

Condition of the Times; 'Discoveries from Within'
A Profiling Experiment, by Daniel E Bourque
(An ongoing study ranging over thirty years.)

Part I, A Point Often Overlooked

The overall profile of Jesus has always been left up in the hay loft, so to speak, and any references to him are usually picked at random from whichever bundle we decide to choose from. This type of illustrating doesn't allow a single or unified imagery of Christ to come forth. That having been said, this task started out as a quest for a better understanding of Jesus from the Gospels in the form of an experiment, as an attempt to zero in on that issue. The question was; 'Could the four Gospels be brought together and work together as one? And if not; why not? But if so, will something show up that we didn't know before?

Before attempting anything, two devotions had to be implanted, first; to be objective with no strings attached and second; forget everything known on the subject and start fresh from the bottom. For this experiment to be executed fairly, it needed to be conducted with a complete open mind as though seeing it for the first time.

The intent was not to rewrite the Gospels, but to reveal them. The Catholic Bible versions use a '*sub-title*' method to head up each of the individual episodes which proved useful. It also allowed the verbiage of the individual stories to stay intact. Re-editing was not the intent here, scripture was to be used 'as-is'. Two other different Bible versions were referenced along-side for fair comparison between the translations of the writings to help fully understand the intent of each portion. Any references that were called from among the Old Testament writings were also chased down as well for the same reason. The whole Bible was explored several times throughout all three versions using this process.

The 1st discovery was within the Gospel of John. Not only was it different, it was very contradictory, enough, that it raised the question of whether or not it could even be used in this effort. It wasn't just a matter of its relation towards the *first three*, but it also clashed with The Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Peter and James, the wisdom books Proverbs, Wisdom and Sirach-(today known as Ben Sira) and the characterization of Jesus conveyed by the prophet Isaiah. The 2nd discovery was a disturbing factor on how much of an *influence* this Gospel had over almost everything.

Since the first three are synoptic in nature, they were shuffled in together first. (Shuffled; the same way you would shuffle three decks of cards. You usually don't break up the cards, you keep them whole, but arrange them according to their combined evidence.) Duplicated episodes were also narrowed down if or where possible. This effort enabled the use of all three synoptic Gospels without bumping over each other. Once that was accomplished, a profile of Jesus' style and focus became fairly visible, almost as though you could see him right in front of you. But now when the supposed shuffling of John's Gospel came into play,

it kept insisting to upset that profile, as though John was portraying someone else. However, a thought came to mind.

Hoping not to leave John's efforts out of the research, all parts that did not pervert the wholeness of the first three were included. When the sections that could be used were finally exhausted, was when the 3rd discovery was realized. As the experiment was being conducted, it innocently unmasked two different writing styles, John's work and someone else's. The parts not used were noticeably damaging to his personal profile, (that of a '*self-proclaimer*'), of which the other writings illustrated the opposite, one of a humbling nature.

Not wanting to take this observation on assumption, research was done to find any credibility to this supposed find. It was learned that it was not unknown there was more than one writer involved in John's Gospel. It's been noted already by credible theologians and scholars alike among the Bible's historical information about its own separate writings as in the NAB and encyclopedic references as well under, '*John; Gospel According to*'. This heading forces the records to confirm that the forth Gospel was indeed written by John. (If you go on line, you'll need to look it up in the Encyclopedias directly; otherwise you get 'Gospel according to John').

The second writer, (perhaps a follower of John, the most widely agreed theory), attempts to magnify who Jesus was, such as 'No one comes to the Father but through me', or 'Behold the Lamb of God'. (In the synoptics, the Baptism of Jesus is described in full detail. In John's gospel, a baptism isn't even mentioned). Though these remarks themselves may be true, many were not fully realized until after his crucifixion. It wasn't until then that his real identity was truly understood. By inserting these declarations ahead of time in the story as personal claims, his subtle approach *unfortunately* gets obscured or almost *erased*. The portions that were salvaged from John's work however, proved out to be most invaluable. Eventually a complete Collective Gospel compilation finally settled down with a profile that all four Gospels could jointly agree.

Now it was just a matter of putting it down and letting it set awhile. Remember, this was only the mechanical assembly of the idea, running from 1979 to 1984. There was still the matter of whether anything else of value would come out of it. It wasn't picked up again till a short time later and read slowly, as fresh material. As the new collective results were being absorbed, the dire situation they were in was unmistakably overwhelming as noted in Part II, thus the 4th unveiling. Only minor editing has been imposed since to close up any oversights.

Part II; What the Experiment Revealed

It is understood the practice of the people at that time related directly to the Laws of Moses, or was supposed to, which Jesus had referred to frequently. (Many of us don't realize those referents are important when it comes to understanding what Jesus was saying). To find out

how their living style was supposed to be, we have to refer back to the Law Moses wrote at Mt. Sinai in the 2nd book Exodus, the Laws he wrote in 3rd book (Levi; 13-14, 19, 21;16-24), or the rewrite of the Laws he did in the 5th book Deuteronomy, which by the way was 40 years after Exodus. That time span also needs to be appreciated to understand some of Christ's arguments. (They may appear a bit primitive, but keep in mind, they were written during the early stages of civilization).

These all seemed pretty clear, such as how they respond to a foe, a neighbor, injuries toward your neighbor, goods, slaves, livestock, etc., or their sacrifices, the first born or unblemished. And personally, if you should obtain a blemish, skin ulcer, un-healing wound, etc., you were to report to the Priests to receive treatment, because they were *also* the care givers. That's the way the law was originally written. But now we need to see how those people lived at the time of Christ. One would think lifestyles improve as time progressed, but apparently some things got lost along the way.

One of the keys we find is *actually* from the Gospel of John, in the story of 'The Man Born Blind'. The question the disciples asked Jesus was, "*Rabbi, who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?*" (John 9;1). [Read that question again?!] It seems the people or even the disciples at that time had been taught that an infection, a deformity or a disease was an outward telltale of their inward sin. In the beginning, if a person had an infection or a sore, it was dealt with to the priests, one on one. But, as seen here, even if a person had been born with a deformity, they will never receive pardon from the Pharisees for a sin they may never had committed in the first place. The proof of this issue is followed up later, concerning the same individual while being interrogated a second time by the Pharisees in (John 9;24-34). He attempts to justify Christ's standing with; "Why herein is the marvel that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes... .. If this man were not from God, he could not do this." And the Pharisees exclaimed, "*You were altogether born in sin, and you dare to teach us!*" And they cast him out.

As you can see, these poor folks were trapped into their judgment for life and beyond. Unless their deformity or illness could be rectified either by the ruling priests or by an act of God and brought back to what they considered a clean or healed state, *they were doomed!* As long as you remain a handicap or ill, your soul is never going to heaven. After your death and on to eternity, you will be burning in hell. Nice thought, huh?!.. You want to talk about anxiety!! Never mind how far that can go. It may not even be of yourself, but maybe one of your 'be damned' loved ones will be going to hell, while you're supposed to enjoy the idea of your accepted place in Heaven without them. And what if someone develops a condition that can't be remedied? Is he or she not only rejected from the temples, but shunned by others as well? I've heard of despair, but give me a break!

No matter how you look at it, this was a 'lose/lose' situation and collapsing real fast. When this concept was compared with the other three Gospels, they all echoed the same issues. Lucky for us, John's testimony displayed an entire dialogue, [from the plain folks dilemma on up to the rulers' defiance; (John 9;1-34)]. It's one thing to have a corrupt leadership and know

that. It's quite another to have *that* condition and no one, not even among the rulers were the wiser, even they thought this, along with their other misguidings, as noted by Jesus in (Matt 23; 1-39).

Now, by itself, this was a startling breakthrough. These portions of John's writings helped to '*break the code*' if you will. There was still the question if anything *else* of significance was going to show itself. Turns out, the synchronization of the four Gospels revealed not only the strain of the times, but *gleamed* of his wisdom and teaching methods. Many of his approaches or illustrations were brilliant. There was also a notable tactfulness among his deliverance. The catch is, most of these revelations did not become clear until three to ten years later, after the work. That was the beauty of it. Once the issues of John's Gospel were brought out in the open, most everything else, including uncertain parables, (such as strange references to the older writings, or his arguing with the rulers), just fell into place.

Back when the project started, it had its possibilities of coming up negative. Instead, it glowed more in his defense. He preached the truth, like no one else, to hopefully free them from an 'unjustified' *horror* of death cast upon them by their misguided rulers and went *full circle* to prove it, so they might *see* it for themselves. The legacy of loyalty, wisdom and love he left for his people has been his *everlasting* symbol ever since. It was amazing how much value was hidden by the insistence that each Gospel be kept separate and/or held tight. The originals can never be replaced, nor should they be, for each contribute their own assets to the whole story. But when compelled to work together for study purposes, an enlightening and *steady* collective Gospel emerged, presenting Jesus not only in a newfound light, but *pulled* up his teachings to a *whole* new level.

(Note; There is no claim this is exactly how the life of Jesus actually played out. That's near impossible, as is already observed with the subtle differences between the Gospels themselves, but it did render a much smoother and *richer* presentation of our Lord. The unveiling of many truths did not reveal themselves until the work was re-examined over the next several years! Only then was that laborious experiment fully appreciated as a success!)

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