

John 10:22-42

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Date: 22 November 2015

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[0 : 0 0] Although we will look at pretty much the whole of this passage, or at least bits of this whole passage, this morning in John 10, verses 22 to the end, as we've already hinted at, the main one I want us to recognise is verse 25.

You see, it is one thing if we don't believe, say, a witness or somebody that says, oh, the Lord's done this for me, the Lord's done that, and we say, well, okay, that may be fine for you, but it doesn't actually affect me much.

Or we read something, we think, okay, but I'm not sure I believe it, but when the Lord himself speaks or witnesses to those who are supposedly seeking answers from him, and is able to say, I told you, and ye believe not, there is probably no greater condemnation in heaven or on earth than having rejected the living witness of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

I told you, and ye believe not. But before we come to that verse, we see the context in which this is said, at verse 22, it was Jerusalem, and the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

So the first thing we know is that Jesus is at this time right at the heart of where the religion of Israel ought to be most manifested. If God is ever anywhere present in Israelite thought, he is present in Jerusalem.

[1 : 3 7] That is the place of his symbolic presence. It is said by the modern-day Israelis, that the Jew, the modern-day Jew, when he wants to pray, he goes to Jerusalem.

When he works, he goes to Hefa, which is a northern coastal city, no doubt famed for its industry and commerce and so on. When he wants to dance, he goes to Tel Aviv, no doubt for the nightlife or whatever it might be the case.

But the idea of going to Jerusalem to pray, nowadays it would just be at the western or so-called wailing wall that an Orthodox Jew would go to pray. But the idea of going to Jerusalem to worship, because that is the symbolic place of God's presence amongst his people, that was deep-rooted in Israelite thought.

And so Jesus is in Jerusalem at a particular feast. We should have a dedication. We'll come to that in a moment. But this is the point of his, where the hub of faith ought to be.

The absolute centre and soul of Israelite faithfulness to God. That's where Jesus is found. And it is in that context when he, the Messiah, is right at the heart of his nation and of its religious recognition and thought.

[2 : 5 2] And there he is, exactly where he should be, exactly where he should be. And still they don't believe. It was at Jerusalem where Jesus is found.

If ever the Messiah should be anywhere for Israel, it is in Jerusalem. And there he is. And still they don't believe him. The feast of the dedication. This wasn't one of the scriptural feasts as set out in the law of Moses.

But rather it was a historical thing that there was a time when Judea, or the land of Israel, was taken over by Greek kings who decided to try and exterminate Judaism.

And so they turned the temple into a pagan temple for the Greek gods and false gods and set up altars and so on. They set up gymnasiums for sort of Greek athletic games.

They encouraged the participation in athletic sports, which, you know, I think, well, that's not a bad thing. Except that all of these sports and races and events were bound up with the worship of the pagan deities.

[3 : 54] Athletes often ran naked in them. And that was considered improper by the Jews. And so they tried to Greekify and paganise so much of Greek culture.

And inevitably, as happens when new things are introduced to a society, some people thought, great, let's embrace this. Throw off the old shackles of our religious past.

And let's embrace this new multi-faith or secular world. And let's engage with all this new Greek culture. And some Jews were all for it. And some were dead against it.

They saw it as a violation not only of their god, but also of their very identity and culture. Now, eventually, the Greek overlords were overthrown.

And when they were overthrown, the Jews took control again of their land. This was in the period between the Old Testament and the New Testament. They took control of their land. They cleared out all the idols from the temple.

[4 : 50] And they purified it, you might say, and cleansed it. And then they rededicated the temple. And this is what the Feast of Dedication was about.

It was about reclaiming back the temple of the holy God of Israel. So this is what they celebrated. And the time period when they celebrated, obviously, their calendar was different from ours.

But it was roughly what to us would now be about the beginning of December. So a couple of weeks hence in terms of our calendar now. It was winter. Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch.

It wasn't actually Solomon's porch. There was nothing left of the temple Solomon had built. This was the rebuilt temple. They called it Solomon's porch because it was thought to be roughly in the place where Solomon had had in his temple, the porches and the colonnades and so on.

We read later on of the apostles meeting there in Acts chapter 3, verse 11. The lame man which was healed held Peter and John. And all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

[5 : 59] That was where the apostles tended to be gathered in Solomon's porch in the temple. And they would come together there. A sort of covered walkway with the colonnades and so on. And Jesus is walking there, perhaps because the weather is not climate.

It is winter at any rate. But he's in Jerusalem. It's a feast and dedication, a religious festival. It's winter. I can't help thinking that perhaps John is throwing in this little detail as well.

Not just for a climate kind of description. And not just setting the scene. But also that there's a spiritual overtone to it as well. But John, remember, is the most deep and spiritual of the four gospel writers.

You know, they will say, you know, Jesus said such and such and it's maybe a few lives. John puts, not puts into the mouth of Jesus, but John records long speeches and soliloquies of Jesus.

You know, they take up a whole chapter or maybe into a second chapter. You know, look at John 14 and then he goes into 15 and then 16. You know, two or three chapters all with direct speech from Jesus.

[7 : 05] This is unknown in the other gospel accounts. Jesus doesn't speak for huge screens of time other than maybe the Sermon on the Mount or whatever. And that's comparatively rare.

So John is deep. John is spiritual in his gospel account. Therefore, you can't just take a wee detail like it was winter. It's not just, oh, because it's cold. Because there's no mention of grazeals or fire or anything like that.

Like Peter warming himself at the fire when Jesus is about to be crucified. Just people's winter. And I would suggest to you that this little detail is in here not just to describe the climate conditions or the particular stage of the year that it is, the particular season of the year.

But it's a spiritual winter as well. It is the temple. It's Jerusalem. It's where Jesus and all places ought to be received as the Messiah. But it's winter.

And in winter, nothing's growing. In winter, there is no fruitfulness. There is no light. There's no blossom or bud or anything. You know, although our pagan forefathers were wrong in the false gods that they worshipped, I do believe that the true God gave them in nature and in a sense of the changing seasons, a little glimpse of something of what he intended to plant later on in men's minds, of the sense of true death and rebirth.

[8 : 31] That as his own son would come in the fullness of time, to die upon the cross and then to be buried and then to rise again the third day. Coincidentally, at that time of year, which would be spring, a new life, a new birth, he intended men's minds to be prepared beforehand so that whatever false or incomplete gods they worshipped before, with their understanding of death in winter, new life in spring, remembering the equinox in the midwinter or whatever it may be, and then the days lengthening and the positions that they recognised, the sun and the standing stones and all these things, everything was centred around the seasons for them.

The sense of death in winter, darkness, and then new life in spring, and life extending and warmth and growth for the summer, and fruit from the soil and so on.

But this is winter. This is the time of death. This is the time of unbelief. It was the feast of the dedication when they were celebrating the fact they got their temple back, they were worshipping again the true God, but what was it worth other than a badge of national identity?

You know, many countries seek to appropriate religions for themselves, and in some situations, less so nowadays in, say, Southern Ireland, which used to be associated with Catholicism, and the North maybe more with Protestantism, Poland you'd think of, oh yes, women Catholics, Spain you'd think women Catholics, Turkey very much associates Islam as being their national identity.

So if somebody is a Turkish Christian, then they reckon they can't really be loyal to the state, they can't really be a true Turkish national, because otherwise they'd be a Muslim.

[10 : 24] And so there's this tendency of states to sort of adopt a particular religion, and that becomes part of their identity. And then somebody who follows a different religion, or finds the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, it's not so much, oh we don't like your religion, but you're not marching in step with everybody else, you're not now part of our loyal, unified state, so something wrong with you, you can't be trusted, maybe you're a traitor, maybe you should be imprisoned, or whatever the case may be.

Reclaiming the temple, a feast of dedication, had become for some of the Jews, no more than the religious expression of their national identity. It wasn't now about a relationship with God, it was simply about this is who we are, this is our temple, our worship, our religion, deal with it, rather than a relationship with the living God.

Now if you think about it, then as now, the only reason for Israel, the Jewish people, existing as a separate entity at all, the only reason they can possibly have survived, despite all the attempts down the centuries, to exterminate them, of which the Holocaust was simply the most widespread, and organized, and vicious.

You know, anti-Semitism, and anti-Jewish persecution, has been going on for centuries, but the only reason they could have survived, is because, of this unique relationship, now somewhat it will be fine, but with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The only reason they exist as a people, is because of having been chosen, in the first place, by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Take that relationship with God, out of the picture, and why do you even exist?

[12 : 18] It's the same with, you know, in Northern Ireland, for example, again, to take the Irish illustration, people say, oh, I'm a Protestant. I think, well, what does that mean?

Well, it means I'm not a Roman Catholic, so, what does that mean? It means you don't go to that church, or, you think you know what you believe about the Pope, does it mean you, you don't believe in transubstantiation, that the bread actually changes into the, the physical body of Christ, and the blood, the wine, really into his blood, is that what you, you say, well, no, it's just that, they don't really know what they mean, you take out the idea, what is a Protestant?

If it is not somebody, who believes the gospel, as it is revealed, in the word of God, if they believe, that it is in Christ alone, that we are saved, that is what, the revelation, reformed Christianity, is about.

This is why, people, supposedly, are not meant to be going through, priests, and saints, and angels, and so on, but straight to Christ, you take out this relationship, with the living Christ, with the living God, then, nobody's quite sure, why they're a Protestant, or a Roman Catholic, or a Jew, or anything like that, if you take out, the relationship with God, and this is what they have done, it is winter, they are there in the temple, but it's winter, nobody's believing, in this man here, in the temple, it's almost like, the religion has become, an end in itself, and for an awful lot of people, that can be the case, religion becomes, an end in itself, it becomes a safety valve, just in case, there's a God, well, I'm going to church, and maybe I'm paying the church, and maybe I'm, I'm doing what I should, and I'm trying to keep the rules, but just in case, I'm kind of hedging my bets, it doesn't work like that, religion can't save you, the temple can't save you, going to a particular church, can't save you, only Christ can save you, but it is winter here, that means that faith, for these people around him, is in a state of deadness, they're not believing,

Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch, he's there, accessible to all, he is living, and walking amongst men, then came the Jews, round about him, and said to them, how long didst thou make us to God, if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly, Jesus answered them, I told you, and you believed not, the works that I do, in my father's name, they bear witness of me, now we've got, various instances, in the previous chapters, you know, in chapter 7, 37, in the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink, he that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly, shall flow, rivers of living waters, if that's not a claim, to messiahship, what is, likewise, in chapter 8, the word eternal page, we see it in verse 12, then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life, the Pharisees therefore, said unto them, thou bearest record of thyself, thy record is not true, so in other words, they're saying to them, now, you tell us if you're the Christ, and if he says, well, yes, actually,

[15 : 33] I am the Christ, and they say, ah, you're bearing witness of yourself, so your record isn't true, they've already tried to catch him out that way, already, in the past, likewise, we see in verse 28, of chapter 8, then said Jesus unto them, when ye have lifted up the son of man, then shall you know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my father hath taught me, I speak these things, this is what he's telling them, this is what he's saying to them, in verse 35, and 36, again, the son abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth ever, if the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed, I know that you're Abraham's seed, but you seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you, again, verse 42, the same chapter, if God were your father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth, and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me, that's not messiahship, what is,

I proceeded and came forth from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me, again, at verse 58, of the same chapter, Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am, now the Jews would know this phrase, I am, as being a divine claim, that's why they tried to stone him, there and then, verse 59 of chapter 8, they took up stones to cast at him, but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of it, and so passed by, he's told them again, and again, and again, who he is, and what his claim is, but ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said of them, you see, they're saying, you're making us to doubt Jesus, Jesus doesn't make anyone to doubt, Jesus causes and enables people, to believe, it is we ourselves, who put our doubts in place, and who tell ourselves, that we are merely doubting, doubting, and doubting is one thing, doubting is saying, well, you know,

I'm not quite sure, I'm open to this, but I'm not quite sure, it's like, John the Baptist, when he sent his disciples, to say to Jesus, you know, are you the one that should come, or should we look for somebody else, now that's doubt, that's John saying, look, I thought it was you, and I still think it probably is you, but you know, can you just make it clear to us, because we're not quite sure anymore, we're ready to believe, but, just not quite sure, that's doubts, that's anxieties, what these unbelieving Jews have, he hasn't doubt, it's straight unbelief, Jesus says, you believe not, you know, you're saying you doubt, but it's not that you doubt, you don't believe, I told you, and you believe not, the works that I do, in my Father's name, they, bear witness of me, that'll be the Christ's first place, I've already told you, already told you, but you don't believe, you don't want to believe, because, if I am he, then instead of being leaders, in your religion, and your nation, now you'll have to follow, your life will have to change, your priorities will have to be adjusted, that is the same for each of us, you know, can you imagine, if say, the likes of,

Richard Dawkins, were converted, you know, he has built his life, his reputation, his fortune, if he has one, on being, a publicly acclaimed atheist, now if he were to be converted, and proclaim publicly, Jesus Christ is now his saviour, not only would he be shut out, completely in the media, there'd be a lockdown, blackout, of any of that news, in terms of, of the media, but also, instead of being, a leader, that everyone, oh the great media, that's always been brilliant, isn't he wonderful, that's all wise book, the so called blood delusion, and so on, but instead, he becomes a mere follower, he becomes a servant, of the risen Christ, he becomes lowly, he has to humble himself, like all of us, must humble ourselves, if we are to follow Christ, we cannot be masters, if we are to be Christians, we must be servants, we must be followers, this is what Jesus invites people to do, follow me, but these people are used to being leaders, they don't want to follow, they want to make sure, that if there's a Messiah, they're going to be right up there, as his lieutenants, as his leading men, as his cabinet, his henchmen, his generals, they are going to be there, basking in his glory, and everybody's saying, oh look the Messiah, there's these devout religious men, who are his lieutenants, his captains, and so on,

I've told you already, Jesus said, you didn't believe me, the works that I do, in my father's name, they bear witness to me, you know what they do, but you believe not, because you're not of my sheep, as I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, now that to me, is quite a terrifying, as well as humbling, few verses there, because it means, that if we say, I just can't believe that, I know the facts, and I know the truths, and I just can't believe it, I can't put my trust in this, and the scary thing is not, well I just haven't got over it yet, so Jesus says, well the reason you can't believe is, you're not actually one of mine, that's why you can't believe, that's why you're not able, to put your trust in me, that's what's holding you back, is you're not actually, one of my sheep, now I don't know if that terrifies you, it would terrify me, because we all like to think, we have the opportunity, well it just means, I'm not there yet Jesus, you know, I'd like to think that, in a few years time, maybe, or a few months,

[21 : 17] I'll come round, and I'll learn a bit more, and then I can make the commitment, we like to think, we've got time, we like to think, we've got opportunity, above all, we like to think, our salvation, or lack of it, is in our hands, this is why, the doctrine of so called, predestination, or election, is so repugnant, to ordinary, human mindset, it is so, so offensive, to unconverted man, because he likes, oh no, that's wrong, I should be able to say, whether I'm going to believe, in this God or not, I should be able to say, whether or not, I'll go to heaven, it's not fair, if God decides, who's going to be saved, and who's not, it's not fair, if I don't control, my own destiny, why should you and I, control, who will dwell, in the presence of God, for all eternity, it's like somebody else, deciding and saying, I'm going to decide, who's going to come into your house, and sit in your city, and eat your food, and watch your TV, and use up your heating,

I'm going to decide, who's going to go and sleep, in your bed, and who's going to decide, to use your furniture, and who's going to go, and dwell in your house, and you've got no saying it at all, you can either like it, or love it, but I'll decide, who goes and dwells in your house, I'll never agree with that, you say, no, no, no, wait a minute, it's my house, I say, who comes and goes as a guest, I say, who's family, who lives with me, who doesn't, I'll decide, who gets over that threshold, thank you very much, not everybody else, and yet with God, we think, oh God shouldn't be able to say, who comes and dwells in this house, God shouldn't be able to say, who lives with him, for all eternity, it should be me, it should be I, who decide, no, it doesn't work that way, and although the world, may be offended by it, and although unbelieving men, may be outraged, as they always were, against Jesus, God will have control, over who will and will not, be with him, for all eternity, God will say, who is of his sheep, and who is not, it's not because, he has raised them, and reared, that he has purchased them, with his own blood, he has the right, to decide, who is his, and who is not, ye believe not, because you are not of my sheep, as I said of you, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, now if that makes you think, oh well, that's fine, that's why I wasn't able to believe, well okay, yes,

I'm not going to worry, about that anymore now, I'm just going to go off, back to the world, okay, that might be how you respond, or it might be a case of, oh, well that's, that's terrifying, that means, I'm not one of his sheep, oh Lord, that's not, I just can't live with that, please Lord, save me, please, please, and the same invitation, will be there, well put your trust in me, trust, and believe, let go, of your own control, of your life, and give your life, into my hands, I will look after you, I will care for you, I will provide for you, I am stronger, than you are, I have got more resources, at my disposal, than all your pathetic, savings, or abilities, or homes, or lands, or whatever, I control the whole world, trust in me, and you will be alright, give your life to me, and you'll know life, like you've never known it before, and eventually, the child of God, will do so, and eventually, the worldly will decide, they're not going to, and none of us knows, who is the Lord, and who isn't ultimately, none of us knows, who will turn our back, on the Lord, at the last minute, like Judas did, none of us knows, who may be saved, at the last minute, like the thief, on the cross was, but this is what Jesus says, my sheep will hear my voice, and they will respond to me,

I know them, and they follow me, they don't try to lead, they don't try to be a big wing, and a big leader, and say, oh well Jesus, I'll take you on my terms, as long as I get to be a leader, no, if we're going to be Christ, we have to follow, we don't leave, we follow, we're not masters, we're servants, we give ourselves completely, into his hand, and he decides, where we go, and what we do, ye believe not, said Jesus, it's not doubt, it's not, oh not quite sure, it's unbelief, there is no sin, more damning, than unbelief, every sin, under the sun, that men and women, may ever commit, there is always forgiveness, through the blood of Christ, there is nothing, that you can do, say or think, which will be too bad, for the blood of Christ, to wash, not to wash away, but the sin of unbelief, means that we refuse, to put our trust, in the only one, who can cleanse us, he that cometh to God, must believe, that he is, and that he is, a wardroof, bound, that diligently seek him, without faith, it is impossible, to please God, therefore, if we are going, to put our trust, in him, and if we do believe, then we will know, or we can know, that we are saved, without question, without doubt, oh well I hope,

I will be, it's not about you, and what you've done, it's about Christ, and what he has done, that's what you're trusting, and if you're saved, it's not because you're good enough, it's because Christ, is good enough, if you have assurance, in your heart, I know, I'm going to heaven, that seems presumptuous, no it doesn't, because our certainty, is based on Christ, and how great he is, and what he has done, upon the cross, but you believe not, because you're not, of my sheep, as I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them, eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man, pluck them out of my hand, and my father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able, to pluck them, out of my father's hand, it's like belt and braces here, it's the double lock, there's no way, of snatching them, out of the hand of Christ, but even if there was, you can't snatch them, out of the father's hand, as I've said, so many times before, some people think, in terms of being held, in God's hand, as though you had an item, a little ball, or a piece of fruit, as being held clutch, and it was somehow, possible to shake his hand, and make him let go, you sometimes see in films, or whatever you know, there's two people, wrestling, one of them's got a gun, and he keeps smacking, the guy's hand, against the wall, or against the table, to make him let go, of the gun, or the knife, or whatever it may be, as though somehow, and the devil, could grasp God's hand, and smack it, against the wall, enough time, to make him let go, of his children, but it's not like that, because what the Lord says, as we mentioned so often, in the past, in Isaiah 49, verses 15 and 16, can a woman forget, her sucking child, that she should not have compassion, on the son of her womb, yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, behold I have graven thee, upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually, before me now, you look at your hand, you see the lines, engraved on your hand, no matter how many times, somebody smacks your hand, against the wall, or turns it upside down, or tries to shake it, the lines are not coming off, the lines cannot be, gouged out of your hand, this is how deep, and how personal, the Lord's own children, are engraved, on the palms of his hands, you can't get the lines, off your hands, you can't pluck, the Lord's children, out of his hand, or out of the father's hand, then the Jews, took up stones again, to store them, now, the significance, in the original, in the Greek here, which we lose in the English, it's as if, oh well, he's really upset us now, let's grab a stone, and pick it up, and throw it in, first of all, they're in the temple, where's all the stones, lying about, well, there aren't, but the sense, of the original, which we don't get, really in the English, is, it's almost like, they produced stones, it's not they went, and picked them up, it's as if, they are carrying them already, big stones, with which they intend, to put somebody to death, there was a certain size, of stone you were meant, to use, and it's as if, they were carrying them, lugging them along, under their robes, and then produced them, they took out, the stones, as it were, it's not they, picked them up, off the ground, but they took them up, and it's all, heaving them up, ready to throw, in other words, they had them there, when they gather, round him, in verse 24, the Jews, came round about him, and said to him, how long does, that make us to doubt, that would be, that Christ tells plainly, they don't say, another word, they don't enter, into an argument, with him, they're not trying, to debate, they're not asking, him questions, everything that he, has said after that, you're not believing, because you're not, my sheep, then they took up, stones, to throw them,

[30 : 27] I'm not, nobody can pluck them, out of my father's hand, I and my father are one, then they take out, their stones, now they're ready, to kill them, they intended, this all along, to shed blood, in the house of God, this is what they planned, I and my father, are one, the unity, in the Godhead, Jesus answered, in any good work, so I showed you, for my father, which one, are you stoning me for, and they said, well for a good work, we stone thee not, I think, just stop for a second, I don't know, our time is going, but stop for a second, and think, the sheer courage, and calmness of Jesus, not many of us, if we see people, suddenly take out stones, that they're ready, to heave, and ready to start, throwing at us, and they're right, round about them, so it's not so much, as throwing them, from a distance, and more ready, to club it with them, you know, within arm's reach, and he doesn't even flinch, he just says, oh which one of my works, are you stoning me for now, he's so calm, he's so brave, in the face of this, attempt on his life, he knows, he's not going to perish, outside of his father's, perfect timing, for a good work, we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, because if thou being a man, makest thyself God, so Jesus quotes scripture,

Psalms 82, at verse 6, it says, I have said, ye are gods, and all of you are children, of the most high, and the scripture, cannot be broken, you're going to give me, a hard time, because I said, I'm the son of God, and he's using, the word of God, of which he has, perfect knowledge, to turn it against them, who claim, to be faithful, to God's word, but in fact, they're determined, to put to death, the one who is the word, need flesh, why, because of their unbelief, you see, the world, will try, and convince you, that unbelief, is a state of neutrality, that is a lie, and we see it, in the world today, that it is not a case of, well, you people choose, to be religious, you people choose, to be Christians, we choose, to be humanists, or secularists, or atheists, or whatever, you know, but we're all equal, and we're all fine, under the law, no one does, to be secularists, atheists, is to be anti-Christian, and you see it, you hear it, in the venom, with which they describe, all things Christian, in the, the bowing down, with the effusive, positive descriptions, of every other religion, under the sun, no matter what they do, but against Christ, there is always, this venom, this hatred, this complete animosity, there is, no, neutrality, in this, spiritual warfare,

Jesus said, he that is not with me, is against me, not just, you choose, not just shrugging, and saying, well, I don't really mind, if that's what you want to do, you know, unbelief, is not a state of neutrality, unbelief, is a choosing, against Christ, Christ, has already been put to death, on the cross, that will either, have been done for us, by which means, we are saved, or it will be taken, as having been done by us, in which case, that blood, will be required, of our hand, therefore, they sought again, to take him, but he escaped, out of their hand, and went away, beyond Jordan, into the place, where John, at first, comprised, and there he abode, and many, resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle, and all things, that John, speak of this man, were true, and many, believed, in him there, in the temple, it is winter, here down, in the Jordan Valley, Israel, is one of these, countries of contrast, you can have, sort of like, desert sun, only a few, short miles away, from where you could have, snow on the mountain tops, in the hills, it is possible, one of the few, countries in the world, where people have said, no, you could be, skiing on the slopes, of Mount Hermon, in the morning, and you could be, floating in the dead sea, in the desert, in the afternoon, because such is the contrast, within this, comparatively small country, so he goes down, into the Jordan Valley, and there, where John, was first baptizing, only three or four years, previously, people are ready, to receive him, they're ready to believe,

Jesus, you see, will always have his people, it's not the case, oh well, if nobody believes in him, poor little Jesus, he'll go away, and he'll be lonely, sort of thing, no, if we won't believe in him here, we'll simply go, where he will be believed, if we won't accept him, in Britain, you'll find his converts, in Syria, if we won't accept him, in Europe, then we'll find him, in Asia, China is now, probably the most, Christian country, in the world, despite being, officially communist, and officially atheist, because the number, of Christians, are just, blooming, out there, and likewise, with all the persecution, of ISIS, and the terrorists, are doing in Syria, and Iraq, people are fleeing, into the refugee camps, in Lebanon, and in Jordan, where these huge, big camps, out of their home location, away from their family environment, what does this mean, people are actually, free there, to hear the gospel, and to respond to it, now there isn't, the family network, of cousins, who put them to death, and of families, who do honor killing, yes it's still dangerous, but now, hundreds, scores, sometimes thousands, across the camps, of ex-Muslim, refugees, finding Christ, in the refugee camps, in Syria, and in Lebanon, all the while,

ISIS are busy, killing people, and beheading children, and so on, meanwhile, the Lord is quietly, overcoming the darkness, and overcoming the power, and the bloodshed, of the devil, with quiet faith, and belief, and love, if they will not, believe him in Jerusalem, they will believe him, in the Jordan, they will not believe him, in Scotland, they will believe him, in Syria, if they will not, believe him in Europe, they will believe him, in Asia, the Lord will have, his people, the Lord has already, called, his children to himself, many believed, in him there, they were not, believing him, in Jerusalem, they were not, believing him, in the temple, they were not, believing him, with their own, pet religions, and their own, national identity, but they believed in him, there, the question is, do we believe in him, here, or must he go, elsewhere, to find his sheep, that will be his, and thus,