

THE
MAN

We've been puzzled by what he is like. Is he a cosmic lunatic, or a swinging Hollywood star? A pale, spooky man you'd be afraid to meet in a dark alley, or the life of the party?

THE
MAN

This paper is a collection of articles written over the last several years. The topic of them all is The Man. These articles bring to life the most difficult thing to imagine in the whole universe, mainly "How would God act if He were a man?" Lots of people think they know the answer, but we were never satisfied with what was offered.

Who is The Man? He's the most loving person to ever walk the earth, the greatest friend that ever lived. The little children in his day instinctively knew that he was the kindest, and the best. Most people today would call him Jesus Christ, but we know him by his Hebrew name Yahshua,* which means "God is powerful to save."

What sort of people did he come to help? The ones who know that there has to be more to this life than anything the world has to offer, people who long for a second chance to start all over, to have a fresh new start, a

new beginning, a new breath of life and the power to love. When we heard about this Yahshua, and that he loved us, we heard it from a people who were actually living together and loving one another. That really affected us. Some of us gave up everything we had and moved right in, others it took us years to even come around.

But one thing we all had in common, whether we knew what to call it or not. We were longing for forgiveness. We wanted peace with "God," whoever that was. We wanted to know the purpose for our lives, what we were created for. We were actually starving for authority in our lives, and to know what the author of our lives had in mind for us.

These things all seem so clear to us now, but at that time, we had no idea what was "wrong" with us. And really, neither did anyone else.

We have no idea who gets these papers when we hand them out, but as a people we always pray to our God that they would get into the hands of those who have the same heart as ours. We are a very faulty people, but we hope to be a people who are loyal to the one who gave up everything he had because he saw our need.

Our need was love. And if one word could explain what The Man is all about, it would be just that... love.

We hope you enjoy reading this paper. 🍌

*Yahshua is the Hebrew name of the Son of God. The footnote to Matthew 1:21 in the New International Version of the New Testament reads: "Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua." In Hebrew, as in old English, there is no "J" sound, so the name Joshua is more accurately rendered Yahshua. For more detailed information, see "Name Above All Names" on our website: www.twelvetribes.com.

They followed him around from town to town, everywhere he would go. They loved him, or at least they thought they did. One thing for sure, they couldn't live without him.

They were the inner circle: a dozen or so men, a handful of women. But they weren't the strong, the self-reliant, the shrewd power seekers jockeying for position. No, they were poor. They had been kicked around. They needed a friend, someone they could trust, someone who would always tell them the truth.

And he did, too. He told everybody the truth. And when people didn't want to hear the truth, he would tell them a story and let them figure the truth out for themselves. Some people really got riled up at what he said, but he didn't let it get him down. Some people, those who were really into the system, hated him enough to kill him. But he still didn't let it get him down.

That's why they — the inner circle — needed him. He had life. He was full to the brim with joy. He didn't just party for a while and burn out. His joy went on and on and on and on ... It was obvious that he loved them. Yes, them! The misfits, the ragamuffins, people who everybody else was ashamed of, people who were ashamed of themselves. He gathered them around and talked to them, filled them full of vision, and made them feel like they were somebody. He wouldn't just talk about the good times. He made the good times happen. He even made the hard times good.

And they would sing. Even when they were so down they didn't know which way was up, they'd sing. He'd make them sing! He wouldn't let them get into themselves and go under. He was really a friend.



THE INNER CIRCLE

But one thing would get him down. Well, not down, really, but sometimes he would just cry. When he saw all the people scattered and divided, and hurting, and afraid — he'd cry.

He wanted so much to gather all the little ones together, and keep them together — little ones like you and me. Sometimes people would just flock to see him and he couldn't bring himself to send them home. He would get right down there with them. Thousands of them. He didn't want to *send* them home, he wanted to *bring* them home. He wanted home to be right there. He wanted love to be their home.

But he would cry because the system had got them so programmed and so leveled out that they wouldn't stay. They'd always go back to the same dead old life, working their job, taking care of their own space, but so cut off from one another and so helpless.

He wanted a fire to break out on the earth. A fire that would burn in the people's hearts and burn out their greed and selfishness and dullness — a pure, white-hot love for one another. And he was one hundred percent devoted to it happening.

So even when he cried, he didn't get hopeless. He wouldn't give up. He *knew* it would happen.

But then the system started to close in on him. They wanted to smash him. Even one of the inner circle betrayed him, told them right where to find him and when to take him. And the rest of his "close friends," when the heat was on, took off running. Nobody stood with him. All of a sudden, they split, trying to save their own necks. Some friends.

But that's not how he saw it. He didn't even get bitter. He *knew* them. He knew all about them. He

even knew they were going to desert him. It didn't matter. He forgave them. Can you believe it? He *forgave* them! He loved them to the end.

Oh, the system crushed him, all right. All the evil in the human heart was focused on him that day. They killed him. But they couldn't kill his spirit.

And before they knew it, his body wasn't dead anymore, either. That spirit of love that he possessed overcame death. Love is stronger than death. He came back from the dead to tell his friends that he forgave them. They hadn't been true friends before, but he *made* them friends. His forgiveness made them loyal to him forever.

We know this man. His love has won us, too. We are followers of this man, *Yahshua*, just like the inner circle was back in the beginning. We need his life. We want to see all his little ones brought home. We don't care what it costs. We don't have anything better to do. We want the Twelve Tribes to be gathered. We want love to fill the earth. We *know* it's going to happen!

He is still looking for just the right ones to fill up his inner circle. ♣

REAL. That's the word you would use to describe him. He wasn't playing a game. He wasn't projecting some image, trying to get people to look up to him. If ever you asked him to tell you about himself, he might say something like, "I am who I am."

That would be a pretty good description. There wasn't a speck of deceit in him. He didn't have anything up his sleeve. He was exactly what he appeared to be. He said exactly what he meant. And that's why people loved him. Or hated him.

Some people promise you the moon, but he wasn't like that. There was substance to what he said. He talked about real things. Like greed. And fear. And selfishness. Things that are inside everybody. Things that phonies don't want to admit and cowards don't want to face up to.

But he wasn't gloomy and depressing. He was full of joy and full of hope. He knew a way out. That's why he talked about those real problems: because he knew that those things were taking people to death, and he didn't want them to go to death. He wanted them to be



full of life— life that would never end.

He talked about love— real love— not some word you hear in a song that makes you feel good until the song ends, and not some plastic religious pretense. The love he talked about was the love he lived. Love that costs you something. Love that costs you your life.

That's why he didn't just give people the same old song and take off, leaving them in the dust. His life wasn't his own. He got right down there in the dust with them and healed their hurts and helped

them through their hard times and dealt with the stuff inside them that was taking them to death.

And he didn't just help people out for a while and then go home, either. He didn't have a home of his own. The only home he had was the people that he loved. They were his everything. He loved them so much that he wanted them to be with him. He called them to follow him, to leave behind homes and families and possessions and, of course, self and embark with him on a radical life of loving the same way he loved.

It was a high calling. Just think about it: actually caring for others at the expense of your own interests. Who could live such a life? Many have tried and failed. But to those who are needy and desperate and trust in him, he gives the power to do what would naturally be impossible.

We follow this man Yahshua. How could we do anything else? He proved his love for us by taking our place in death. We never knew love like that before— a love that is stronger than death. He is the one whom death could not hold. He is our everything. 🙏

Our Master Yahshua the Messiah Liberator

*A person facing certain death has no doubt about the reality of judgment.
At that instant he knows where his life is taking him;
he is no longer able to ignore the voice of his conscience.*

He faced certain death. He not only sensed judgment — He stood before the judge and was condemned. The dreadful sentence of death had been rendered. He bore a heavy weight of guilt as He left the court.

His was not a private execution before the eyes of a few required witnesses. He walked before His countrymen, disfigured by the brutal treatment of His guards. Strong men paled at the sight of Him and women wept. Step by awful step He walked to where his life would finally be wrenched from His battered body.

Many men had walked that grim path before. The guilt they bore sealed their eternal destiny. Stumbling and collapsing from exhaustion, He finally reached the place of execution. In a few agonizing hours the public spectacle came to an end. Those who were there heard him cry out about being forsaken by God. He surely was.

There before the eyes of heaven and earth his life ended. The weight of guilt thrust his righteous soul down into the pit of death. Yet he didn't bear his own guilt — He bore ours. He willingly took upon himself the anguish that our sins deserved. In all his suffering he uttered no complaint and felt no bitterness.

His death was the greatest act of love ever demonstrated. His innocent blood covered every unjust and filthy act that we have ever done — all the things we continued to do against our conscience.

He spent three days and three nights in death, and that was enough to pay for the sin of us all. The pain he went through was enough. Even in death there was not one bit of distrust or resistance to his Father's will for Him. That's why the full anguish of death was able to reach the very core of his being in such a short time. It more than equaled the suffering which the hard-hearted will resist eternally as they continue to reason away their guilty consciences.

When he had done all he was sent to do, his Father raised him from the dead. Because of his innocence it was impossible for death to hold him. In his death he purchased the earth and all its inhabitants. In his resurrection he became King to all who would follow him. His name — Yahshua* — means *I am mighty and powerful to save*. That same power that raised him from the dead enables his disciples to love one another the same way he loved us. It actually breaks down the barriers that alienate human beings from one another. It produces a life of love and unity — the evidence that God loves mankind and sacrificed his Son to set us free.

He is our Liberator. Anyone who is willing to do his will can come to him and be set free from death. God, in his great mercy and loving kindness towards man, provided a way that even the unjust and filthy could find forgiveness and change their eternal destiny. 🙏

DREAMER



They had lots of problems. The homeless poor were everywhere. Diseases that they had never known before ravaged the nation. The stench of all the sick beggars in the city streets was enough to knock a person over. It seemed like they were cursed, forgotten by God. A few affluent religious leaders were saying that it was all because of sin, but nobody seemed to have any real solutions.

So what did they need with an idealist? What good did it do for some uneducated visionary to come along saying, "Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied; blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh"? Why hold out to people the promise of heaven on earth when it seemed the

government was trying to make life hell with all its oppressive regulations? Surely no one would listen to this man.

BUT STRANGELY ENOUGH, people did listen. They traveled for miles just to see him. Maybe they just needed a little hope. Maybe it didn't matter that he didn't have any money to hand out or any social programs to propose to the government. Maybe there weren't any solutions, and all that they could expect was a fantasy of love and peace that would get their minds off of their problems for a little while.

The more popular he got, the more rumors circulated about him. They said that he was a healer, a miracle worker. They said that he was a zealot, advocating a new kind of government. They said that he was a devil, calling people to

abandon their religion and follow him. Eventually, he caused such a stir that some of the leaders began to be concerned. There might be riots. There might be government reprisals. A lot of decent law-abiding citizens might get hurt. All his talk about a government based on love might just be a front for an attempted political takeover, one that would surely end in disaster. Something needed to be done, so they did it.

They found someone to betray him, seized him in the middle of the night, and brought him to trial. Evidence was scanty and conflicting. His own testimony seemed to be that of a mere dreamer. "My kingdom is not of this world," he said. "If it were, my followers would be fighting to deliver me."

The judge handed down a bizarre ver-



dict, simultaneously declaring the prisoner innocent and washing his hands of his death. After a tormenting six-hour-long execution, his brutally disfigured body was laid in the grave. To the thinking of most, both the dreamer and the dream were gone forever.

SEVEN WEEKS SLIPPED PAST, just as inconspicuously as his followers who had deserted him on the night of his arrest. Nothing was seen or heard of his cause.

Then suddenly, vividly, they reappeared. Clear-eyed and articulate, full of peace as well as passion, these disciples testified to the goodness and innocence of their Master, as well as the guilt of the nation and its leaders for putting him to death. But they weren't calling for blood. They were calling for repentance and forgiveness. They were saying

that their Master's death was enough blood to be shed — enough to pay for the guilt of the whole world.

They were also saying that he wasn't dead anymore. They had seen him alive. He had gone up into the heavens to sit on the throne of the universe. He had given them his very own spirit to live in them and cause them to be just like him.

THE RESULT OF THEIR SINCERE, impassioned testimony was electrifying. Thousands cried out in desperation to be released from their guilt. They were each plunged into water as a sign of their cleansing and proclaimed to be new creatures with a new life, the life of a disciple of Yahshua, their slain and resurrected king.

The form that this new life took was even more electrifying. Every disciple was so concerned for the welfare of his

brothers that he sacrificed his own time, his own goals, even his own possessions to meet their needs. The result was that in a nation where homelessness and poverty abounded, there were no rich or poor among these disciples, and each one had a home where he was loved and cared for. The words of the "dreamer" had come true: the poor and hungry were blessed. A new social order had begun on the earth.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT NEW SOCIAL ORDER? It's hard to say. But just like the first disciples, we want to share with others the life our God has established here. We want to freely give to you what has been gladly given to us. What else can people do when they share the same dream?✠

COMET

From time to time, radical men and their radical thoughts have swept across the stage of history. When these men appear, they disturb the comfortable and self-satisfied among us. But there is one man who deserves our special recognition. His career was like the path of a comet in both its briefness and intensity. Who was this man? He was everything his name describes. He still is. His name is Healer.

Though his years were short, his extraordinary life established a new race among the afflicted, broken-hearted, and strife-torn peoples of the earth. There has never been a light like the light that shone forth from this man. His words broke into the unexplored areas of the human heart, bringing men's motives out of their dark burrows and into plain view. Even those who followed him found the ancient foundations of their lives quaking in devastation.

The words that he spoke had an amazing effect on people. When he spoke, some people totally abandoned their homes, families, jobs, and properties to follow him from town to town, doing whatever he told them to do. Others heard his words and turned their back on him, or called him a devil, or plotted to kill him.

What did this man talk about that caused such a stir? What was it that polarized all of humanity, causing some to adore him and others to grind their teeth at him?

It was something so wonderful that if you heard it, you could hardly believe it.

The good news he proclaimed was this:

"Deny yourself. Turn away from your self-centered life. Let your old impulses and desires die inside of you. Follow me in the way I am going and you will find yourself caring for others and having all your needs met. You don't have to live this way any longer. I have come to rule the earth in righteousness and true jus-

tice. I am here to establish a new order, a new life that will fill the whole earth. This present world system is headed for certain destruction but you don't have to be destroyed. I am going to shed my innocent blood for you so that you can be free from the bondage of sin, and rule with me forever."

Is it any wonder that the society of his day cried out against him? Whatever else the deafness and blindness of his hearers might have missed, it's clear that they saw this; he was the seed of a whole new order of things. The greatest enemy to this man's message was the fossilized human heart.

Yet, what this man accomplished was enduring. That's why his name is important. His name shines in all that he has accomplished. His name is Deliverer.

The same world that he came into has made him the victim of a great campaign, a campaign to distort his true image. His shocking message and what it brings us all to, has been intellectualized by a million hollow words. We've lost sight of him in the dust of a stampede to enshrine him and institutionalize him. Although he poured out his life in the dusty, sun-bit villages of Judea, artists have insisted on presenting him clean, combed and sleek, in spotless clothing, and with an expression that the average child would think strange and repelling.

These, among a million other impressions, have made him unreal to so many of us. This distortion of his image has also distorted his name. If we view him in an unreal way, we truly cannot know him or be connected to him. His name is Restorer.

The traditional groups that have a



supposed devotion to his memory largely ignore the matter that was closest to his heart — the message of his kingdom, the call of deliverance from the decaying society in which we live. He was the most passionate and determined man who ever lived. The blazing quality of his life was so pure that even death has bowed down before him. His endurance and single-mindedness have established a beachhead in this hostile world. He accomplished the mission he was given to do. The greatest act of love in all of history, the ultimate purpose: to set all creation free.

To the complex reasoning of the resisting heart, he is a tyrant, demanding total obedience. But to the yielding heart, he is the King who offers total care. To take him seriously is to enter upon a challenging and radical new path. Of those who find themselves stirred by his word, he said "These are my sheep. They will hear my voice." He is the perfect Shepherd.

The life he established is unending, and one day it is going to fill the whole earth, and then the whole universe. Despite what we may have been told, we now know that his name is Salvation. This is the name he is known by among the people he is gathering. His name is true because it says what he is. His name is Radical. 🌟

FORSAKEN

THE WORDS GUSHED FROM THE LIPS OF THE BEATEN MAN LIKE BLOOD FROM A SEVERED ARTERY.

“My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?” He voiced a pang of loneliness sharper, deeper, and more devastating than any other human being has ever felt, before or since. Many of the witnesses could not understand what he had said, so distorted was his voice by his anguish. Those who did understand his words were dumbfounded that he, of all people, was speaking such things.

Hadn't he said that God was his Father? Wasn't he the one who had told them how God cared for the birds and the flowers, how he knew the number of hairs on each person's head? Not even one sparrow falls to the ground without his Father knowing it - that's what he had said. How then could he, the Teacher, be forsaken by this same God?

Wasn't he the one who overflowed with joy and kindness? Wasn't he the one who healed the sick, fed the hungry, and comforted the oppressed? Wasn't he the one who had more joy, and more compassion, than anyone else? Yes, he was the one who always

cared, always trusted, always loved. He was the righteous one. How then could he end up like this?

THE SLEEPLESS NIGHT HAD TAKEN ITS TOLL ON HIM: betrayed by a trusted companion, deserted by all his friends, disowned repeatedly by one who claimed to love him most. He had been mocked and tormented by his enemies, spat upon, battered beyond recognition. He didn't even look like a man anymore. His back was raw from a cruel flogging, his face pounded until it was a bloody and swollen mass, all the hairs of his beard pulled out. Men could not bear to look at him, so horrible was the sight.

And yet, throughout all of this, throughout even the six hours of hanging on a cross, being further mocked and taunted, he had kept his peace. He hadn't opened his mouth against his oppressors, but rather prayed for their forgiveness. The composure and dignity of this man had been enough to make his executioner comment that surely this was God's son.

SUDDENLY, HOWEVER, the intimate bond with his Father that he had known

all his life was gone. Loneliness engulfed him. What a night and a day of steady abuse had not accomplished, that one moment of alienation from his Father did. Within minutes he was dead from a broken heart.

What had caused God to forsake him? Our sin. He took the blame for all our selfish, rebellious deeds upon himself. The weight of all our guilt plunged his soul into death. The stark and thorough separation he felt was the sum of the rejection we all deserved for our willful defiance toward our Creator. We deserved to be rejected forever.

BUT AFTER THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS, he was suddenly alive again. Why? Because there was absolutely no resistance in him. In that short time his submissive soul received what we would not have accepted had we suffered for eternity. This is the measure of his love for us. He experienced the death that we deserved in order that we could experience the life he had always known — an intimate life of love. That's why we follow him, the one who has promised to never forsake us — our Master Yahshua. 🙏



P

ERFUME

A woman living in Jerusalem heard news of the man Yahshua. He was known to be at the house of Simon the Pharisee that evening. On hearing this she hurried home to her meager, one-room dwelling. Taking a key that hung from her neck, she opened a trunk where she had hidden something quite precious. She reached in, and as her fingers grasped the object, she just looked at it for a moment, weighing it in her hand. Many times before she had held this alabaster flask of costly perfume, polishing its smooth surface, admiring its translucent glow as she held

it to the sunlight. She had paid at least a year's earnings for the sense of dignity and worth that merely possessing such an object brought to her. But today, what she had once prized so highly no longer held the same appeal.

Resolutely she crossed the city, barely noticed by passers-by in the dimming twilight. Some who recognized her looked away quickly in disgust or embarrassment, for this woman was a prostitute, a notorious sinner and social outcast. Certainly no one noticed how tightly she held the small flask, or the tears welling up in her eyes that only hinted at

what was going on in her heart.

As she approached the house of Simon the Pharisee, her steps quickened. Her heart began to pound as thoughts of her past flooded her mind ... everything she had ever done ... the heaviness of the shame and guilt of how she had lived. She clung to the glimmer of hope she had already received from the man Yahshua...

Weeks earlier — she felt sick at the memory — caught in the very act of adultery, she had been dragged through the streets of Jerusalem to the temple and thrown down in the midst of the crowd there. Weeping with fear and humiliation,

her hair matted across her face with dirt and tears, she could barely discern what was happening as she heard the sharp tones of the men who had brought her, and then a long silence. She stood waiting for the first blow; other women had been stoned to death for her offense. There was no possible escape. She saw with piercing clarity that her guilt warranted more than a death sentence — she was under a curse. Could these people have mercy? Could God even have mercy? There was no sacrifice or offering she knew of that could cover how she had deliberately violated her conscience. She was terrified. It wasn't the pain of death that was frightening, but what would await her after death. There was no way to ever make things right, no forgiveness possible.

Then in the turmoil of her thoughts she heard the measured, calm response of another voice: "Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone." There was another long silence, and then only the whispers of the crowd and the scrape of sandaled feet as one by one her accusers went away. Then a moment of silence.

"Woman, where are your accusers? Is there no one to condemn you?" asked the kind voice.

"No one, Master," she replied in a puzzled voice, unable to even meet his eyes.

"Neither do I condemn you," said Yahshua. "Go your way and sin no more."

She was pierced to the heart. He had not excused her — her deeds were worthy of death — but he had forgiven her. Somehow she knew he had this authority. The self-righteous religious leaders

had scattered as his words exposed what was in their hearts. Yahshua could have condemned her, but he didn't want to. He wanted to save her.

In the days following, she went over and over these things in her mind. Nothing would ever be the same again. She was overwhelmed by the condition of her life and the depths of her sin. The tremendous relief she had felt when Yahshua said, "Neither do I condemn you" — she wanted that release from all the guilt of everything she had given herself to over the years.

People said he was a prophet, or maybe the Messiah sent from God to save their nation. The woman thought about his name, Yahshua, "I am mighty and powerful to save," and she believed.

Without a hint of self-consciousness, the woman entered Simon's house and began scanning the room where many were gathered for a meal. Where was he? Heedless of the cold, disapproving stares of her onlookers, she made her way to Yahshua and fell at his feet as he was reclining at the table. He was not displeased. In his spirit he had already sensed what was in this woman's heart, and his own heart turned to receive what she was beginning to express.

Breaking the seal of the perfume, she began to pour it over his feet in what seemed an extravagant and lavish expression of gratitude. She wept freely with tears of both sorrow for her life and a deep thankfulness for this man, wiping his feet with her hair and kissing them repeatedly in absolute adoration.

What she was doing seemed wasteful to the Pharisees, an unseemly display of

affection that went far beyond their understanding. They were outraged that a woman known to be immoral was interrupting a gathering of such righteous men. Simon, the one who had invited Yahshua, thought to himself, "If this man were truly a prophet, he would know what sort of person this woman is, who is touching him, that she is a sinner."

Yahshua was grieved as he discerned what was in Simon's heart. "Simon, I have something to say to you."

"Say it, teacher," Simon replied.

"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed him fifty days' wages. When they were unable to pay, he graciously forgave them both. Which of them will love him more?"

Simon judged correctly, answering, "The one whom he forgave more."

Then Yahshua said, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much, but he who is forgiven little, loves little."

Then Yahshua told the woman, "Your sins have been forgiven."

The people around started whispering, "Who is this that even forgives sins?" But Yahshua only continued to encourage her, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." 🙏

CULT LEADER

He hung there on the cross with his body bleeding and beaten beyond recognition. He choked and gasped for air as the searing pain shot to the core of his being. Shock waves shuddered down his frame. The crowd watching him jeered and mocked, defiantly calling out, "Come down from there if you are the Son of God!"

Many had died at the hands of the Romans claiming to be the Messiah, but this case was different. It was more than just the execution of another cult leader. These men were crucifying what he stood for as well. "Come down from there," they mockingly said again, "and we will believe in you," not realizing and not caring that they wouldn't have.

They couldn't know the deep love that motivated this perfect man to make the most costly personal sacrifice that would ever be made throughout all eternity. All they were thinking about was themselves, and how he had offended their sense of righteousness, as they hurled contempt and hatred at him.

His peace and composure during the shameful ordeal astonished those few onlookers who were saddened by the greatness of his suffering. They noticed that the tenderness they'd always seen in his eyes was still there.

Even his disciples had fled the scene, as the pressure became more and more real in their own lives. The mocking crowd taunted him; "You saved others, now save yourself!" They didn't know he was at that moment receiving the penalty they deserved for their sins and their insolent, presumptuous attitudes.

Only a few who were standing there that day appreciated the awesome self-control this humble man was exercising. Even though they didn't fully understand what was going on, they could sense

that he knew what he was doing. That knowledge lifted him above the shame of his nakedness and the pain of his broken body. Then it happened. His last breath was released with a great cry of submission. Like the lambs of old, the sacrifice of his life had been thoroughly inspected and found blameless. His face set like flint and his final conscious thought to please his Father, he was what a lamb could never be, a willing sacrifice for sin.

At that moment, the unimaginable weight of the sin of the whole world crushed the spirit in his body down, down into the center of the earth. As his soul was ripped from the broken shell of his body, the pain he had been experiencing did not let up. The crushing sense of distance and alienation from his Father in heaven grew greater and greater. In the agony of death he received the just penalty for the accumulated selfishness and wickedness of the entire human race. And he did more than that too. Through facing death and overcoming the fear of its loss and suffering, he took away its power forever.

As he came up out of the depths of the earth, he knew there would be those who would care enough about what he'd done for them to obey whatever he would tell them to do. These would be the ones he would entrust the keys to — the keys he'd taken from the evil prince who rules the fallen world, the keys to death and the unseen spiritual realm.

He knew how to unlock the prison of self-centeredness and death within man. His message on earth had been clear, very clear, but his words only had their full effect in those who fully trusted him. Those who had known him told others what he had said so they could also be unlocked from their prison. The love that

dwelled in the hearts of this small group forbade them from doing anything less than sharing everything they had. They didn't even want to consider that anything belonging to them was their own. Seeing one another's needs, they shared their meals, their homes, and their very lives.

It was in all these ways that they were dying to themselves. Just like he had died on the cross, they were dying to all the things that had motivated them before to make their own lives better, but had only left them separated and lonely. Nothing gave them greater joy than to experience the exact same life that he had on a daily basis. This was the bloom of their first love. Lost, hopeless humans beings were attracted to this amazing life of togetherness and wholeness. In the communities of Yahshua the Messiah they were set free from the dark, personal prison of self-centered existence they'd been trapped in. These early disciples proved they had the keys and that they could unlock the doors for others as well. They proved that God was in their midst by the love and unity they had.

Yet as the Church grew, so did strife, immorality, and greed, until they were hopelessly divided by the very things he had died to do away with. Those same evil spirits that tested their Master had come to test his people; and they hadn't completely trusted, not the way he had trusted his Father. They didn't realize they were losing their first love. They didn't even know they had lost the keys.

How tragic it would be for anyone to be like those who mocked and laughed at him saying, "Come down!" not knowing he had already come down. The King of Kings came to bring his Kingdom down to the earth, into men's lives — if they would let him. 🙏

He gathered together a band of disciples who spent all their time, day and night, with one another and with him. They *needed* to be with him because they were *full* of problems. And he was the one who had the solution. So he created an environment in which they could share everything — not just their possessions, but their joys, their hurts, and their problems, too. This is what fellowship is.

Yahshua got his twelve handpicked disciples together and kept them with him all the time. They shared a *common* life with him, The Man. They learned the way their Master thought. They learned how he related to his Father in heaven. They saw him face impossible difficulties and overcome. They knew deeply what it meant when he said that he couldn't do anything apart from his Father. They knew where his power came from. He proved to them that he had no advantage over them or any other disciple. He didn't use any special divine privileges. He did everything as a *man* who had fellowship with his Father in heaven.

He came to them as the Light of the world. He showed them the way to be real human beings. But it wasn't enough for him just to show them the way to live. He also had to prepare them to live it. He had to deal with all of the false things they had learned. These weren't just false ideas of what God was like, or what it meant to be holy, or things like that. He had to deal with their false and hurtful ways of living. So he kept them with him and with one another until all the false ways in them came to the light. During the years that they lived with him they got totally *exposed*. Their hidden motives came out. Their shallowness, their worldly ambitions, their selfish refusal to suffer — it all came to the light. All their false concepts of being the handpicked messengers of the Messiah, the future rulers of Israel, got totally torn down. It was a time of intense training. They fought with one another, got their feelings hurt,

Tools



All their false concepts of being the handpicked messengers of the Messiah, the future rulers of Israel, got totally torn down.

pouted, sulked, argued, resented one another, gossiped about each other — until every false way came out of them and was exposed. Then they finally got down to being who they were meant to be. They lost their false faces. They arrived at a proper understanding of themselves. They left behind all their thoughts of being superior and special

and learned to accept themselves and each other for who they really were. They saw that by themselves, apart from depending upon their Father in heaven, they were a *hopeless mess*. They understood in their experience that without him they couldn't do anything.

Now he had something to work with. 🙌

IN COMMON HUMAN FLESH



He was a simple man. Children loved him. Everywhere he went, he told stories. Amazingly enough, people listened to him.

He wasn't a very handsome man or very noble-looking. His hands bore the signs of hard work and his face the marks of sorrow. There was nothing in his dress, his hair, or his manner of speech to call attention to him. If you ever met him you'd hardly be able to remember what he looked like. He had the same dark, sun-baked skin as the rest of his people, the same roughly musical speech. Perhaps all you would remember of your encounter with him would be how he loved you.

For some reason, crowds started following him. Many came seeking healing from their physical ailments. A few others came because they were at the end of their rope. Some came to listen. Most just came to watch.

One time, some law enforcement officers were ordered to arrest him. They went to the place where he was speaking. The crowd was all stirred up. The officers stood in the crowd listening and waiting for an opportunity to quietly take him into custody. After a while, they went back empty-handed. When their superiors questioned them as to why they failed to seize him, all they could say was, "No man ever spoke the way this man speaks."

The words he spoke had an amazing

effect on people. When he spoke, some people totally abandoned their homes, families, jobs, and properties to follow him from town to town, doing whatever he told them to do. Others heard his words and turned their backs on him, or called him a devil, or plotted to kill him.

What did this man talk about that caused such a stir? What was it that polarized all of humanity, causing some to adore him and others to grind their teeth at him? It was something so wonderful that if you heard it, you could hardly take it in. Basically he said this:

Junk your whole life and start over. The one who rules heaven is beginning to rule on the earth. He is preparing to judge and punish all the evil that is done here. But first, He wants to purge away the evil that is in your life. He doesn't want you to be destroyed. He is passionately in love with you. He wants to be your Father. Let him!

There were so many wonderful things that this man said and did, that all the books in the whole world could not have contained them all. He told of a treasure that was worth more than all the riches and fame that the world could offer. That treasure was to know God as your Father and to do his will.

There was only one way to get this treasure. He was the only one who had it. The treasure was hidden right there in him. Right in his common human flesh.

He said, "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. If you want to get to the Father, you have to come through me."

Ah, the treasure! But, O the cost! Many people considered that cost: *In order to know the Father, you have to follow a man. And this man requires you to abandon everything to follow him. Any "truth" of life from any other source has to die. You have to totally trust him. What a decision!*

Not many chose to follow him. For those who were the least bit satisfied with their life, the cost was too high. He might as well have told them to put a hangman's noose around their neck and follow him to the gallows. But those who chose to follow found in him the power to overcome all fear, even the fear of death.

He overcame death, you know. Not only did he not fear death, but also he abolished its power. Those who plotted to kill him finally got an opportunity to carry out their plan. But after they had their way, this man got up out of the tomb where they laid his corpse, and he never went back. His corpse is no longer a corpse, but a living human body that now sits on the throne in heaven.

This simple man's name is Yahshua. There is no Messiah and no Sovereign but this man. One day soon he will leave his Father's throne in heaven and come to take his throne on earth. Whoever hopes for that day is getting ready now. 🙏



TWILIGHT

It is twilight, the time between the lights. The edge of the sky fades into violet, and above it hangs a veil of deep blue. Behind both waits a heaven of black fast approaching, and the second set of lights: the small, dim stars of evening.

In a tomb, a man's body is set down and left to rot. Three nights drag by.

Three mornings come and then three long days. Now it is twilight again and his spirit returns to his body. Death flees away like a frightened crow.

Suddenly his eyes flutter open. His nostrils fill with air. His first sharp breath rushes into his chest like a flood of fire. It's charged with the sweetness of twilight, the cool of the evening,

the delicious fragrance of plants growing in a garden. Like a sword, it cuts the strangling noose of lifelessness. Soon every cell in his body is surging with new life. A smile fills his lips and well-being springs up from his guts, up the entire length of his chest and escapes his parted lips like the beginning of a triumphant cry.

He sits up, bolts up, throws off the bloodstained linen. The newborn power of life fills his every movement. It wells up like a fountain as his feet swing down from the rock and touch earth. He is on his feet, standing, walking, springing into the twilight.

Did you see his eyes when they first opened, after his eyelids had flung off the air of the tomb? His first glance pierced upwards through the greying light and the sullen rock around him. It broke out into the violet and blue of the twilight until his sight captured the trembling, unseen universe

beyond. He saw triumph. He saw death's cold limbs shake like twigs in a gale. He saw the fleeing serpent pinned head-down beneath a staff. And the stamp of a heel crushing its head. Little wonder he smiled. Or leaped. Or danced. Or shouted. Or praised his God. Or went to meet those he loved.

Wouldn't you? 🙏

*Yahshua is the Hebrew name of the Son of God. The footnote to Matthew 1:21 in the New International Version of the New Testament reads: "Jesus is the Greek form of *Joshua*." In Hebrew, as in old English, there is no "J" sound, so the name *Joshua* is more accurately rendered *Yahshua*. For more detailed information, see "Name Above All Names" on our website: www.twelvetribe.com.

WHO WE ARE



Our community started out in Chattanooga, Tennessee about 30 years ago when a couple who sincerely wanted to do “God’s will” opened up their home to whoever wanted to do the same. People came. Some stayed.

We came to have many houses there and started the Yellow Deli Restaurant. In time we had households and Yellow Delis in Dalton and Trenton, Georgia, Mentone, Alabama and Dayton, Tennessee.

Eventually we all moved up to Island Pond, Vermont spreading out throughout Vermont and making homes in other states and countries. We’ve had a handful of restaurants in the towns we’ve lived in and many cottage industries making all kinds of things from candles to futon mattresses. You might have even worked alongside us on some construction site somewhere.

We’ve been many places, some for a little while and some we’re still here. Maybe you’ve met us or seen us around,

maybe you befriended one of us somewhere, you came to see us later and we’d moved. Just about all of us you’ve met are still here somewhere in the list below.

Way back in Chattanooga we called ourselves “The Light Brigade,” and “The Vine Christian Community,” later in Vermont, “The Northeast Kingdom Community Church,” and more recently, “the Messianic Communities.” Some people have called us simply “The Yahshuas.” Today we call ourselves “The Twelve Tribes.”

If you ever saw a big burgundy & cream colored, double-decker bus, that was us. Or a peculiar blue wooden ship that you’d probably say looked like Noah’s ark, it’s us again.

We’d love to see the life our Master Yahshua has given us fill the whole earth and we want people who desire the same to come be with us.✝

SOME OF THE PLACES WE’VE LIVED

Chattanooga and Dayton, Tennessee.
Dalton and Trenton, Georgia
Mentone, Alabama
Providence, Rhode Island
Gorham, Maine
Bridgeport, Connecticut
Santa Cruz, California
Asheville, North Carolina
St. Joseph, Missouri
Harrisonburg, Virginia
New Paltz, New York
Burlington, Vermont
Nova Scotia
Monticello, New York
High Bridge, New Jersey

Call us toll-free 24 hours a day —

In the USA and Canada:

1-888-TWELVE TRIBES
(1-888-893-5838)

In the UK:

0800-0743267

SOME OF THE PLACES WE NOW LIVE

Community in Island Pond

P.O. Box 449, Island Pond, VT 05846
☎ (802) 723-9708

Community in Boston

92 Melville Ave, Dorchester, MA 02124
☎ (617) 282-9876

Community in Hyannis

14 Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601
☎ (508) 790-3172

Community in Plymouth

7 North Street, Plymouth, MA 02360
☎ (508) 732-7201

Community in Lancaster

12 High Street, Lancaster, NH 03584
☎ (603) 788-4376

Community in Coxsackie

7 Ely Street, Coxsackie, NY 12051
☎ (518) 731-7711

Community in Buffalo

78 Pleasant Ave, Hamburg, NY 14075
☎ (716) 649-7835

Community in West Palm Beach

6311 Wallis Road, W. Palm Beach, FL 33413
☎ (561) 686-7561

Community on the Lake of the Ozarks

119 Main Street, Warsaw, MO 65355
☎ (660) 438-4481

Community in Colorado Springs

406 Karr Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80916
☎ (719) 573-1907

The Community in Winnipeg

89 East Gate, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2C2,
Canada ☎ (204) 786-8787

To find a complete list of our U.S. and International Communities, please visit our web site:

www.twelvetribes.com

English Español Français Deutsch
Portugués Magyar Afrikaans