautiful thing. That's something that we learn in time in within the Church, that any time we pray, we learn that He always hears us. God desires to hear us. He wants us to have a relationship with Him. And that's up to us. He's made everything available. It's like the work, what we put into it. Everything is there. Provided everything for us to grow, to be blessed, and yet sometimes it's so hard for that to get that through our heads.

But yet in the Church through time, and hopefully it isn't a long time sometimes (but sometimes it is), to have that kind of confidence to know that when you go before God, even in repentance and you're genuine and open with God, not holding back, God knows everything that you've done, that we've done in our lives when we do things that are wrong, when we think wrong, when wrong things come out of our mouth. And if we dwell on wrong things, God knows what's in the mind. And then we come to that point as we have to, to be able to acknowledge our sin when we sin and to repent before God and to

have a confidence to know the kind of love that God has for us, that He wants that of us anyway so that we can be forgiven.

That's why Joshua died. That's the kind of love, the sacrificing kind of love. So, that was already given to us, has been given to us. And so, as we learn that and grow in that, we know that God hears us all the time, even when we've sinned. Meaning that when we come to the point of repentance. If we don't repent, then we begin to be cut off from God's holy spirit and a relationship with God. But that's an individual choice.

But if there is a confidence there and a love to God and a desire to continue in this way of life, a desire to fight for this way of life, a desire to stand up for this way of life – not to be embarrassed by it, not to be... you know, by others around us in family or anyone anywhere, but to hold our heads high because we know who we are regardless of what they think about us. We know who we are, and we know who our God is and who our High Priest is. And so, we stand in that firm and rejoice in that—awesome—and know that we're always heard. That's a beautiful thing.

And so, He's just relaying something here, saying something that we all have to come to learn. He knew it from a very early age, obviously. We learn it over time or grow stronger in that knowledge over time. And that has to do with understanding the love of God in a relationship that we have there, knowing that we are praying constantly, continually day by day asking God for help, seeking to make sure or being on guard against sin, and where there is sin repenting of it, and thinking about others within the Body and praying about matters that we might know of and asking for help in other things that might be a part of our mind and what we're going through in life that we share with God.

So, it says, **I thank You that You heard Me. Even I know that You always hear Me. But because of the people who stand by, I am saying this.** So again here, it's being said for that purpose, for the people, for it to be recorded, for it to be talked about, for people to learn from it through time whenever they read this story.

**That they may believe that You have sent Me.** So, even more so because He was the Christ, Joshua, not yet having fulfilled the role of the Messiah yet to come and reign as the King. He's going to go away into a far country, as it said, and then come back and return to receive His Kingdom at that time. That's when He is manifested as the Messiah. But coming first to be our Passover. Awesome.

"That they may believe that You have sent Me." So, by what's getting ready to take place, so that now even more so they've been crippled heal, they've seen the lame heal, they've seen all kinds of deformities, of things that people have had that have been healed during this trip, and finally, coming down through the areas of Galilee on down, so many people. Blind people who were able to see. People who couldn't speak who could now speak. People who couldn't hear who could now hear. People who were blind who could now see. All these things taking place, but now the crescendo, the greatest yet of something to this point. Because there's a greater one coming. But this one here at this point, the

greatest of that which people could witness and see, and that should then just on a physical basis alone say, "I know that You are of God. Don't understand it, but I know, because no human can do these things. I know that You are of God."

That's why the Pharisees and the Sadducees have such condemnation and will have in the future as well. They've got much to repent of and much to conquer and overcome if they will, if they even will, because of their mind and their mindset, because they so resisted the truth and what was staring them right in the face. And to think otherwise because they couldn't... What they conjured up, what they were teaching and believing at that point in time, they had to protect it; they had to secure it. And their standard of what was righteous was greater than what Gods... And so, it's this mindset that what they had and what they devised was greater than God. Mind-boggling.

"So that they may believe that You have sent Me." So, those who witness this, those who see this, those who know this, and those who read it later on, and it's a matter of did it really happen? That's their choice to make, whether or not to believe. But this is what happened, and all those who saw it had no room, even the Sadducees and Pharisees, because they were around. They were around all the time. And yet they would have to find fault. Incredible. Perverse minds.

**Verse 43—Then, when He had spoken this**, in other words, to God the Father, **He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth!** Awesome! "Lazarus, come forth!" And all these people, a lot of people standing around. Because there were those who were following Him in the first place. There were those who followed Mary and Martha out when they went out, thinking they were going to the tomb anyway. But they went out to see Joshua. And then all these other people who had been gathered around who had been following Him all the way down from Jericho, even, and going on into then this spot here.

And then He makes this so that everyone would hear it. **Lazarus, come forth! Then he who was dead came forth.** Can you imagine? That would dumbfound people and probably scare the tar out of them in many ways, because this is so foreign to anything that a human being has ever done. Human beings can't do this. And yet here is something who was dead, been dead for four days, and now he's coming out (staggering out may be a better way of saying it, because he was all wrapped up), staggering out of the tomb because of what Christ just said.

**Then he who was dead came forth bound hand and foot with gravecloth, and his face was bound about him with a headcloth. And Joshua told them, Unbind him. Unwrap these things off of him and let him go. Then many of the Jews who came to Mary, who had seen the things which Joshua did, believed.** It's not the word "on." You know, the Protestant world, especially, I hate how they've used some of these expressions. But it's a word that means "believed into," or **in Him**.

So, what does that mean? Well, the Protestant world has so messed this up in the expression that they conjure up something totally different in their mind. First of all is yes, believed in Him. It has to do with

who He was. He was the Passover... He was going to be the Passover. He was coming as the Messiah. You know, He was the Messiah. Not yet fulfilling that role yet, but He was the Messiah, He was the Christ.

And so, they began to believe that He was the Son of God. They believed in Him, of everything that had been said about Him. And so, that's what it means to "believe into Him." It's about the things He taught, everything that He taught along the way that were from God. This is all a part of it. It's not just believing that some man came along and started healing people. It goes way above and beyond that. It's about God. It's about the power of God and what was being revealed through Him, that He is the Son of God, He is of God.

**Verse 46—But some of them went their way...** See, isn't that amazing? **But some of them went their way to the Pharisees and told them about the things Joshua had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, What can we do, for this Man does many miracles.** It's not even thinking about acknowledging. It wasn't a matter of saying, "Maybe we should consider that He is of God. Maybe we should invite and start listening to what He has to say." But it wasn't that at all; it was "How do we deal with this? How are we going to change this, expose it to be something different?" that they had in their minds, "that He's not of God." Because that was their objective, that He's not of God. And so, "If we can't do that, what are we going to do?" Well, that comes a few days later, doesn't it?

Then they said, **verse 48—if we leave Him alone in this manner, all will believe in Him.** So, it's like, "We can't let this happen. What are we going to do? Because if this continues on, He continues to do these kinds of things, everybody is going to believe in Him." **...and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and the nation.** So, if they believe He's the Messiah, that He is a King, that He is a Son of David, then we're in big trouble because they're going to take away our place because of retribution and how the Romans work. They're not going to allow this to happen.

So, just reading a story like this and seeing what happens, and even what happened here, is kind of mind-boggling, to see how far the human mind goes when it resists God. So, not the easy road. It has to be fought for. That's why it says put on the whole armor. It's not an easy journey. It's one where we have to make the greatest commitments of our life that this is what we're going to live, this is what we're going to fight, this is what we're convicted of, and we seek the help and power we know we have to have to stay in that mindset to continue to fight, to continue to move forward, and to be a part of something so incredibly great.

Because the carnal, human mind of itself is against God. And so many – a lesson never to be forgotten – so many have left. The Apostasy itself cries aloud of how so many can leave and abandon everything that they were given. Incredible. But it happens.

We have so much to be thankful for – to be able to believe, to know the stories of things we're reading, to know they're true, to be able to see the truth in them, to be able to see the truths that God has given to us, all the way through scripture. That no one could write something from beginning to end over such

long periods of time, when certain parts were written that were different, and have everything fit together like a hand in glove perfectly in God's way of life. It's such a beautiful thing and such an awesome thing for us to be part of.

We'll continue on with more of the story next Sabbath.