

Chapter 5 Rejection

Book Two

THE KING ARRIVES

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The disciples were upset that Yeshua was going to Jerusalem for the Dedication. They knew the leaders were getting more and more upset with Yeshua and afraid he would be attacked, killed. Some of the scholars warned them. Yeshua even said he would be rejected by the rulers, killed, but would rise again on the third day.¹ They were puzzled by that. When he said they would have to carry their own crosses, they were horrified. They had seen men hung on crosses. He said a lot of strange things. There must be spiritual meanings.

Wherever Yeshua went children came to him. He always smiled at them and they knew he like them. Most adults chased them away and scolded them for everything they did. The followers who had children along appreciated that Yeshua made them welcome. He was comfortable with Gentiles, sinners, women, children too.

One Sabbath during worship there was a badly crippled woman. Yeshua healed her and the leaders, scholars were angry.² Yeshua reminded them that scholars ruled animals could be untied and feed on the Sabbath. In some ways Yeshua was gracious to all except when he was not. He pronounced doom, everlasting destruction. He called for repentance and turning to God not just for those called sinners but especially upon all who in their own opinions thought they were acceptable. "The first shall be last and the last shall be first."³

Yeshua's followers heard him pronounce doom upon Jerusalem. Word of that spread and reached the ears of the leaders and scholars. They despised him before and were plotting his doom in return. Destroying Yeshua had to be done properly or it might backfire. They kept warning he was dangerous. He was no scholar, had no real education, his mother was not married, he was Galilean, common labor, demon possessed, trouble maker, rabble rouser, false Messiah.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_predicts_his_death

² [Luke 13](#)

³ [Matthew 19:30; Mark 10:31, and Luke 13:30](#)

The leaders in Jerusalem would not stoop to listen to him personally. They judged from reports sent to them. They could not understand why common people followed him. They despised common people too. The people knew the leaders were against Yeshua, some stayed away. Others listened to him and respected him, saw his miracles, experienced the spirit of divine love and understood the spirit of divine judgement. They longed for God's blessings and felt the weight of oppression from the powerful.

Some had wrong ideas about Yeshua. They wanted him to act as a judge in their case. They offered to follow him on conditions. They wanted to use him, his fame as a way to impress others. An important scholar invited him to dinner on the Sabbath and there was a sick man there. Yeshua turned the tables on them. He asked them, if it was permitted to heal on the sabbath?⁴ When they chose not to answer, he healed him and they could not complain.

There was a well known beggar, obnoxious, drunk, named Lazarus.⁵ He was always underfoot, demanding alms, complaining about the people passing by. Most beggars knew if they acted and spoke respectfully they would be given more. Yeshua heard of him and asked what had happened before that he got to be like this. He heard a long tale of tragic woe. Much the man had brought upon himself, some he had not. He was born unloved, in wretchedness. The scriptures promise harsh judgment on the evil. Everyone knew he was doomed. Yeshua spoke with him and received suspicion, anger, bitterness.

Later they learned he had died, much to the relief of all. Everyone was saying surely Lazarus was in hell. Yeshua paused and motioned for them to be quiet. He told a story. In it Lazarus was known by name in heaven and welcomed there. While the name of a rich man was not and he was not received there. The rich man asked if Lazarus could go back and warn his five brothers. He was told that if the books of Moses did not warn them, they would not repent even if someone came back from the dead. The listeners all knew Joseph ben Caiaphas had five brothers.⁶ Months later the followers realized, those brothers did not repent even when they learned Lazarus of Bethany and Yeshua were raised.

Again at dinner with leaders, he got caught in a dispute between the two great schools, Hillel and Shammai. The host and guests complained Yeshua had not properly washed before

4 [Luke 14](#)

5 [Luke 16](#)

6 [By cultural requirements, a rich man would be a leader in the synagog and active in religious affairs. https://weekly.israelbiblecenter.com/rich-man-lazarus-based-real-life/](#)

eating.⁷ They were following the rule of Shammai, distinguishing ritual purity. Yeshua countered with Hillel's position that the core issue was not ritual purity but moral, inner purity. They were deeply offended and harassed him with difficult questions. Yeshua responded with harsh words of condemnation upon them

The whole culture was based on knowledge and privilege. Those with more knowledge of religions issues deserved to be more respected and had privileges over those beneath them. Yeshua turned this upside down. He made clear those with knowledge and privileges were held to higher standard by God and risked harsher punishments.

Near Jericho⁸ on the way, Jesus healed a blind man who was calling him "Son of David". In doing so the man was calling him the Messiah. In the city with crowds before and after him, a short man climbed a tree to see him. "Zacchaeus, come down." Yeshua invited himself to stay with him.⁹ He was rich, the chief tax collector at one of the most lucrative posts. They had long conversations. Yeshua joked that Zacchaeus had lived up to the meaning of his name. The Twelve, their families and many other followers ate well. Afterward Zacchaeus returned "excess" revenue to many.

Yeshua spoke with the leaders of the Synagog¹⁰ about forgiveness.¹¹ They decided to permit Zacchaeus to worship there. The followers were dealing with complaints from the people about Yeshua eating, drinking and staying with sinners. The next day as they were leaving Jericho, there were two blind men.¹² Again he was addressed as "Son of David." One of them, Bar Timaeus joined them as a follower. They passed the Winter Palaces spread over a large area.¹³

The very long climb to the top took much of the day. They left the warmth of the Jordan for the winter chill of Jerusalem. It was wonderful to stay with Lazarus and at the oil press.

⁷ [Luke 11](#)

⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jericho> 11,000 years old One of the oldest cities ever.

⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zacchaeus>

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wadi_Qelt_Synagogue One of the very earliest ever built.

¹¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forgiveness#Christianity>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Healing_the_blind_near_Jericho

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasmonean_royal_winter_palaces <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jericho-the-winter-palace-of-king-herod> <https://archaeologyillustrated.com/collections/jericho-herods-winter-palace-and-balsam-tree-plantations-1st-century-bc/> <http://cojs.org/suzanne-f-singer-winter-palaces-jericho-biblical-archaeology-review-3-2-1977/>

Yeshua did not make a great show of himself, no teaching in the Temple Courts. Many people did seek him out. There was a constant flow of people coming for healing and to listen to him teach. It was much more relaxed than other times they were there. Finally the leaders posted men near Yeshua to watch and see just who the people were that were coming. That greatly reduced the number coming.

Yeshua went up to the Temple for the Hanukkah celebration. The worship celebration was glorious but Yeshua was not able to appreciate it. They were waiting for him¹⁴. They backed him into Solomon's porch¹⁵ to interrogate him. They demanded that he would tell them he was the Messiah. They were from the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of Israel. They had the responsibility, the authority, to judge, rule, decide, if he was really the Messiah or an imposter. Yeshua knew if he said so they would immediately stone him to death. He told them to remember what he had said "Son of Man", Son of God." He reminded them of the works he had done. They claimed no evil person could do such miracles, therefore he had to be a righteous person.

Yeshua challenged them. As Sheep follow the voice of their shepherd so Yeshua's sheep follow him. Therefore since the rulers rejected him they were unable to see, hear, understand, who he was. He knew the scriptures and knew the teachings of the scholars. He turned that around on them. He referred to God as his father and that God had given him his followers. They were furious that he was claiming God as his father and so claiming he was God. He confounded them by reminding them of the teachings¹⁶ they knew well concerning Psalm 82: "I said, you are gods." One story asserted that since they were gods, death had no power over them. Another claimed that as gods they could not have children. In both stories Israel's sin ended their status. Yeshua finished off by reminding them of all he had done which was what his father would do. Then he escaped their clutches.

It was not possible to stay in Jerusalem or Judea, so Yeshua led his followers across the Jordan to Perea, to where John had been baptizing. Jerusalem was cold in winter. This was warm comfortable, much better than it was in summer heat. Many people came to Yeshua there, and the Council had no authority to arrest him. Yeshua had not spent much time in Perea. Many had heard about him and were eager to see him and hear his message. They

¹⁴ [John 10](#)

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Temple <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/temple-at-jerusalem/what-did-herods-temple-in-jerusalem-look-like/> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon%27s_Porch

¹⁶ [They are preserved in the Midrash Rabbah Exodus 32:7](#)

were hoping to see miracles. John preached and baptized but did no miracles. Yeshua's message was almost the same as John's. "Repent the Kingdom is at hand." With Yeshua there was the sense that the Kingdom had come in Yeshua himself. Believe in him.

He climbed the long ascent to Philadelphia.¹⁷ The people there were not so impressed with Yeshua, Arabs, Greeks, Moabites. They were more interested in selling things to his followers. On the way back, at the edge of the trees they stopped at the Castle of the Servant. It was built long before and left unfinished by Hyrcanus of Jerusalem. It was a powerful illustration of Yeshua's words of judgement and doom. The powerful place their confidence and hope in their own strength.

They returned to John's campsite and settled in. Yeshua's followers talked among themselves wondering what the future would bring. They were conflicted. They loved Yeshua. His words were the Word of God. His actions were God's deeds. They had seen great crowds of people moved by him. They had seen opposition from the powerful and fear in many people. There was such a spirit of love, gentleness mercy, compassion. He loved them, took care of them. They loved him. And they worried. Some of his words were strange. Some were harsh. So many had turned away, no longer followed. What would Yeshua do?

A messenger came from Lazarus' sisters. He had suddenly fallen very sick. He looked very bad. They needed Yeshua to come back immediately.¹⁸ Yeshua heard the urgent plea. He prayed. He continued as before. Everyone was puzzled. They did not understand. After two more days, Yeshua told them to pack up, they were going back to Bethany. Lazarus had died. Now they were even more puzzled, they thought Yeshua was staying away because the authorities wanted to catch and kill him.

It was a worried and concerned group that crossed the Jordan and headed up the long steep road to the top to Bethany. They were not so concerned about Lazarus. He had been dead for days. What would happen to them, to Yeshua. Actually Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days. People thought the ghost stayed around for three days. Then when the body started to decay, it left. Lazarus was dead and gone.

There were a number of people around. Lazarus was an important person, well known to the council. His position as Master of the Sacred Oil was just underneath them. He had regular dealing with them and hundreds of priest, olive oil workers under him. Jerusalem, the Temple was just down the hill. It was a constant stream of mourners coming to see his family.

¹⁷ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amman> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qasr_Al-Abd

¹⁸ John 11

So much sadness, such a fine man, cut down so suddenly in the prime of life. His sons were too young to take his position. Would Simon take over the position or would he have the power while the oldest son learned how to handle the position? The Council would make the final decision.

Unbelievable! Yeshua raised Lazarus from the grave. People screamed. Others fainted. It took awhile before anyone even thought to praise God.¹⁹ Hallelujahs. Cheers. Shouts of Joy echoed through the hills.

Questions:

What was it like traveling with Jesus on his ministry?"

I deliberately avoid quoting Jesus teachings as much as possible. It is better for the reader to read His word as recorded in the Gospels

The Gospels record the events of Jesus' life. They do not include the background information everyone knew at the time they were written. This is one of a series of stories that includes that background faithful to what is known about the history and culture. I hope this provokes-in a good way-the reader to think deeply about the Scriptural account. Go to my web site for more. <http://thesignofconcord.com>. These are in the section titled "King of Kings". There is also a section titled "King of Kings Supplements" with additional information.

If you do not think this reflects the culture and historic situation, how would you tell the story?

Many thanks to my patient wife Lynne for repeatedly proofreading.

This is meant for non technical readers. The footnotes are links to the documentation.

Notes:

This is one of a series of stories that attempt to make an accurate portrayal of the culture and history of the times in which Jesus lived. Go to my web site for more. <http://thesignofconcord.com>

If the reader discovers any historical inaccuracy, please send me the corrections and evidence. Please feel free to pass it on to others. Thanks to my patient wife Lynne for repeatedly proofreading. I excel at creative spelling and punctuation. ConcordDove@mac.com

This is meant for non technical readers. For them Wikipedia is a good reference. Scholars are able to find scholarly references for the following footnotes.

¹⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lazarus_of_Bethany https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raising_of_Lazarus https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb_of_Lazarus

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later LAZARUS ILL DIES

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Jesus

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historical_background_of_the_New_Testament

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_Christian#Split_of_early_Christianity_and_Judaism

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_in_the_Talmud

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_harmony

<http://www.gospelparallels.com>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_holidays https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_calendar

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah>

Syrian Legion 12 Thunderers Fulminata and 6 Iron Ferrata Pacuvias acting legate
in Egypt the 3rd and 22nd legions

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tachanun>

<https://www.romae-vitam.com>