

DIVINE PROVOCATIONS

Jesus' Life, Ministry and Crucifixion

Matthew 16:13-16 (ESV)

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

PREPARATION FOR VIDEO

- ◆ Pray for wisdom and understanding of the content.
- ◆ Read Chapters: 31—38 of The Unseen Realm
- ◆ Review viewer guide and Questions for Deeper Understanding.

Viewer Guide

Why do the gospels all start with the story of John the Baptist and Jesus' baptism?

Study bibles and commentaries draw attention to _____ imagery and vocabulary used at Jesus' baptism:

- ◆ Going through the sea with Moses and Israel and associated events.
- ◆ Commissioning, presence of a prophet (John) / Moses imagery at baptism.
- ◆ Jn 3 – Nicodemus came by night - the Passover happened at night.
- ◆ Unless one is born again (from above) of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Being born again, supernaturally, from above, is drawn from _____ imagery Nicodemus would be familiar with. The Israelite identity is closely connected to the Exodus story and being delivered from Egypt. This event defines what it means to be Jewish: To go through water, to the Promised Land, to the Mountain of God where God makes a covenant with you.

Jews are born of the water, having passed through the Red Sea; Jesus says this Old Covenant is not adequate. The New Covenant requires one to be born again, from above, by the Spirit to see the kingdom of God. The Jewish identity is inadequate, one must also be born of the Spirit and a participant in the _____ Covenant.



POINT TO PONDER

The Exodus event defines what it means to be Jewish. Jews are born of the water, having passed through the Red Sea. Jesus says this Old Covenant is not adequate. The New Covenant requires one to be born again, from above, by the Spirit to see the Kingdom of God.

As a teacher of the law, Nicodemus would know the New Covenant is linked to the new Son of David, the _____. (Ezek 36-37) Trusting in the Jewish identity will fall short. One needs to embrace the Messiah. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up that whoever believes in Him will have eternal life." Jesus draws on the Jewish identity in the Exodus and adds the New Covenant to it in this conversation.

The N.T. writers _____ the reader has a certain body of knowledge about the O.T. directly related to Moses, Torah, Exodus, and passing through the Red Sea. When the writers linked concepts about the Spirit and the New Covenant, most readers would have known what he was tracking on.

The more one understands their O.T., the more _____ can be seen underneath the surface of the N.T.

"The more one understands their O.T., the more imagery can be seen underneath the surface of the N.T."

What is it about the beginning of Jesus' ministry that taps into the supernatural world view of the O.T.?

We see this most prominently when Jesus is compelled by the Spirit to go into the _____ after His baptism.

Jesus goes to places that are associated with Gentiles and says and does things that loop the Gentiles into promises previously only associated with the Jews. Jesus is not just here to rescue Israel but to take back the _____ by defeating the gods of the Deut 32 worldview.



We talked earlier about Satan fishing for information when Jesus was tested in the wilderness. When Satan quotes Ps 91 and dares Jesus to throw himself down Jesus doesn't play along, lest he telegraph the plan that he needed to die in a certain manner. When Jesus says "You shall not put the Lord to the test" there is a _____ meaning since Satan is testing both God the father and God the son at the same time.

Satan also offers Jesus the _____ of the nations. He knows Jesus is here because God has not given up on the idea to restore Eden and govern the earth. So, he offers to give Jesus all this on Satan's terms, on the condition Jesus bow down and worship him. Cosmic evil is aware that the end-game of Messiah's mission is to reclaim dominion of the earth.

The earth is currently under the _____ of Satan – "the god of this world." Because of Satan's actions in the garden, everyone, even those under the gods of the Deut 32 worldview, eventually will die and be linked with the lord of the dead.

Satan knows Jesus is there to take everything back from the powers and principalities of the Deut 32 worldview. Satan tries to get Jesus to _____ the plan of God and come up with a new plan, as Satan did back in the garden. Jesus doesn't fall for any of it.

Jesus is not here just to rescue Israel but to take back the nations.

Jesus' first sermon takes place at the synagogue in Nazareth in "Galilee of the Gentiles." This was an area that in the O.T. and N.T. was known for a significant gentile presence. Ironically the savior grows up in Nazareth. Jesus goes to the synagogue and gives partial quotes of chapters 42, 58 and 61 from the scroll of Isaiah - leaving out the parts about the gentiles being _____.

In these and other episodes, Jesus eliminates the judgment language and quotes only positive language, previously only associated with promises to the Jews. By eliminating the judgment language, Jesus communicates that God wants the Messiah / Servant to accomplish salvation not just for the Jew, but for everyone.

Jesus puts the gods of the nations on notice. These are provocations that lead up to cosmic evil doing what needs to happen – killing Jesus. To have the New Covenant, coming with the Spirit, and the resurrection language of the O.T. come to pass requires Jesus' death and resurrection. One can't have a resurrection without a death.

Jesus is provoking both earthly and supernatural audiences by announcing He is not just here for "His people," but to take back the nations and all people from the gods.

Was the Gates of Hell / Hades interaction in Matthew 16 this type of provocation?

Recall in the first century Jewish mindset the existence of sin and evil is connected to _____ events:

- ◆ Gen 3 (Fall) – death, estrangement from God, the rebel is cast down to earth / underworld.
- ◆ Gen 6 (Flood) – Sons of God / Watchers taught humanity more efficient means of destruction, the proliferation of depravity, evil, chaos.
- ◆ Gen 12 (Babel) – Fragmented humanity, nations allotted to the sons of God, idolatry.

Messiah is here to fix all _____. Different episodes in the gospels and epistles mark their reversals.

Jesus telegraphs clearly that He is here to free the Gentiles and not just the Israelites. The seventy disciples Jesus sends out (Masoretic text 70, Septuagint 72) - corresponding to the Table of _____ in Gen 10. He specifically goes out to other regions and delivers people from demons in Gentile territory. The son of David leaves the comfortable confines of predominately Jewish areas. He is here for Jew and Gentile.



Caesarea Philippi (Mt 16) involves cosmic geography. Jesus asks the disciples "who do people say that the Son of Man is?" and then "But who do you say that I am?" Peter replies "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus says the Spirit has helped Peter make this confession. "You are Peter, and on this _____ I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"Upon this rock" does not refer to Peter. Roman Catholic tradition uses this passage to say Jesus is founding the church upon

Peter as the first Pope. Protestants go back to Deuteronomy where God was the rock that provided water in the wilderness. Neither of those are correct.

Instead, "Upon this rock" refers to the actual place they are standing, which is the _____ of Pan - entirely made of rock. Pan is where our horns and pointy tail devil imagery comes from.

Jesus' messaging here is: This place is important because its going to mark the destiny of not only those that follow Him, those that embrace Him, but also of cosmic evil—whereas, we (the church) are going to put an end to it. We are going to turn Satan's domain into his _____.

Caesarea Philippi is in the region of _____ mentioned in the O.T. In the days of Moses and Joshua even the Canaanites considered this a terrible place because it contained gateways to the netherworld (Ashtaroth and Edrei) which are also mentioned when Moses and Joshua go to Bashan and remove the last of the Rephaim / giant clans. The Rephaim are in Sheol / Hades / the underworld (Is 14 and Ezek 32)

This was ground zero for _____ evil. This where occult Ba'al worship began, dividing Israel into two kingdoms. In Jesus' time it was still a place of occult practice with Zeus as the "Most High." It represents Ba'al, the realm of the dead, the underworld, the cosmic spirits of the Nephilim of the giant clans and the demons.

Jesus picks this place to go and say "upon this _____ I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." Grammatically, a better translation is "the gates of Hell will not be able to _____ it." This translation more accurately captures the offensive (verses defensive) posture of the church as we assault evil.

Jesus goes directly to the gates of Hell and lays down a challenge. This is a _____. Jesus knows the crucifixion is imminent and pokes Satan to that end. Satan doesn't know Jesus' death is part of the plan. He is being provoked into moving people to put Jesus to death in order to get rid of Him and preserve Satan's power. This is all by design.

Jesus goes directly to the gates of hell and lays down a challenge! This is a provocation!

What happens next related to cosmic geography?



The location of Caesarea Philippi is also connected to the transfiguration account in Matt 17.

After six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain, which is not named. Geographically, Bashan is the most likely candidate. It is called Mount Bashan in Ps 68 and popularly known as *Mount Hermon*.

The cosmic geography is significant. Ps 68:20-22 says, "to the Lord belong deliverances from death... O Mountain of Bashan! Why do you look with hatred... at the mountain God desired for His abode {antipathy with Mount Sinai} I will bring them back from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea."

What sea? Bashan (Canaanite "Serpent") is the place of chaos and supernatural evil. These are details that are lost in translation but would be familiar to a Semitic speaker in that day. It is also associated

with the gates of hell, entryways to the netherworld and the serpent. The sea is a familiar metaphor for chaos and death. Leviathan, the serpent.

All this vocabulary in Ps 68 resonates with Mount Bashan / Hermon. In Second Temple Jewish literature, notably the Book of Enoch, they retell the story of the sin of the Watchers with the daughters of men (Gen 6). This is the mountain where the Watchers descend to launch their plan which will lead to the proliferation of depravity.

Why does Jesus pick this spot to be transfigured to reveal His glory? (Mt 17 – see also Ps 68)

Jesus goes to the place evil began and unveils who He is, the incarnate Most High as if to say “Here I am, do something about it!” This was yet another provocation, aimed at ground zero of the demonic world - the pinnacle of the achievement of human corruption by supernatural beings. Readers of Jesus’ day would have been familiar with this context.



From this point forward, Jesus taught the disciples that He needed to go to Jerusalem and die. Jesus accomplished His mission to provoke cosmic evil to set the wheels in motion which would lead to His death.

This is the plan, but the disciples are unsettled. Thomas says “let’s go die with Him.” Peter opposes the plan and is told “get behind me Satan.” They have the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and six days later everyone turns on Him and Jesus is dead. Satan entered the heart of Judas. These events relate to cosmic geography because Jesus goes to these two very specific places to provoke forces of evil. He already messaged He was not just here for the Jews but to take everyone and everything from them.

Sending out the seventy disciples announced the Kingdom of God was among us, the Kingdom was near. Members of this kingdom don’t worry about death. Jesus says “I saw Satan fall like lightning” at this time- expelled from bringing accusation. Members of this kingdom are no longer subject to accusation, and the lord of the dead no longer has any claim on their life.

All these episodes are part of a matrix of ideas. Jesus provokes His death because He must die in order to rise again and set into motion another set of ideas related to the defeat of death and Satan, and rolling back the authority of the sons of God, the principalities and powers.

Understanding the shared worldview of Jesus’ time connects many different events into a fuller picture.

On the cross, Jesus quoted Ps 22:12 - surrounded by strong bulls of Bashan – how does this relate? (Read Psalm 22) Much of the imagery in Psalm 22 is referenced in the physical effects of the crucifixion. “Bulls of Bashan” is not about bovines. Metaphorically, Bashan refers to the High Places at Dan where Ba’al, the lord of the dead, the template figure for Satan, was worshipped. Beelzebul = Prince Baal, a title for Satan.

Bulls of Bashan does not just reference the evildoers at the foot of the cross, but also cosmic evil surrounding, trapping and killing Jesus. They are participants in the death of the Messiah.
Bulls of Bashan = Demons.

The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis captures the scene. The White Witch, Jadis, is a Satan figure and a giant. Cosmic supernatural figures kill Aslan, the savior figure, not knowing he will come back to life.

Does the idea of cosmic geography go away when Jesus goes back to heaven?

No, we see cosmic geography in Pentecost. We have the Great Commission given at the ascension. When Jesus ascends, He sits down at the right hand of God the Father, in a position of _____ over everything, including Israel and all the nations. The ascension is in conjunction with the giving of the Great Commission. "Go therefore and make disciples..."

In Mt 28:18 Christ says "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." It is on this basis the disciples will be His witnesses "in Jerusalem and in all Judea... to the end of the earth."

Paul and Peter both link the resurrection to the defeat of the principalities, rulers, powers and authorities. There is a connection between the resurrection / ascension and the _____ of the authority and power of the fallen gods of the Deut 32 worldview.

The connection is seen most clearly at Pentecost.

How is what happened at Pentecost related to the nations and cosmic geography?

For the first century reader familiar with the Deut 32 world view, Pentecost has several connections.

In Acts 2:2-4, the disciples were meeting in the upper room and suddenly... **divided** (Greek *diamaridzo*) tongues as of fire appeared to them. This word for "divided" is also found in the Septuagint / Greek translation of the O.T., (which is normally quoted by the N.T. writers who are writing in Greek) in Deut 32:8 when the Most High _____ up the nations.



In Acts 2:6 the people were "**bewildered**" (Greek verb *sugcheo*), also found in the Septuagint translation of Gen 11 in the tower of _____ story.

There are two references to things happening in Acts 2 that directly relate to the Deut 32 _____.

They are enabled to speak in other languages (a _____ of Babel because everyone can communicate) specifically in order to communicate the gospel.

Acts 2:9 lists nations represented at _____. Exiled Jews travelled from all over the known world to attend Pentecost. The list moves from east to west (branching at the Sea). The same nations are listed in the Babel story, encompassing all the regions in the Gen 10 Table of Nations except one. (More on that later.)

There are nations historically referenced in Israel that are not listed Acts 2, and picked up later. For example, the gospel goes to Samaria (via Simon the Magician). This is significant because Samaria was the apostate northern capital of the ten tribes after the monarchy split. So, the _____ is for

them too, they are included.

Damascus is referenced. God told Abraham every place he went as far as he could see and later, everywhere Moses' foot tread, the land would be given to Israel. The outermost perimeter where Abraham pursued Lot is _____.

Phillip meets the _____ eunuch in the south. During the time of Manasseh, when the temple and ark were threatened there was a two-pronged tradition. Firstly, a number of priests and those who were faithful to Yahweh left the country and moved south to Egypt and then settled in Philae of Elephantine. There is a Jewish temple and colony in what would be considered later Ethiopia. Secondly, some believe the ark of the covenant was taken to Philae. There is a Jewish presence in Ethiopia, where the eunuch was from. He hears the gospel and becomes a believer. The gospel is for Ethiopian Jews.

Then Phillip is transported to Azotus, which was an obscure, tiny strip of land in _____ territory adjacent to, but not included with areas later claimed as part of the parameters of the kingdom of Solomon in 1 Kings 10.

Every piece of land associated with Jewish / Israelite promise receives the _____ first, before Paul is converted and begins his ministry to the Gentiles. Now the mission transitions to the Gentile nations that were divorced and dispersed at Babel. (Is 66:23)

Paul mentions twice to the Romans that he wants to get to Spain / Tarshish. Tarshish is the one remaining nation in the Table of Nations that is not accounted for elsewhere in the books of Acts. Paul is aware he is the apostle to the gentiles. Paul may have believed he wouldn't die until this mission is completed and the gospel is planted in every nation that was _____ at Babel. (All of the known world at that time.)

This is cosmic geography / thought. The Lord, through His church, is going to reclaim everything that was surrendered both in terms of Israel and also the nations.

Paul calls Jesus "the seed of Abraham." Recall that immediately after the nations were disinherited in Gen 11, God calls Abraham and restarts humanity through the miraculous birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah. God says through Abraham's seed all these nations will eventually be blessed and brought back into the family. In Gal 3, Paul says "if you are Christ's, you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise." (Jew and Gentile)

Acts is like an object lesson - a living illustration of the gospel starting in Jerusalem, Judea and spreading to the rest of the world that brings the Deut 32 worldview of the O.T. into the N.T.

When Paul goes into pagan territories, he assumes he has the right to be there and the power of the gods over the gentiles has been nullified. Jesus' resurrection and ascension has stripped away the rulers, authorities, principalities and powers.

Don't be afraid; the Most High became and man and died for you. Paul is His messenger. Believe!

We may be familiar with these elements but knowing the full _____ makes Acts more interesting, coherent interconnected and awesome.

"Acts is like an object lesson - a living illustration of the gospel starting in Jerusalem, Judea and spreading to the rest of the world that brings the Deut 32 worldview of the O.T. into the N.T."

Questions for Deeper Understanding

In the conversation with Jesus and Nicodemus (Jn 3:10), why does Jesus ask Nicodemus “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?” Explain what Jesus meant by that question.

Why did Satan try to tempt Jesus in the wilderness?

What is the Big Idea conveyed by Jesus’ ministry where he goes into places that are associated by gentile presence? Which of the three OT rebellions does this behavior address?

Why is the event at Caesarea Philippi critical to understanding the mission of Jesus and the events in Gen 6? **Discuss**

Why does Jesus pick Bashan (Mt Hermon) to take Peter, James and John where He is transfigured?

What is the Big Idea why all of these events at Mt Hermon, collectively, are done and for what reason?

Psalm 22 is referenced by Jesus at his crucifixion. Explain why the bulls of Bashan play into this event at the cross and its supernatural connection to cosmic evil?

How does the Great Commission (Mat 28: 18-20) and cosmic geography relate to each other?

Acts 2 and Pentecost have profound explications to the Deut 32 worldview. Discuss their connections and specifically referencing Act 2: 2-4 and the Table of Nations (Gen 10).

Why does Paul point to Jesus as being the “seed of Abraham” and Gal 3. Include Paul’s message to the gentiles?

Prayer Request

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆



Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

James 5:13-15 (ESV)

Other Resources to Consider:

- ◆ www.drms.com
- ◆ www.nakedbiblepodcast.com
- ◆ www.moreunseenrealm.com
- ◆ The Divine Council Worldview Facebook Group