

Pre-Conditions before Searching Jesus' Teachings,
by Daniel E Bourque, © 2018. (*Actual event, 1979*)

Tombstones usually state the birth and death dates of that individual. My barber had shared with me in conversation, that a whole person's life is summed up in the *dash* that stands between those two dates. He conveyed that a friend had recently brought up this very point. I couldn't help but relay back to him how the Christian Profession of Faith does exactly the same thing, to the effect; 'born of the virgin Mary, died under Pontus Pilot',..

Seems that dash of life is completely left out in that profession. It doesn't have to go on with a whole paragraph, but *something* should be in there! However, it's always been accepted as an unsolved mystery. Up to now, the overall profile of Jesus stays 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 method eludes from illustrating a single or unified imagery of Christ or the reason of his teachings and so the mystery carries on. This may be what prompted me to pledge to God at my Confirmation ceremony of 1964, (becoming a soldier of Christ) that *someday* I'm going to find out what this is all about!

In the late 70s, when I was in my troubled times, I felt a need to get closer to the Lord. I realized I still did not know enough about the whole story of Jesus, so I took to the four Gospels. I was seeing the similarities until I got to John's Gospel. Not being completely sure with myself, I read them all three times over, only to wind up with more questions than when I started. My need to get closer was only widening all the more. This was unacceptable.

There had to be a way to see through this dilemma. That having been said, an idea came up in the form of an experiment. The question was; 'Could the four Gospels be brought together and work as one?' Might the joined Gospels speak to us? Perhaps they could reveal something in unity where it remains aloof while they stay apart. And if not; why not? But if so, will anything show up that we didn't know before?

This meant taking on a very demanding ordeal, not to mention possibly *damned* for even thinking down this path, for I myself was brought up as a Christian! My aim was not to prove anything; my only hope was for stability. I prayed to the Father with all my heart for His approval, or not, on such an attempt. I did receive a sign, somewhat of what I refer to as an acknowledgement to my prayer, a sort of physical

response that only I would recognize. That afternoon I came home and wrote down what I had seen that day.

Before beginning, I prayed to the Heavenly Father for His guidance and was later *forewarned* with a vision. An image of a large *Golden Double-Edged Sword* appeared beyond the trees with this understanding; 'This *Sword* is presented to all those who are considering any undertaking of such magnitude, for it demands great responsibility and total commitment. Personal glory, supposed gratification or individual beliefs have no place in these endeavors. Those with faint hearts should **not** attempt their luck with this *Sword* for its power strikes both ways; it can either grant the power of light or take it away. And if it be the latter, you must be willing to accept it alone and *stand down* for the others sake. Should you eventually accept bearing hold of this *Sword*, take full heed to these warnings!'

I hadn't heard of this approach ever being done before, which meant I'd be on my own with this one. Who knows, maybe all of this might just turn out to be nothing more than crowd control, then I could throw the whole deal in the trash and get on with my life, fully revived. Or was this actually a calling? The size and significance of this challenge was very intimidating. But to back away from any possible chance of finding closure on something that's been haunting me for years, not to mention my pledge, I would become my own betrayer.

After careful prayer, meditation and preparation of the most earnest regard, I humbly and tearfully gripped the largest *Sword* of swords.