

*All Jesus ever did,
he never did.*

*"I can of mine own self
do nothing..." (John 5:30)*

**In all those silent years,
He learned not to live,
but to let *ANOTHER*
live through him.
That is the only way
it will ever work!**

*"Thou in me, I in them,
that we all may be perfect in ONE."
(John 17:23)*

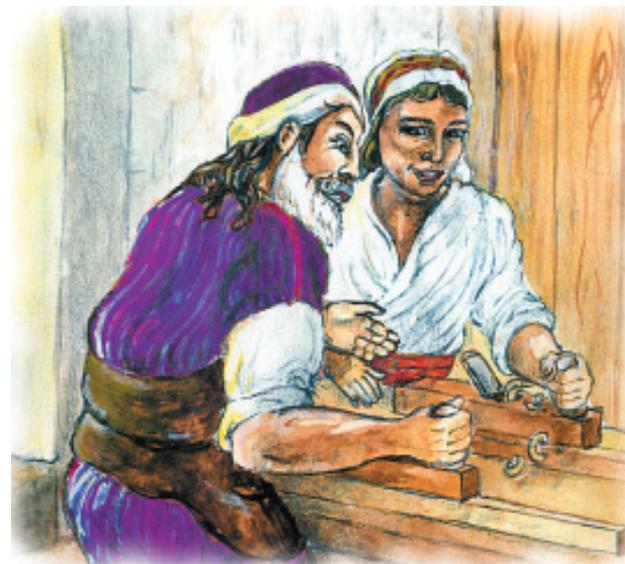


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The Silent Years

The Silent Years

A Divine Apprenticeship



ARTHUR BURT

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The Silent Years —

A Divine apprenticeship...

Jesus' eighteen silent years, from 12 to 30...

He took on our humanity... He humbled Himself.

He was in all points tempted, yet He never sinned.

He learned obedience... (Heb 5:8)

He was coupled. He learned to let Another live through Him.

He was learning...

And His mission began when He finished His apprenticeship

... at the set time.

The Silent Years

A Divine Apprenticeship



ARTHUR BURT

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The Silent Years
A Divine Apprenticeship

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Dedicated to the Most Wonderful Man in the World!

The Crucified Jew —

The Crucified Jew being the mightiest among the holy and the holiest among the mighty has with his pierced hands lifted empires off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries and still governs the ages.

Gene Paul Richtor

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*The Pictures— depict! They invite us
into an unknown field!
Pictures give Vision!*

—Arthur Burt

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PREFACE

PARDON ME! ***Excuse This Interruption!***

*A Preface is something nobody ever reads!
Like the preacher who says “Briefly...” or
“Finally...” and then goes on forty or fifty
minutes after. This is not a big book! Read it
twice! The first time, it can confuse or offend
you. Next time — ask the Holy Spirit to
reveal what it is all about!*

ONE

A Challenge for You... and for Me...

The purpose of this little book is to present to you a question, *a challenge*. Could it be that you... me... we... missed something in the Will, the New Testament, which is the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ? Could it be that we have missed our *birthright*?! The plotter, Satan, schemes to alter the Will, *his power being a power to deceive*. Has he made ineffective what, in fact, is effective because the Testator died?

Where there is a testament or a Will, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. A testament is only in force after men are dead. (Hebrews 9:16-17) It is of no strength at all while the testator lives. Jesus died, rose again and sent heaven's solicitor, the Holy Ghost... the Executor of the Will, to acquaint you and me with our inheritance. ***If you are a son, then you are an heir!*** (Gal 4:7) And the Word says as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)

Now in blunt language, a two-year-old heir cannot be trusted to handle a £2 Million or a \$5 Million inheritance. Under the terms of the will, "...the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all: But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father." (Gal 4:1-2)

So you see, even as the first Son had to submit to a ***Divine apprenticeship***, so must the other sons! Man, in the person of

Adam, rose up in rebellion in the first garden, Eden. Man, in the person of Jesus, the last Adam, humbled Himself in the second garden, *Gethsemane!* This was the final surrender of His will in obedience to the Father after being subject to “tutors and governors” for all those *silent years*.

**ARE YOU
COUPLED OR
ON YOUR
OWN?**

*I in them, Thou in
Me, that we may be
made perfect in
ONE.
(John 17:23)*

The coupled carriage (train-car) goes as fast as the locomotive it is attached to. Its speed or its power depends upon the *coupling*. Jesus says, “Take My yoke upon you. I am coupled to *ANOTHER*, My Father. Couple up to Me.” “Take My yoke...” (Matt 11:29) In all those *silent years*, He learned not to live... **but to let *ANOTHER* live through *Him!* THAT IS THE ONLY WAY IT WILL EVER WORK!** As He is, so are we!

...in His Yielding...

His learning obedience was in His *suffering*. (Heb 5:8) His suffering was in His *yielding*. It was in His *letting*. It was in His *taking* the Father’s yoke. He thus destroyed the impetus of compulsion! ...And He’s coupled up.

When you speak of the pressures of life, you are unconsciously declaring your resistance. You register the pressures of life by your resistance. But by saying “Amen” to God, you are coupled up. You become a positive to a negative. You say “Amen” to God who has permitted in His wisdom what He

could have prevented in His power. He that compels thee, go with him. (Matt 5:41) *You have destroyed compulsion. This is the secret of **The Silent Years.***

Men who dedicate themselves to warfare must submit themselves to the discipline of a drilled army; the issue is life or death! There is no — “Gentlemen, may I have your attention?” Commands are barked out. “**Atten-SHUN! Quick Maaaarch... Left, Right, Left, Right...**” I am not even permitted to walk at my own pace. Obedience is never obedience unless it is instant! This is the lesson of the sergeant major.

Jesus lived a Divine life as a man. If He didn't, there would be no hope for me! Let go — and let God!

TWO

About Coupling Up

Many say we haven't got what Jesus had. It's a lie! We do have what Jesus had. Some say, "Well, He was the Son of God." We are sons of God! Jesus was as helpless as I am. But He was "coupled up"*

A revelation has taken place in the world with electricity. Seventy-five years ago, we had no electricity! I don't know anything so much like the power of God as electricity. Electricity is the power of God! My mother had a tub to do the washing in. She had a *poss-stick*. She would *poss, poss, poss, poss... up and down, up and down*, and that *poss-stick* would *poss* the dirt out of the clothes in the soapy water. That was the only way we could clean them seventy years ago. Today you have a washing machine. Air-conditioning... Lights... We had oil candles! There was no electricity and no switch to turn on!

I remember the old tram cars. They had no power; they weren't like a bus with an engine in it. The electric wires were up above. When the trolley touched the electric wires, the tram car went.

Trolley busses to this day are still much in evidence. You could have a trolley bus that will carry 75 people up a steep gradient in Nottingham. And yet you can see a struggling

*We must understand what "coupling up" is. We travel a lot by train in the United Kingdom and in "train station" terms, there is a snap coupling between two carriages or two train cars, or between two trucks. This is termed "coupling up".

little four-seater car trying so hard in second or third gear... chugging up the same hill. This trolley bus with 75 people

**I was born to glide!
I was never meant
to chug up a hill
with my own effort.**

just glides past. But it has no power of its own. There are no gears. It has a trolley that touches electrified wires. When it touches those wires, the power moves 75 people and they just glide up the hill!

If you come to our country, to the United Kingdom, you will see that the railway system is *electrified*. That's from north to south and south to north. But it is not electrified from east to west. If you come to North Wales where we live, you will come on the electrified system up to the city of Crewe.

But when you get to Crewe, they take the electric off and they put a diesel on. So from Crewe to North Wales, there is no electrification of the system. But the straight course from London to Glasgow is electrified. And the carriages will go 120 miles an hour.

You've got this great monster at the front and behind it there are a dozen carriages. As long as that monster is related to the electric system, they all go 120 miles per hour.

There's no power in those carriages, none at all. They've got to be "*coupled up*". If they're *coupled up*, they'll go. And as long as that train at the front is in touch with the electrified system, it will glide along at 120 miles per hour.

This example goes along every line of electricity. You can push a lawn mower or you can plug in. I can cut my grass at home without effort because I have an electric lawn mower.

I watch the boys now with their effortless tools. I remember the days when we used to use our screwdrivers... *press and turn, press and turn...* to get that screw to go in. You don't do that anymore. You have a tool, plug it in, put it into the cut at the top of the screw and it will just whirl around. And it's in *without effort!* And if you want to take that screw out, you just reverse it. It comes out *without effort*.

Electric fires... there's no coal, no dirt, no ash! Just press the switch and the heat comes on! For lighting, heating, washing, milking, air conditioning, the whole realm of electrified tools.... Everything is now motivated by electricity. The electric revolution has taken place in my lifetime. Years ago, we had nothing like this! And I've done all the sweating! But now I watch the boys, they don't do anything. They just put the thing in, turn the switch and that's it.

Is the Church Coupled Up? Where is the Power?

In a sense, electricity is the very *power* of God. It is also typical of the power of God. And I do not see in the Church an electrification attendant to power. God says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit...." (Zech 4:6) If the Spirit of Him that raised Jesus up from the dead shall *electrify* you.... (Rom 8:11)

Now, how are we electrified? You know, you've got an iron. We had irons we used to put on the heat until they got hot. Now you have an electric iron filled with water and you just plug it in and it does the job. Electric kettles, electric alarm

clocks, everything today is dominated by electricity, typical of the power of God!

Is this power attendant of something that we in the spiritual realm should have? Are the people of God to be electrified? Are the people of God to recognize the unseen power of God to revolutionize us? As it is done in the natural, should it not be done in the spiritual? On what principle is it done? Well, it's done on the principle of plugging in and switching on! All you do with your electric iron or your electric fire is plug into your power and switch it on. And the power flows!

There's a similar illustration with jump leads or battery cables when your battery is flat. Someone comes along with battery cables and they put positive to positive and negative to negative. They apply it to your flat battery, then it is charged and your car can go.

Is there, in this final day, a revelation whereby we can be electrified spiritually? All your efforts — struggling, pushing, striving — the physical efforts that have been so pathetic are ousted by electricity. Milk carts, fires, tools, irons... everything is now electrified. *Is there a place where the Son of God became electrified at Cana of Galilee?*

**We've got to come to our personal
Cana! "This beginning of miracles..."
"...I can of mine own self do nothing..."
(John 5:19)**

***The Son of God became “electrified”
Because He had no Power of His own...***

The first thing... He's the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom 8:29) *He's the only begotten of the Father...* (John 1:14), but He's the firstborn of many brethren. See, the Divine purpose was from the *prototype* to produce on the assembly lines an extension of the same principle. Now what is the principle of the prototype? To my amazement, I see that the *prototype* has no power at all! "I can of My own self do nothing." (John 5:19) Now He's declaring a principle.

And He's declaring a principle that the Church doesn't believe. The Church doesn't believe in helplessness, in bankruptcy. From the very word *Go*, you start educating your children and catering for this and that rather than seeing that the Son of God declared that He could *of His own self* — (Now look at the operative words!) ***Of His own self, He could do nothing!***

Now another man called Paul says, "I can do all things...." How does He do all things? He does all things through Christ. (Phil 4:13) Who's He? He's the man who said, "I can do nothing of Myself." (John 8:28) So here's a man saying he can do all things through being plugged into a man who says He can do nothing, but who's plugged into a Power. "...Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory...." (Matt 6:13) *Of God* "are all things...." (Rom 11:36) (I Cor 8:6) (Heb 2:10). He is the source of all spiritual electricity. He is the powerhouse. And only as we are plugged in and switched on, does that power flow!

***In all those silent years, He learned not to
live, but to let ANOTHER live through Him.
That is the only way it will ever work!***

*“I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in ONE.”
(John 17:23)*

***Maybe we're clogged up
with the tree of knowledge (Gen 2:17)...***

But as we have proved so often, we are so clogged up; we are blocked with the knowledge of the tree of good and evil and we've set up an independent source. We've set up an independent source that had made us the enemies of God and made God the enemy of us — because He will not give the glory to another. (Is 48:11)

So when we plug in and switch on, nothing happens. We've got a short circuit somewhere. Because "...of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom *be* glory for ever." (Rom 11:36) *Of, Through, To... Of, Through, To... Of, Through, To...* So Sovereignty sends it forth into humanity. The responsibility now lies in humanity because humanity has got to know that what is through us is not *through* us. And when we realize it's *not* through us, it goes *through* us, back to Him... and keeps the electric circuit going. *Of, Through, To... Of, Through, To... Of, Through, To...*

But the moment I believe that there's something through *me*, then I've got a short circuit. And it stops. And because I believe it's through me, it doesn't go *through* me. It's blocked, it's stopped, it breaks down... and God Himself sees that the short circuit safeguards the glory, the credit due His name.

***Thine is the power, the glory... (Matt 6:13)
When the glory isn't safe,
God becomes man's enemy...***

Most houses have a fuse box. It is specifically made. You put in a 5-amp fuse. It's a delicate little wire. If anything blows, the fuse blows. And it's easier to replace a fuse than to build another house if the house burns down. Houses burn down because of positive and negative touching in the rafters. But then the whole purpose is that positive and negative are meant to meet in purpose at a set time. And when they meet in purpose, positive and negative, they produce light, heat, power, motion. That's the purpose. But if they meet before they should meet, then you've got a short circuit and the whole thing blows. But it's easier to replace a fuse wire than a house. The electrician knows this and that's why the fuse box is there.

God is heaven's great electrician and the power is His. But the power is His that the glory might be His. Thine is the power that the glory shall be safe. Now the moment the glory isn't safe, then there's a breakdown in the system. It breaks down and God becomes man's enemy instead of his friend. And now you've got the situation. God is not concerned like the electrician in the building. The electrician is concerned about the building being burned down. God is concerned about His glory. And once He sees a man touching the glory (Acts 12:23), He deliberately causes the system to break down. He will not give the credit or the glory to another. (Is 48:11) (I Cor 1:29)

**Now another man called Paul says, "I can do all things...."
How does He do all things? He does all things through
Christ. (Phil 4:13) Who's He? He's the man who said,
"I can do nothing of Myself." (John 8:28)
So here's a man saying he can do all things through being
plugged into a man who says He can do nothing.**

And I see in this system, the electrical system of heaven. I see that men believe there's something working through *them*. And the minute they believe it's through *them*, it stops and it doesn't go through them and back to *Him*. The system breaks down. God now becomes the adversary instead of the Helper of His people. They believe that it's through them. God says, "It's not by might, nor by power, but it's by *My Spirit*." (Zech 4:6)

His Spirit is the electricity that sends everything into motion. It moves, it generates, it heats, it gives light, it gives revelation, it gives power, it gives health, it gives quickening. Everything is by the Spirit of God and the Spirit of God actually is the Divine electricity that flows through the cables. But whatever happens, it's got to be recognized, "Not by might, nor by power..." (Zech 4:6), but by *God's* electricity! Once that breaks down, then the whole system breaks down.

The Divine prototype has enabled us to be partakers of the Divine nature!

The Bible says the Son of God, who was initially the Word, dwelt with the Father. And the Father was so delighted with Him, *the Divine prototype*, that He said "Let's have some more! Let's have an extension! And I'm delegating You to do it. It's *of Me*, but it's *by You*. I'm delegating it to You."

The Son, essentially, is Divine. But while He's Divine, the Father purposes that there shall be others of that Divinity. We are made "*partakers of the Divine nature*". (II Pet 1:4) We are not roses, onions, cabbages. We are the Sons of God, *partakers of the Divinity*. "Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness." (Gen 1:26) This creation had to partake of Divinity. So now the Father says to the Word, "I want you to take your coat off. I want you to disrobe of your Divinity and you will

enter into humanity. And you will become like the creation that I initially ordered you to form.”

Without Him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:3) Initially, He made everything. Now then, He steps across the stars, leaves His Divinity behind, and enters into humanity — which is the mystery of the incarnation. He enters into humanity and comes into the womb of a little peasant girl. And from word *Go*, He is now a man. The initial Adam failed God. This *last Adam* must *never, never* fail God.

He learned obedience in humanity...

When somebody is drowning, the rescuer goes into the sea. But the sea must not go into the rescuer. If the sea goes into the rescuer, then the rescued and the rescuer are both drowned. The rescuer has got to go in the sea and bring the drowning man out of the sea. But he must *never* have the sea going into him. So the Son of God comes down now as the son of man. And Jesus is God. He’s all God, but He’s not all of God. He says, “...My Father is greater than I.” (John 14:28)

I can take that bucket into the sea. And I can fill it with sea. And I can say, “That is all water, nothing but water.” But it’s not *all of the sea*. It’s all sea. But it’s not all of the sea. Jesus, my Lord and Saviour, is all God, nothing but God. And He surrendered that. He took off the cloak of His Divinity and now becomes all man in humanity, the mystery of the incarnation.

He steps across the stars, enters into the womb of a peasant girl, whom He initially had made, and now He’s birthed into humanity. He has a father that wasn’t His. And as a man, He suckles, He waddles, and He does everything that a man can do. *But He must never sin*. The Son of God develops and waxes strong in Spirit and in Grace.



Jesus...

THE MAN THAT MADE HIS OWN MOTHER!

*He stepped across the stars and entered into the
womb of a simple peasant girl!*

*He made everything. He enters into the womb of a
peasant girl whom He initially had made, and now
He's birthed into humanity!*

*He steps across the stars, leaves His Divinity behind,
and enters into humanity—
the mystery of the incarnation.*

*The Son of God became the Son of Man...
that I, the son of man can become a son of God.*

“WITHOUT HIM WAS NOT ANYTHING
MADE THAT WAS MADE.” (JOHN 1:3)

And at twelve, He is now in the Temple. Mary's lost Him, she comes back all hot and bothered. "Where have you been? Where have you been?! Your father and I..." And Jesus says, "Oh mother, wist ye not...? Don't you know? Have you forgotten? ...*wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business!*" (Luke 2:49) Not Joseph's. She didn't wist. So He went down and He was subject unto her at twelve. He becomes a boy again, keeping the Fifth Commandment honoring His father and mother. (Ex 20:12) He surrenders totally His revelation. And for 18 *silent years*, from 12 to 30, *He's learning obedience. So you're not going to claim it by faith overnight! It has to be learned.*

THREE

Can of My Own Self Do Nothing

John 5:30

A note about *The Silent Years*

The Silent Years was written nearly 20 years ago. Here we are at 2000 years, the beginning of the 7th Day, and I believe the Holy Spirit is speaking to me... “*Bring it Out! Let the people read it NOW! Now is the time!*” *It’s vital!* The people don’t believe Jesus is our *Kinsman Redeemer*. But He is... He’s like me!

*Remember... All Jesus ever did, He never did!
Now is the time for you and for me.
It’s the day of fullness!*

So in The Silent Years... I create situations that come because He was in all points tested, tempted... but never sinned. (Heb 4:15) He’s tempted to be dirty, tempted to be lazy, tempted to be greedy, tempted to be lustful. Everything that man is subject to, He got to be subject to. Because you will not buy anything that doesn’t have a guarantee.

Whatever it is, the first thing you want to know — is it guaranteed? Is the car guaranteed? Is the washer guaranteed? Is the tape recorder guaranteed? *Is it guaranteed?* The only way you can guarantee anything is to test it. If it’s never been tested, you can’t guarantee it. Now the Son of God was in all points tested. Absolutely tested! And He came through.

All right, I've created some situations that you don't want to talk about. But how could He be perfect if He was not subject to the emotions of a sexual person? He was tempted to be a fornicator. He was tempted to be a thief. He was *in all points tempted*. (Heb 4:15) In *all* points tempted!

But I've created situations knowing I'm on a firm foundation. Vashti the whore, a bustling, busty, beautiful whore. Black hair, flashing eyes, belly dancing down in the bazaar... Vowing with the girls, "I've conquered the others, but 'til I've conquered Him..." and she pushes against Him, squeezes by, her body touching His in the bazaar—*deliberately*. She comes up to His workshop with any excuse, "Could you make this...?" Wanting to be left alone to tempt Him, to bring Him down. She wasn't able to do it. Rather... He led her into life and *Divine electricity!*

There are different situations in the book, all to finally establish something: **Jesus never did anything miraculously until Cana of Galilee.** *Then...* "This beginning of miracles did Jesus at Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory..." (John 2:11) Is there a Cana for you or for me?

He never did a miracle until He finished His apprenticeship. *And then He entered in.* And if He's the first born of many brethren, when are the others coming? Is this not the time? Is it not time for us now?

This is what I'm seeking. Just as electrification of humanity has come at this end of six days... because now we're living in the day of fullness. You pick your phone up, you drive your chariot, you zoom through the sky in an airplane! We partake of fullness which condemns us because He now turns the coin over and He says, "Now then, pour it out! *Over to you...* You admit it! You've partaken of every kind of fullness that

I've released from heaven. *Now what about this!* My Divine purpose isn't a telephone, it isn't a washing machine. It's "*...the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*" (Eph 4:13)

And how does it happen? Well, you believe you can do something. **He believed He could do nothing!** (John 5:30) Now there's the issue! And until I am ceasing to judge people because I believe *I could do*, I never enter into what the Son of God is saying, "I can of My own self do nothing..." (John 5:30) "I can of My own self do nothing..." (John 5:30) That is the gateway! *It's the step.* It's the entrance into the purpose of God to have many Sons. It's the manifestation of the Sons of God who come to the measure of the stature of the fullness. (Eph 4:13)

Now to me, this is not fancy preaching. And it's not just another book. All I can hope is that God will give revelation. I don't know whether you are seeing what I see, I'm not better than you. But I see it! And I know that God has made me to see it that I might enter into it... That I might enter into the Divine electrification of the Sons of God! Revelation does not come by concentration, but by the Holy Spirit! (*electrification!*)

— Arthur Burt

PS

I am aware that these writings may shock some sensitive people. Many may not agree. Some may feel I have bordered on the irreverent. I have never seen a book written about those eighteen *silent years* of Jesus from the age of twelve to thirty. I cannot take refuge in company, so I am an easy target for criticism!

My ignorance of Eastern customs is considerable... but I have studied and gleaned from some ancient volumes that were contemporaneous with Jesus, *so maybe this so-called fiction is not altogether fictitious* and there is some wheat in the chaff! *From any angle, how dare I venture into the unknown!*
I have dared!

Let me make one thing very clear. I believe absolutely in the spotless, peerless Divinity of Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God. (1 Pet 1:19) (Heb 9:14) But I believe this had TO BE PROVED down here when He became the Son of Man.

— Arthur

**He never, never did a miracle until He finished His apprenticeship. And then He entered in.
And if He's the first born of many brethren,
when are the others coming?
Is this not the time? Is it not time for us now?**

FOUR

He Is Our Ever-Present Saviour... Our Kinsman Redeemer!

Oh the wonder that He who made the world humbled Himself to enter it as a babe in a manger — the outrageous Christmas Story that we have gotten used to! In our tradition and sentimentality, have we missed something in our conception of Jesus? He's our *KINSMAN REDEEMER!*

Have we so completely relegated our Saviour to the stained-glass window — halo around His head, upturned eyes, hands together, floating footlessly in a flowing robe — that we fail to see Him as our down-to-earth, ever-present Saviour? Isn't He the One who is more willing to answer than we are to ask?

In *ALL* points tempted, He has an intensely personal understanding of me and my problems! Should not the miners' leader have worked in the coal pits? Is it not commendable that Prince Charles, England's future king, has known the discipline of the Armed Services and *learned* obedience?

There is a false reverence that the passage of time and the traditions of men have produced among us. Jesus seems unrelated to our modern everyday life. We have clothed Him with unreality! He's like me! Our Kinsman Redeemer! He's just like me. But He never sinned.

With some, it would be almost blasphemous to say, "Jesus finished His fish and chips and went to heaven." Many would be horrified! And yet the Word of God declares, "And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, 'Have ye any meat?' And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them." (Luke 24:41-43) "Thus... it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead..." (Luke 24:46) "And He led them out... and He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." (Luke 24:50,51) We can split hairs about fried or broiled fish, honeycomb or potatoes and miss what God is saying. *What is He saying?*

You may not be able to compete in Olympic Sports, but you watch with bated breath as your representative comes forward. USA? Britain? Germany? "*How many points has he scored? Has he broken the record?!*" All your hopes are pinned on *another*... your delegate!

If Jesus Christ had failed as a man, I would have been eternally lost! That's what these *silent years* mean to me. I exalt a Saviour without spot or blemish, not because He is a museum piece, untried, untested, preserved, delivered *from*.... I exalt a Saviour because He went through His "trials" like the runner on the course, the boxer in the ring, the jumper at the hurdles.... He was delivered *IN*, by the grace of God!

From the manger to the cross, the last Adam triumphed over every situation as an *INDWELT MAN*! This is the lesson I must learn: He overcame through the life of *ANOTHER*. "It is the Father that dwelleth in Me." (John 14:10) *And this is available to me!*

If I destroy the foundation that Jesus the Son of God became the Son of Man, I am like the man who sits on the branch of the tree as he saws it off. Unless He made it *AS A MAN*, then there is no hope for me! Because my hope is not in me!

If Christ sinned, how could He die for my sins?



Teenage Apprenticeship... Jesus with Joseph

FIVE

We Reverently Approach Those Silent Years

To write Christian fiction almost seems a contradiction. There is a part of this book that would seem to be fiction. All I can say is crumbs from a loaf of bread are still bread and may be easier to swallow.

We reverently approach those *silent years*. We take our shoes off because the ground is holy and listen for a still small voice to speak.

- **Hebrews 4:15** is not fiction. It declares that Jesus was *IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED* like we are, yet without sin.
- **Hebrews 5:8** says, “Though He were a Son, yet *LEARNED HE OBEDIENCE* by the things which He suffered....”
- **Ezekiel 3:15** proclaims, “I sat where they sat....”

From these three Scriptures alone, if there be none else, I believe *The Silent Years* speak. The apprenticeship of the Son of Man was in those silent years — *experiences in the SCHOOL OF LIFE*. Where else?! What firm guarantees its goods straight off the factory bench without *proving*?

Obedience is not something to be claimed by faith in a moment. “Lord, make me patient and please hurry up!” No! *Obedience is learned through the things we suffer!* “Suffer”

in the sense of allowing or yielding to, in which case we do not suffer pain. Or "Suffer" in the sense of pain, because of the things we will not suffer in the sense of allowing or yielding to.

No one would consider that Jesus was in pain when He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not." (Matt 19:14) *He suffered in the sense of allowing or yielding to the circumstances of life!*

SIX

In-Out, Ebb-Flow, Yield-Advance

People must be committed to getting the poison from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil out of their system before they can receive the LIFE that comes from the TREE OF LIFE.

The *silent years* were not empty years. They were as full as our years. His were full of the same kind of circumstances: misunderstandings, intrigue, jealousy, envy, lust, hate, striving, yearning, joy, sorrow, achievement, the hum-drum, crisis.... There were births, marriages, deaths, surprises, disappointments....

And each situation calls forth from the heart of man a reaction, or if you like, *a judgment!* You cannot see a sunset, a roast beef dinner, a mountain of dirty dishes, a pretty girl, or a dead body without some sort of *reaction!*

Judgments from the heart are as common as breath from the nostrils! Every circumstance in the life of Jesus was an occasion to bring Him into union with the Father or to divide Him from the Father, as surely as the expulsion of air from the lungs creates an intake of fresh air.

The natural illustrates the spiritual. The expulsion of poison from the lungs demands fresh air, which is fresh life. Either that, or I die! We are tied to the *in-out, ebb-flow, yield-advance* process of living. You cannot choose two *ins* to one *out* or two *outs* to one *in*.

God breathed into man's nostrils, the breath of life. And it is up to man to submit and continue the process! My intake from my circumstances should bring me to God. And I reject or expel any poisonous judgment that would come from eating of the *FORBIDDEN TREE of the KNOWLEDGE of GOOD and EVIL*. Joseph said, "So now it was not you..." (*he breathed out*), "but God" (*he breathed in*)! (Gen 45:8)

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee! (Is 26:3) This keeps the blood stream pure. This is heart purity! "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matt 5:8)

Any interruption in the flow is the first step to death, suffocation, strangulation. Just see how long you can hold your breath before you are in real pain!

If a man is drowning in the sea, **first** get the man out of the sea, **then** get the sea out of the man! This we call artificial respiration, which from the *OUTSIDE* is to make the lungs do what they should be doing from the *INSIDE*. *They cannot inhale until they exhale.*

People must be committed to getting the poison from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil out of their system *before* they can receive the *LIFE* that comes from the *TREE OF LIFE*. God said to Adam, "Where did you get your information from? *Who told you?*" (Gen 2:11)

The function of man's heart is an unseen bowing to the rulership of Christ on the basis of peace. I can be "*peace controlled*" instead of "*reason ruled*".

The New ***Testament*** has been TESTED! When Jesus was twelve years of age, He raised the issue, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49) He disen-

tangled Himself from the obvious affairs of life to declare His first allegiance was to His Father. Then follows the eighteen *silent years*, which end at the marriage of Cana

Mary reappears again in the same role, seeking to relate to Jesus with the obvious affairs of this life again. “*They have no wine.*” Jesus again disentangles Himself, “What’s it got to do with me? Mine hour is not yet come.” (John 2:4)

Mary said, “*Whatever He saith unto you, DO IT.*” (John 2:5) Obviously, eighteen years had produced implicit confidence in Mary over her Son’s Word. Then the lights changed to green and Jesus said, “Fill the water pots with water.” (John 2:7) **A burst of glory!!** *The silence is broken and Divinity is revealed in a Carpenter’s body! Our Kinsman Redeemer!*

SEVEN

In His Humility, He Took Upon Himself Our Humanity

There is an old story of how Queen Victoria made a Banquet for her soldiers who had won the Victoria's Cross Medal for Bravery. It was a special feast, a Royal Banquet with all the glittering pomp of a royal palace! The guests came from every walk of life — the rich, the poor. Their only qualification for being there — *outstanding bravery*.

Among the guests was a very poor, uneducated soldier completely overwhelmed by such an array of regal splendor. The table sparkled with gleaming cutlery such as his eyes had never seen before. Trembling, he picked up a finger bowl and as he drank from it, there was a titter of laughter accompanied by subdued snickers and superior smiles from those around.

As he blushed with embarrassment, the Queen saw what had happened. She leaned forward, picked up a finger bowl, *her eyes flashing fire*, and drank from it. Then with a resounding "**Thwack!**", she placed it on the table! And as the Queen slowly looked around the royal table, still with flashing eyes, smirks and sniggers died and heads bowed. She had identified herself with her humble soldier!

That's what Jesus did! My Kinsman Redeemer! Son of God — Son of Man. "And the Word was made flesh...." (John 1:14) In His humility, He took upon Himself our humanity.

He was found in fashion as a man, even to being hungry. Subject to the lawful appetites of man, He said "...I thirst." (John 19:28) He sat down on Jacob's well because He was weary and said, "Give me to drink." (John 4:7) He rode on a donkey. (Matt 21:5) His feet trod the dusty roads of this world and were washed with the tears of a penitent woman who wiped them with her hair. (Luke 7:38)

When the cry for help goes up from a drowning man, his would-be rescuer kicks off his shoes, throws aside his coat and *dives into the very conditions he seeks to save the struggling victim from*. **He must overcome to undertake!** He is of no service if he sinks.

Those *silent years* would prove if Jesus was fit to be the Saviour of Mankind. Spotless and sinless in heaven as the Divine Son of God, He kicked off the shoes of untried, untempted Divinity, threw aside His royal robe and plunged into our fallen world **AS A MAN**.

It is one thing for a man from the roof to issue instructions to a man in the garden as to how to climb the wall. It is another thing for the man on the roof to come down and as we say in the North of England, "*Give him a bunk up!*" In other words, get under him and lift him up!

The Son of God became the Son of Man that I, the son of man, may become a son of God!

Through the Life of Another!

How does this happen? Only the way it works in Jesus! *Through the life of Another!* Jesus said, "Thou in Me..." That is how! "*I in them, Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One.*" (John 17:23) Not that we all may be perfect in three. No, in **One!**

The little word "*in*" settles it. We are *in* Another, and Another is *in* us. Jesus, 100% Divine and therefore perfect, surrendered that and became 100% man and took upon Himself the image of the first Adam. God said, "Let Us make man in Our image." (Genesis 1:26) So Jesus, the Word, who was in the beginning and one of the *Us*'s, not only *participated* in creation, but He Himself submitted to it, and became *one of us!*

To strut up and down the shores of heaven in His innate Divinity would have done nothing for me as I drowned in the sea of sin. Neither would it have helped had he plunged into the sea of sin and sank. A drowning Saviour is a contradiction. *He HAD to overcome in that which I had gone under in!*

The lifeguard must be subjected to rigorous training if he is to be able to save me. Reading a little book on First Aid will never be a substitute for battling with the waves. *And while He MUST go into the sea, the sea must NEVER go into him.*

So... the silent years were vital! He was learning...

The Scriptures say *He was learning...* learning to swim in the sea of sin! Suppose He had snarled at Joseph, scowled at His mother, complained at His brothers. Or when left alone with the woman caught in the act of adultery had fallen Himself, and after driving the money changers out of the Temple had pocketed the loot. Suppose He starved and whipped the little ass He rode upon, cursed the children instead of cuddling them, and eventually died in leading an insurrection against Rome! He would have lived and died in vain. You and I would have been lost forever!

"...*should not perish...*" is right in the middle of John 3:16! "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but

have everlasting life." (John 3:16) *Only as the Sinless One could He die for us sinful ones.*

Jesus had to live in a sinful world without sin! Which is more important, to keep your child away from water or to teach your child to swim? *Which!!* Eventually Jesus was launched after His final "Trials" like they say of a great ocean liner. This was finalized in meeting the devil in the wilderness!

God's guarantee! "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better **TESTament!**" (Heb 7:22) ***He was coupled!*** ...*He was learning. ...He was coupled!*



Eleazar's Memories

EIGHT

What Could Have Happened In the Silent Years?!

I talked to old Eleazar, the scribe. His wrinkled parchment-like face, drooping eyelids covering faded brown eyes, lit up as I asked him about Mary's Son, Jesus. Yes, he said he had known Him as a child. Had he not known the family over a score of years? In fact, he had lived so close to the carpenter and his family, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, James and Joses, Simon and Judas, and the girls.... They were almost like his own kith and kin!

He remembered the time when Joseph was ill and said young Jesus took over the whole family with their problems, the girls with their philandering like butterflies... And Jesus, not yet twenty years of age was a pillar to Mary, His mother, battling the poverty that a sick and moody man had given her, along with a big family.

The old man closed his eyes. And Eleazar remembered... "Yes," he said, "there was the time when Simon and Judas had attacked Abiathar, the wine merchant, that bear of a man! Abiathar had invested in some cattle and had bullied their father into making the yokes for his cattle for a pittance of money, then refused to pay and said the work was shoddy!"

He heard the howls as they beat him up, and remembered it was only the sudden appearance of Jesus, standing between the man and His brothers, that saved Abiathar from an early

grave! "Oh yes, Jesus could manage His brothers!" Eleazar said He was big and strong, but above that, *they respected an authority that He carried.*

Again, he remembered the time when Jesus got His fingers around Zadok's throat. Zadok and Cushi for many months had paid unwelcome attention to the girls — Esther, Rebekah and Rachel. "*Unwelcome*" was hardly the word, "*pestered*" was more like it. The girls almost feared to go out. "Ah well, that finished the night Jesus heard Esther screaming," the old man stopped. "I too rushed out at the sounds of the screams to find Zadok gasping for breath, Esther sobbing and panting, and Jesus towering over the would-be rapist. Neither Zadok nor Cushi troubled the girls again. Of course, from that time on, there were black looks from black eyes every time Jesus passed by."

Eleazar said Jesus was "hated by the evil, loved by the oppressed, and in a certain way respected by all." The old man rambled on. "Did I say... *'loved by the oppressed?'*"

"...There were many maidens who cast sidelong looks as He passed by. They gazed with admiration at the carpenter's son! His sisters were popular with the damsels who made many an excuse to visit them as a means to getting nearer to Jesus of Nazareth! ...You ask how He reacted to the young women? Friendly, but not familiar."

Eleazar continued. "Now with the children, He was so different. They were *His delight*, His constant companions! I have been in the Carpenter's shop after the death of Joseph when the children were knee deep in wood shavings... rolling, screaming with delight, arms full of anything they could gather from the floor to hurl at one another, while Jesus, unruffled... would be working in the background."



“Guess Jesus, who is it?”

“...Another time, He would stop and join in with them. Then as He sat down, they would push and jostle to sit on His knees, three on one, two on another. And while sticky hands were placed over His eyes, there would be a voice from behind saying, ‘*Guess, Jesus! Who is it!?*’ He never pushed them away because they were dirty, sweaty or raggy. Yet never did He allow impertinence or arguments without a firm rebuke!”

Eleazar later mentioned, “He *NEVER* defended Himself. (Matt 27:12) (Mark 15:3) (Luke 23:9) Yet He was always ready to take the side of the weak, the oppressed and the poor. When Neriah’s old widow was robbed and beaten up, He rebuked the indifference of us all until so ashamed were we, that we fell in behind Him and pursued every opening that led to Hilkiah’s sons being discovered as the culprits. So moved were we that we were ready to stone them. He made them restore everything. He was an embarrassment and a rebuke to the evil-doer.”

Eleazar described Him further. “Although a champion of the fallen and the weak, He Himself was insulted and never answered back. Hints and slurs that He was a bastard were never replied to. A man of such unusual calm and peace!”

“...He was many times pushed ‘round, robbed, unfairly treated, imposed upon — even by His own disciples. His few earthly possessions were so often trespassed upon. He seemed to have no rights. People owed Him money for work done and with glib tongues excused themselves with lies as plain as the noses on their faces. Yet if the same thing happened to another, He could be ruthlessly fierce.”

“...His eyes could smile, or penetrate like pinpoints of fire! They said He was lazy, cruel, sullen. Then others would say

He was arrogant, pompous and interfering. He often would disappear, no one really knew where....”

“...He had enemies. He was loved, He was hated, even plotted against. There was the time a trap was laid by those who hated His righteousness. They would give anything to bring Him down...”

Eleazar continued with many stories... remembering those days. He talked about Massalian, an old man who lived on the road to Bethany. He had once been a priest, a man of great leadership, skilled in the Law and the Prophets, and Jesus often visited him. The story goes that one of the daughters of Barzillai, a long-standing enemy of Jesus, contrived (like Potiphar’s wife had tried to do with Joseph) to defile His reputation.

“Whether the damsel had a real infatuation for Jesus is not known,” Eleazar said. “All I can tell you is that on one of His visits to old Massalian, her screams rang out in the dark and when some came running, her clothing was ripped and she pointed to Jesus and claimed He had attempted to rape her! Jesus held His peace! He just stood there and His calm spoke volumes. He answered nothing to the torrent of her accusations. An unearthly presence surrounded Him, but no sound proceeded from His mouth. He stood silently!”

“Suddenly she fell at His feet as if dead. She sobbed uncontrollably, her body shaking until finally, convulsively, she begged His forgiveness and admitted it was nothing but lies... *lies!* The crowd dispersed! He won without a word!”

Eleazar explained they knew He was the victim of Barzillai’s evil tongue and scheming mind. Had He not exposed Barzillai’s latest plot as he had contrived to get Eliab the



Jesus Sitting with Massalian, the Old Priest

Potter's house? This carpenter's son had an uncanny discernment. *He knew without knowing.* Men flinched before those eyes and fled like scurrying beetles from the light, when you lift a rock up!

Eleazar, the scribe, adjusted his staff, placed one hand on the top of the other, and rested his gaunt chin atop as he continued. "All the village knew Joseph as a morose, moody man. Whether the result of a sick body, no one quite knew. Mary, on the contrary, was fair, buxom, talkative and attractive... which provoked a sullen jealousy in Joseph. This often seemed to rebound upon Jesus. He became the butt, and whether it was because of His unusual birth or amazing grace may only be known to His heavenly Father!"

Eleazar continued. "Towards the end of Joseph's life, Jesus almost carried the family. What His toil-worn hands in honest work did not produce, His foresight and wisdom did! He was a pillar to his mother, an example and leader to His brothers and sisters, and yet almost careless about Himself. He never seemed to have anything. He was always giving things away. It was quite a common situation for one of His brothers to be *borrowing* what was the property of Jesus until, if He used it again, it seemed as if He was the borrower!"



Vashti, the Whore

NINE

Vashti, the Whore

Down in the crowded Bazaars, Vashti the whore paraded like a queen, tossing her arrogant head. She boasted she would lie with Jesus before the next full moon.

His clean-cut image was a challenge to her pride! Many were the men who had not been able to resist her outstanding charms. She was not one of *them*, she was *the* one of them. Her voluptuous belly dancing conquered more men, so she said, than Jesus had made wooden yokes!

She accosted Him with her gleaming swaying body. Her whirling black hair cascading down in unruly masses over her perfumed shoulders as if to declare the defiant moods of her heart! Her glittering black eyes, long lashes, red lips and full bosom always made her conquests easy. They fell like pole-axed bullocks.

Once having boasted to the other whores, she, for the sake of her pride, was *determined* to conquer the carpenter's son. It irritated her that He seemed so oblivious to her charms and now, she made Him her goal.

Almost impudently, she stood in His way *deliberately* in the narrow alleys of the Bazaar, making Him have to squeeze by her to get past. Other times she made her way with one or two others up to His workshop. "Would He do this?" "... Could He do that?"

There were muttered whispers, sly looks, unspoken judgments that eventually broke out like sores and spots on a teenager's face. Then... *it happened!* Vashti, the whore, who had sought to conquer, *was conquered!* The Belly Dancer danced no more! Jesus the Carpenter had made something anew that was not of wood. And a changed life spoke volumes of the power of the Son of God!

A tamed tigress only added to the testimony of what they had already said about Him with real wild beasts. Was it really true that He had a power and a charm over the animal creation? Was it true what Mannaseh, son of Henez had said? "At the mercy of wild beasts one day, almost ready to be torn asunder, this Jesus had appeared in the nick of time and *commanded* them to go. And they went!" Like a man in a dream, Mannaseh had risen. And Jesus had gone.



The Rich Man Attempting to Tempt

TEN

The Story of Jacob-Bar-Amnon

Jacob-Bar-Amnon, the wealthy cloth merchant, approached Jesus one day with fat and oily charm... exuding apparent good will, flashing smiles from his huge black-bearded head. Layers of fat, many chins, gleaming rings... all spake of an opulence that the lean Carpenter was a stranger to.

The cloth merchant spoke of great wealth, golden opportunities and prestige that would make the workshop as the moon to the sun! *And Jesus... Look at this man! A rich man... camels, she asses, oxen, sheep!*

All he asked was a little cooperation in a *plan*. If Jesus would come into a partnership, it would be so easy — nothing to lose. *“All He would have to do would be...”*

He stooped and lowered his voice. No one really knew what Jesus said, but bystanders said old Bar-Amnon went up the road spitting and spluttering like a leaking wine skin!

ELEVEN

In All Points Tempted

No one had ever seen Jesus sick, but “*Often was He weary and He seemed to be able to sleep anywhere.*” Some said that He had even fallen asleep in the Synagogue, lulled, *no doubt* by the droning repetitions of the priests of His day!

He was vibrant, yet reserved... retreating into a spiritual refuge where no man could follow Him. Lost in a sea of calm! Engulfed in a relationship with another world where only His God and Father mattered!

He loved and yet never gave Himself to man. He learned obedience to His Father by yielding before man. His concern to His Father made Him unconcerned about the things that concern you and me. Many times man’s doormat, but never a people-pleaser!

In an awesome pre-existence with the Eternal God, yet He humbled Himself to come into a fallen world about which John 1:3 declares, “All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.”

To make an ant and then become an ant living in an ant’s world is an amazing situation. The Son of God becomes the Son of Man to lift fallen man back into the realm of the Sons of God. ***Our Kinsman Redeemer!***

Cruelty, brutality, lust, wealth, idleness, greed, vanity, doubt, carelessness, pomp, a fair show in the flesh, lying, cheating, jealousy, envy — you name it and He has been tempted on that point. You can go on and on... and never go beyond the world of the Lord. ***ALL POINTS...*** *Yet He never sinned. (Heb 4:15)*



Tamar and Uncle Jesus

TWELVE

Jesus Laughed

Last week I saw Eleazar again. He was sitting out under an oak tree dozing. But as he awakened, he seemed disposed to reminisce. And I remembered what someone asked a brother called Rufus Mosely, "Do you think Jesus ever laughed?" "I don't know," Rufus replied, "but He sure made it possible for me to!" So I turned to the old man and asked him if Jesus was a very solemn man. Did He ever express Himself in joy or humor? Did He smile much?

Eleazar nodded his head vigorously, "Yes, oh yes! With the children, He was always laughing and smiling and would join in with their harmless games! They would pull Him around. I have seen them clamber on His back, grab Him by the hand, crawl between His legs and throw their arms around His waist as He passed by."

"...The youngest ones would eagerly run to greet Him or show Him some little treasure — a colored stone, a fresh plucked flower, or even a captive living creature! Whether there were frogs or worms, butterflies or fishes, He would share their interests just as if He was one of them!"

Eleazar said he remembered little **Tamar**, the daughter of Nahum the Kenite. "She would run with outstretched arms whenever she saw Jesus. One day, her father never came back from a fishing trip on Lake Galilee. Her early sobs for comfort as she buried her head on His shoulder, with the passage of time, turned to shrieks of childish glee as she would tweak

His beard and Jesus, *laughing*, sought to avoid being caught by chubby fingers! She looked upon Him as her very own *Uncle Jesus!*"

"The boys would try their muscles against Jesus, sometimes three or four of them at once! Breathlessly, in a rough and tumble, He would put His strong arms around them until they gave in. Oh yes, there were shouts of laughter from struggling children, and some of the shouts were from Jesus!"



"I have seen Him on all fours romping in the grass, three or four mounted riders struggling to keep on, and with equal effort as He sought to throw them off! And He used to say that any of them that could survive a splashing battle from Jordan to Galilee would get a free ride on one of the donkeys that His brothers owned!"

"His sisters teased Him unmercifully. When would He take to Himself a wife? Did He know what Miriam had said to them in the market? Or that Abigail, the tax gatherer's daughter told them last week she dreamed she had married a carpenter with auburn hair, of course, *just like Jesus*. Much of the laughter between Jesus and His sisters was on this wise...."

"They hid His few belongings, confided whispers about what Rachel, the daughter of Sheba had said.... and what about

Esther, Mary, Rahab, Martha and many of the other maidens?! And oh, of course, *Ohinoam*, the daughter of Eliab the younger. Jesus would never hear the end of that from His teasing sisters. When she had fallen off a rebellious camel, Jesus picked her up in His arms just as His sisters had arrived on the scene. The camel bolted and there was Jesus with the damsel in His arms! *Oh... La! La! La!* Oh yes, *we* know... But she was in no hurry for Jesus to put her down. She clung to Him, her arms around His neck much longer than to get over her fright. In fact, if He hadn't put her down, she would still have been there. She said so! She told them so! ...Then there would be another burst of laughter as Jesus would catch His sister by her plaited hair."



"Gee-Up, Jesus"

“Oh, no! Life wasn’t dull at the carpenter’s house! Joseph would retreat somewhere and Mary would hustle and bustle around her brood like a clucking hen with her chicks.”

Besides her family, Eleazar said there were always extras. An ever-obliging Jesus was always involved with someone with His woodwork or with some kind of a problem, the lonely, the odd ones. The carpenter’s house, and more so after the death of Joseph, became a rallying point, a refuge... as well as a feasting place!

THIRTEEN

A Servant of the People Before a Saviour of the People

Young Jesus was available to serve. Not to serve Mankind, but to serve His Father who related Him to the needs of mankind.

I was curious about Jesus in His younger days, in His teens, in the change from boyhood. I knew what happened when He was twelve. And the remarkable thing about Him is that He was a keen learner, out of which, He became an apt teacher. Out of His *under* came His *over*.

And I made a discovery. I consulted old Eleazar again with his wealth of memories. But this time, I extended and gleaned from others about Jesus. I thought He was a loner. I thought that He got away from people, a kind of a monastic attitude. But I discovered He was *involved* with people. He wasn't aloof, but He was available... to help, to listen, to serve. And out of His willingness to *serve* came His ability to *do*.

He had an amazing ability to impart and to help *before* His ministry of the miraculous. Well, He was the nearest thing to a miracle *outside* of a miracle! He was doctor to the sick, referee in the fights, a guide in the hour when people did not know which way to turn, a servant willing to put His shoulder under the wheel that was stuck in the mud. He was helping with a rebellious donkey and seeking to find out why it wouldn't do what it should do. He even entered into the mystic kingdom of His sisters with their women's needlecraft and

tapestries. He was there, He was a servant, but He was a leader. Out of His *under*, comes His *over*. *What a demonstration!*

**A servant willing to put His shoulder
under the wheel that was stuck in the mud,
...before His ministry of the miraculous.**

Where did all His parables come from? Well, out of His involvement with farming and fields and gardening. He was there, helping in the fields. And He was very much at home in the fields — plowing, digging, pruning, planting and whatever else is entailed in all the parables. He obviously had practical knowledge. He Himself had dug and planted. And His willingness... producing an *ability*.

Now I had thought He spent time alone. I believe He did, in communion with His Father, they say He went sometimes into the wilderness. But He was also involved with people and their problems. And I found that at the end of a busy day working in the carpenter's shop, He'd learn that Ezra had been around, "Could Jesus come and have a look at the boat?" Levi had been around about a yoke. Even His mother, fussing 'round like a brooding hen, but *needing* Him.

This was a discovery to me, *almost a shock!* I knew He was the oldest, and as such, became the leader of the family. The girls looked up to Him. The girls took their problems to Him. His brothers went to Him. But why? Well, because He *gave Himself*. He didn't just give good advice. He gave *Himself*. He so identified with their problems — as if they were *His* problems. It was no longer *your* problem, it was *our* problem.

He put His shoulder, *figuratively*, under the wheel of the stuck chariot. *He was there*, not sitting in a sublime cleanliness of independence. But He was soiled and muddy — push-

ing, lifting, struggling. And it didn't stop with the material. People came to Him because He had amazing wisdom. Wisdom was there in the person of this Jesus of Nazareth.

Mind you, all this *before* Cana of Galilee. Cana of Galilee was the *introduction of the miraculous*, that which separated Him and introduced Him into the realm of Divinity and the miraculous. I know that and I agree. But I wanted to go... *the other side*. I wanted to find out how the man as a man, the young man as a young man, and the boy as a boy functioned.

I'm not discussing His capacity as the Son of Man revealed as the Son of God. As the Scripture says, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory...." (John 2:11) He emerges from the cocoon of the caterpillar into the beauty of the butterfly. This was pinpointed at Cana. I'm probing around pre-Cana. I'm questioning *before* the birth of His ministry. And I find as much as any man could be, a miracle without miracles!

His ability came out of His willingness to be involved.

He seemed born to serve — a *servant* of the people before a *Saviour* of the people. If He were missing, you'd find Him *involved* with somebody's problem. He spent long hours serving. It didn't matter how limited He was in time. You understand, He was a working man. He wasn't like Moses, a prince brought up in a palace. He was working everyday.

I saw Him revealed in the true light of the *servant* of the people. Instead of a monastic figure alone with God, it was the other side of it.

And so I probed further and I discovered... *His ability is birthed out of His willingness to serve*. You want something



Jesus... Serving, Mending in His Earlier Days

doing? *Ask Jesus*. You don't agree? You doubt He was available to help in any task? Look over there! Who is that on *bended knee* washing dirty feet! ...**Jesus!** The greater includes the lesser!

Jesus, Washing Dirty Feet

It's on the principle of the greater including the lesser. Thinking on this, if Jesus stooped to wash dirty feet, and I don't see how He could except He got down on His knees, then I could easily see Him going down to Capernaum to fetch bread and meat for Mary.

I could see Him stripped to the waist by the lakeside gutting fish. I could see Him helping an old man named Eli. The boat is leaking, it needs "pitching", or as we would say, "painting". Like Noah's ark, "pitching" within and without. Do I have a problem seeing Jesus wielding a brush? Well of course not! Would He not help Eli, an old man who no longer has the sight or the strength?

He was released from need, delivered from deliverance, but captured on a higher level.

I can see Him helping the helpless, maybe the hopeless and the useless. And all the while, it is obvious that He was not the servant of Mary just to do whatever she said. It almost seems rude the way He spoke to her, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" (John 2:4) He was released from need, delivered from deliverance, but captured on a higher level. He was moving on an unseen clock up and He declares, "...Mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:4)

If Jesus was down here today, He would be identified with our traffic lights. He would be saying, "Look, your lights might be

green, but My Father's light is red. And I can't move 'till that light up there turns to green."

"...Mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:4) He was less than an hour off His hour when He said it and He comes out of His apprenticeship! He is *now* related to a proceeding Word rather than a proceeded* Word. He gets His first creative Word, which the breath of God has sent forth. *And then...* "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth His glory." (John 2:11) This was where He finished His apprenticeship. It was the end and it was the beginning....

Jesus was available. Not to serve mankind, but to serve His Father who relates Him to the needs of mankind. So He can quite easily resist and slip out of the need that Mary would put on Him and yet gladly put His shoulder under any burden that His Father gives. And as a servant in every avenue of life, Our Lord Jesus is available for that which His Father relates Him to. And that's *NOT* directly to me, *No!* He's delivered from man's needs, He's related to the Father. And the Father relates Him to me.

* *proceeded*. A past Word, a "dead" Word.

"...man does not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord..." (Deut 8:3)

FOURTEEN

The Distant Christ

Eleazar went on... "Poverty and abundance collided head on, and somehow Jehovah-Jireh prevailed! And yet, this same Jesus could be remote and distant like the ice on the peak of Mount Hermon."

"Somehow He who relaxed in innocence, never seemed to 'fit' with the religious and the super-spiritual of His day. They would ask Him questions about His birth, 'Was it true...?' And about His destiny, 'Was He to be a deliverer, a king?' He would turn abruptly away, engage in anything natural or pick a baby up and walk out with it, or go and play with the children. He seemed almost rude — anything to avoid the sickly sentiment of Phariseeism, the holier-than-thou people. He hated pride!"

He hated pride!

FIFTEEN

A Leaping Jesus!

So often, the mournful features of Christ greet us today from the walls of churches, chapels and homes... *the medieval concept, halo complete!* Was He really like that? What does Hebrews 1:9 mean? It says, “*But unto the Son He saith... ‘God, even thy God, hath anointed Thee with the **oil of gladness ABOVE thy fellows.**’*” In Luke 10:21, it is recorded that Jesus **rejoiced** (*agalliao*) in spirit. *Agalliao* means “to exalt, to leap much in the air for joy.” Does this offend you? **A leaping Jesus!!**

Oh yes, He is the Man of Sorrows. (Is 53:3) But they were not His own sorrows. *They were yours!* (Is 53:4)

SIXTEEN

Eleazar Spoke of Him Again

“He brought an unseen presence with Him,” said Eleazar. “Some were immediately uncomfortable and shuffled away with some excuse, but it was not the bad who went and the good who stayed. I have seen blatant sinners — harlots, rogues, vagabonds and publicans in open truth with Him. And those whom you would have thought would have stayed, uneasily slid away as He relentlessly denounced the Pride of Man. He hated it! He won arguments without arguing. His silence was His greatest weapon! An unseen presence came when He held His peace....”

“Many mused in their hearts. Some were astonished and said, ‘Whence hath this man this wisdom? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary? and His brethren, James and Joses, and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this Man all these things? (Matt 13:54-56). *“And they were offended in Him.” (Matt 13:57)*

“He loved the simple life... the fields, the mountains, flowers, birds, the rippling stream, the plop of a fish as it leapt to catch an adventurous dragon fly. He would sit silently by glinting water as it reflected the dancing sunbeams. He would pluck a demure flower and gaze into the center of its yielding world. An ant or a bee would cause Him to be lost in meditation and for a moment, a busy world would go by. He would not just look at a lily of the field, He would *consider* it, as if life held

no greater importance. I have seen Him stoop to pick up a bird with a broken wing or carry a little stray lamb back to the fold."

"I would not have been surprised if one day He'd give up the carpenter's shop to become a shepherd. *He'd make a good shepherd!*"

Eleazar said He was a slow worker because He was such a stickler for detail. If something was not true to pattern, He would not lower His standard. His yokes never chafed, always fit, and were easy in every way. He made a stool with the same care. Some were put into a synagogue!

Anything out of Jesus' shop was well worth what He charged. His estimates were fair and correct because He would sit down to count the cost. And He never went beyond them!

I asked Eleazar what did they say about Him? That He is the coming Messiah? That He is without fault? That He will deliver His people from the Roman yoke? What was it like living with a man who never sins?

Eleazar squinted and grunted. "He who has a crooked rule, places it against him who has a straight rule and declares him crooked," was his only comment. "There are those who would have killed Him if they could have. He had many enemies. He did not seem to care. I do not think He knew what it meant to be afraid."



Jesus with Mary and Martha

SEVENTEEN

Ponderings About Relationships... Was Jesus Ever in Love?

Was Jesus ever in love? Could He possibly be in all points tempted like we are, and yet avoid this vital area in the natural man's life? As our *Kinsman Redeemer*, in fashion as a man, did He understand the heartache, the yearnings, the jealousies, the frustrations, the tremendous temptations to place unreal values on human situations that the sons and daughters of mankind are subject to? Did He know the strange drawing power between a man and a woman? And what about the fulfilling of the Divine command, "...be fruitful and multiply..." (Gen 35:11) or that marriage is sanctified by a Divine order and not the *use*, but the abuse is wrong.

Jesus ended His *silent years* by being a guest at a wedding feast at Cana. Could He Himself have hallowed marriage by being married? Is marriage sinful? Did His Divine call to redeem the world involve His surrender of something He would have delighted in naturally? He loved children, certainly.

John 11:5 says, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." By boxing them all together, we presume His love had nothing to do with this vital area. Was there no reaction to two beautiful girls sitting at His feet, possibly both in love with Him? Each dancing attendance on Him... one busying herself with the pleasantries of the home, cooking for Jesus,

enjoying Him enjoying the meal she had delighted to prepare.
“*Have a little more. Oh, come on, do have a little more!*”

And Mary, sitting at His feet.... Did she have a premonition how soon He was to be nailed to a cross as she gently handled those feet and anointed them with the ointment of spikenard and as she wiped them with the hair of her head, her glory? (John 11:2) (Luke 7:37-38) Was He wooden or did He know the pull of human emotion?! *In all points tempted and yet — WITHOUT SIN. (Heb 4:15)*

He was not emotionless. He wept. (John 11:35) He wept again over Jerusalem. (Luke 19:41) Maybe we will never know down here the complete, tremendous humanity of the Son of God!

The mermaid concept (*half God, half man*) may have prevented us from seeing that *all God* became *all Man* and filled up again with *all God*... opening the door through His redemptive work for you and me. As many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God! (John 1:12)

He partook of every angle and avenue *as a man*, learned obedience by the things He suffered and triumphed through the Life of *Another*. (II Cor 2:14) The Son of Man was indwelt with the Life of Another. So may I be! The Price? ***Obedience...***

There could have been a very beautiful and tender relationship between Jesus and one of Lazarus' sisters, Mary or Martha!

Behold the Man! A full-blooded man as God intended you and me to be, but *WITHOUT SIN. (Heb 4:15)*



After the Wine at Cana, Comes the Whip in the Temple

EIGHTEEN

A Flailing Whip!

He was capable of every emotion and yet, may I emphasize again, **without sin**. (Heb 4:15) Even hatred!

“But unto the Son He saith, ‘Thou has loved righteousness and hated iniquity...’” (Heb 1:9) “And Jesus went up into the Temple in Jerusalem and found those that sold oxen, and sheep and doves, and the changers of the money sitting and when He had made a scourge of small cords, He drove them all out of the Temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the money changers and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, ‘Take these things hence; Make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.’” (John 2:14-16)

What a Man! A Man of many moods! The meek and lowly Nazarene... The wrathful revolutionary aflame with a Divine indignation! Whipping men and beasts amidst the clatter of falling tables and jingling coins into a confused exodus through the Temple doors! ...*Maybe a rebuke to our modern-day commercialism of the Gospel.*

We glibly quote Hebrews 13:8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” Have we considered, instead of running into His loving arms, the possibility of fleeing from His upraised arm with a flailing whip?



So much of our conception revolves around spelling, “God is £love” with the Pound, or Je\$u\$ with the Dollar signs! The financial raping of the work of God is an open sore on the Body of Christ. Would He make a scourge again in our day? How many pictures are there of the not-so-gentle Jesus with a whip? “For the love of money is the root of all evil....” (1Tim 6:10)

Jehoveh Jireh!

NINETEEN

The Secret

The Old Testament was a covenant between Jehovah and His ancient people, Israel. God said, "If you will obey Me, I will..." (Ex 23:22) Israel did not obey, so the covenant broke. If the New Testament is no different from the Old Testament, then it is all a waste of time! God found fault with the Old Testament and where it broke on the human element.

God put a Man, the *human element*, who was *perfect* in the New Testament. "...God was **in** Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself..." (II Cor 5:19) "For by *ONE* offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14) I am perfect or perfected in Another and that *Another* is Jesus, Son of God, Son of Man.

Ah, but wait a minute! There was Another in the Another! *There is the secret*. He said, "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one..." (John 17:23) The Son of God was *INDWELT*. "...the Father that dwelleth *IN* Me..." (John 14:10)

Humanity indwelt with Divinity... Divinity clothed with humanity.

"...ANOTHER"

*Upon a Life, I did not live,
Upon a death, I did not die,
Another's Life — Another's Death,
I stake my whole eternity.*

TWENTY

Learning Obedience

Obedience is neither an incidental nor an alternative in the life of the born-again believer. If Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered (Heb 5:8), *so must I*. Remember, to *suffer* can mean to allow, to yield to, or obviously to be in pain. Suffering is *inescapable* in this life. You will either yield to the circumstances of this life or resist and suffer pain. One way or the other, you *will suffer*.

If I see God in my circumstances, then I bow and yield and *suffer* the thing. And I do not suffer in the sense of pain. *I say AMEN to God*. It is so, so be it. "Thank you Father, you have permitted in your wisdom what you could have prevented in your power!"

In Genesis 1, it is recorded again and again, "...and it was so." And the "so's" were interspersed with "good's" and "very good's". Do you fall out with the "so's"? If you fall out with God's "so's", you will be sending an SOS. And you will be in trouble!

Are you finding what is so? *Or are you learning by obedience to say Amen to God for what is SO?* Here's a recipe for a happy, peaceful and contented life: *Amen, IT IS SO*. Three little words!

What caused Jesus to leap in the air? (*Agalliao: Luke 10:21*) It was the recognition of something that was good in the

Father's sight, *not* something good from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

At least five times, it is recorded in Genesis at the beginning "...and *IT WAS SO.*" What happened with Jesus in Gethsemane, a place where the human will surrenders unconditionally to the will of God? *Do we all have a Gethsemane?*

The Son of Man did not want to die. That was His will *AS A MAN.* "If it be possible...!" (Matt 26:39) "*Is there any way around this? I don't want to die.*" He could say that without sinning! But He could not refuse the Father's will without sinning! The sin would have been in *not yielding*, or in refusing to say "*Amen*" to the Father's *SO.* And so, *it was so!*

He made a choice. "*NOT My will, but Thine be done!*" (Luke 22:42) *Do we all have a Gethsemane?*

JESUS knew what it was to have no bed, no money, to be spat upon, to be betrayed, to be tired and weary, footsore, to be beaten and lashed, to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be misunderstood, falsely accused, hunted, plotted against, insulted, mocked and ridiculed, and finally... finally... ***Crucified.***

The Yoke of Obedience ***Learning to stay still until His Word comes at the set time***

Obedience is not obedience unless it is *INSTANT AND ABSOLUTE!* This is why it has to be *learned*, even by our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He said to His mother, "...Mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:4) Paul says, "...I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, ...to be content." (Phil 4:11) "I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to *suffer need.*" (Phil

4:12) Tremendous words! Jesus says, "Come unto Me and learn of Me. Take my yoke." (Matt 11:28,29) *It's the yoke of obedience.*

The man who learns to stay still moves quickest when the Spirit prompts! "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His Glory!" (John 2:11) ***In other words, in all those silent years, Jesus was learning... learning obedience.***

He was living in a sick community and apparently doing nothing about it. Mine hour... Mine hour... "...Mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:4) "...at the SET time of which God had spoken to him." (Gen 21:2) "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Eccl 3:1) "...he that believeth shall not make haste." (Is 28:16) "...in due season...." (Gal 6:9)

Consider those *silent years*. How often did Jesus see need and do nothing about it? *He was yoked not to crying need but to His Father. "As I get My orders, I decide as I am bidden to decide. As the voice comes to Me, so I give a decision." (John 5:30) Learning to stay still until His Word comes.... "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt 4:4)*

TWENTY-ONE

Jacob the Leper

He was old, partially blind, and only with great difficulty could he do anything at all. He was just one of the countless casualties of life. If God be God, and a God of Love... *then why? Why? Why?!*

Jesus befriended the friendless old man, braving traditions, the fear of contamination, and sparing one of life's rarest commodities — *TIME*. Did He know in all those *silent years* of the "*All Power*" that would be available at the SET time?

He was learning to be in "*TIME*" when He had lived in the Eternity of His Father. He was having to submit to all the limitations of men even as He approached old Jacob the Leper!

Did you ever consider that Jesus knew what it was to be identified helplessly with helplessness? "*...Mine hour is not yet come!*" (*John 2:4*)

The old man would peer through misty, half-closed eyes. "Is that you, Jesus?" Jacob would share the sparse beggarly experiences of the yesterdays that made up his life. Jesus, as if nothing else to do in His life, would patiently listen, suggest, comfort or occasionally alter.

Maybe, in a soon-coming future, He would use Jacob's plight as He would say to the multitudes, "*...I was sick, and ye VISITED ME....*" (*Matt 25:36*) "*...IN AS MUCH... ye have done it unto Me.*" (*Matt 25:40*)

The end came suddenly. They found him one morning... a smile of peace on his pock-marked face. And clutched in his poor crippled hand was a little wooden dove that Jesus had shaped in His shop. Nobody cried, only Jesus.



SUMMARY

He Was Learning Obedience

All Jesus ever did He *Never* did!
His apprenticeship finished at Cana of Galilee.
This *beginning* of Miracles... (John 2:11)

We all have a Cana! *Then...* we will manifest His Glory!
Not ours! Jesus Manifested the Father's Glory! (John 2:11)

As He is, so are we!
When will we learn?

When we learn to tell the time by *God's clock!*
Mine Hour is Not Yet Come! (John 2:4)

OBEDIENCE IS NOT A VIRTUE! IT'S AN OBLIGATION! I OUGHT!

Now to me, this is not fancy preaching.
And it's not just another book.
All I can hope is that God will give revelation.
I don't know whether you are seeing what I see,
I'm not better than you. But I see it!
And I know that God has made me to see it
that I might enter into it... That I might enter into
the Divine electrification of the sons of God!

— *Arthur Burt*



About the Author, Arthur Burt

Arthur was born in Great Britain in 1912. Born Again in the Revival Days following the Welsh Revival that swept across the oceans. He's one of our "fathers in the faith" and his life is a testimony of more than 70 years ministering the Word of God and walking by faith.

He's known as a "story-teller," true stories that change and challenge lives! He and his wife, Marjorie, raised nine children. They live in Penmaenmawr, North Wales... still expecting the great revival that has no ebb.

*Much of his life is described in his biography, **Around the World in 80 Years**. Other books by Arthur Burt include **Surrender, Cock-A-Doodle-Do!** and **Pebbles to Slay Goliath**.*

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