



*Grace and Peace to All of God's  
Children here at Zion!*

*Pastor's Page by:*

*Rev. Charles E. Yunghans, PsyD*

Suppose you were a literate citizen of Judea sometime around the year 30 A.D. and you came upon a posted notice that read,

**Wanted: Yeshu Hanozri**

*He shall be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel into apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf. Anyone who knows where he is, let him declare it to the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.*

Would you know that you had just read the arrest warrant for Jesus of Nazareth? The above is historian Paul L. Maier's superficial reconstruction of an actual passage recorded in *Nezikin V.281* of the infamous *Tractate Sanhedrin 43A* of the *Babylonian Talmud*. It is likely as close as we will ever get to the actual wording of the arrest warrant circulated for the arrest of Jesus, because it was likely copied into the *Talmud* from the warrant itself. You can find this on page 114 of Maier's book, *In the Fullness of Time: A Historian Looks at Christmas, Easter and the Early Church*. Maier believes that the sentence of stoning makes this text particularly credible because the warrant would have been circulated before Jesus' arrest, which is when he was delivered by the Sanhedrin into Roman hands. Because all this happened under the very nose of Roman authority, only a Roman court could pronounce a death sentence, which, for someone not a Roman citizen, usually meant crucifixion (remember also that when they were both executed in Rome, Peter, who was **not** a Roman citizen, was crucified; but Paul, who **was** a Roman citizen, was given the "dignity" of being beheaded). But had Jesus been captured somewhere out in the countryside and away from direct Roman authority, He would likely have been stoned. As it had been, He was nearly stoned in Jerusalem itself (see John 10: 31). Also, consider St. Luke's account of the time Jesus was rejected in His hometown of *Nozret* (Nazareth): The angry crowd led Him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw Him off the precipice (see Luke 4: 29). This was often the first step in a stoning: The victim would be thrown from some height; and then, as he lay injured, he would be finished off with stones.

Maier also notes a couple ways in which this hostile *Talmud* text supports what we know of our Lord: First, it accuses Him of practicing sorcery. Thus it acknowledges that our Lord did many mighty deeds during His earthly sojourn. The judgment that these miracles were done by sorcery simply shows a hostile source deciding that these amazing deeds were done with the help of powers that were from below. Remember, after all, the Pharisees' accusations that "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons" (Matthew 9: 34 and 12: 24). Yet the writer of this hostile source knew he could not but admit that Jesus did many wondrous things.

The *Talmud* text also accuses our Lord of "entic[ing] Israel into apostasy." Here again, to those who were unprepared to receive Him as Israel's Messiah, His teaching would not be viewed as godly persuasion or instruction, but as demonic enticement; and His claim to be the Messiah and Son of the Most High would not be viewed as revelation, but as apostasy of the worst order. If they were to talk of inspiration in Jesus' case, His would be seen as the inspiration of Beelzebul. So whether you were, let us say, the evangelist Saint Matthew or the Rabbi who penned *Tractate Sanhedrin 43A*, You both agreed that Jesus performed many wonders and claimed divine origin, power and authority. You were worlds apart, however, on where you thought His power and authority came from.

Nobody who heard about Him in Galilee or Perea or Judea back during Jesus' earthly sojourn doubted that He existed. Nobody back there and then doubted that He did many wonderful things. Unless they also saw Him or talked with His disciples, reports of those works are why they heard about Him in the first place, as we read in Matthew 4: 23-25, Luke 4: 14 or John 6: 2. Nobody doubted that He claimed divine origin and authority. We know this much from the Gospels **and** the hostile but confirming witness of these ancient Jewish texts. Never mind all of the sophistries of scornful university professors over the last couple centuries: If you were back there and then, you **knew** this.

Who, then, was He? Christ or criminal? Divine or demoniac? Thanks be to the Holy Spirit that you who are reading this have learned, through the means of grace, that He is the Lamb of God Who then was setting His face like flint toward Jerusalem, carrying the sins of the world to the altar of the cross. During this past Christmastide, we, through the readings from Isaiah, Micah, Saint Matthew and Saint Luke have imagined ourselves hearing the heavenly chorus as it surprised the shepherds who tended the sheep likely meant for sacrifice in the temple; and we knelt with those shepherds before His manger in Bethlehem. With Saint Matthew we followed the light of that special star as it led the wise men to Him with their gifts. Our jaws should have dropped to the floor in amazement as Saint John explained that this Jesus is the Word of God Incarnate, and as we saw the skies open and the Spirit descend on Him at His baptism, and heard the Father's affirmation, "This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well-pleased." We sat at His feet as He taught us on the mountainside. Now, as He stands before us on another mountain peak, radiating with a light too bright for our eyes, we once again hear the Father proclaim, "This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well-pleased. Listen to Him!"

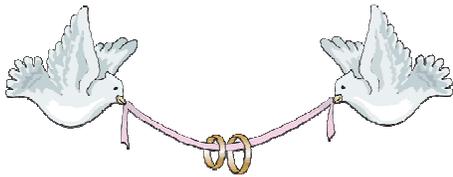
Let us once again listen faithfully to His Word and follow Him in humility and contrition through March and into mid-April, as He, by Whom all things were made, draws ever closer to the cross with our sins upon His shoulders.

Yours with a prayer for a peaceful and holy Lent,

Pastor Charles



Alex Welke	3/1
Earl Jones	3/2
Donald Verch	3/2
Barbara Calkins	3/5
Krysta Martinek	3/6
Katherine Gonyer	3/14
Judy Benson	3/20
Doris Post	3/20
Alex Ziebarth	3/26
Bryan Myers	3/29



## Happy Anniversary

Larry & Carol Gale	3/26/1977
Jim & Rita LaNou	3/27/1965



## PRAY FOR OUR MISSIONS

CLEF, Wade Bellesbach, adopted seminary student, Concordia Theo. Seminary Ft. Wayne, Rev. Daniel Jastram, Pastor Clint Hoff.



## Remember Our Homebound Members



Mavis Berry	Lila Pahl
Isabel Lenz	Robert Jacobson
Juanita Lueck	



## LENTEN CALENDAR

- 3/1- 6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service
- 3/8- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Midweek 1 Service
- 3/15- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Midweek 2 Service
- 3/22- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Midweek 3 Service
- 3/29- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Midweek 4 Service
- 4/5- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Midweek 5 Service
- 4/9- 9:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Service
- 4/13- 6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service
- 4/14- 6:30 p.m. Good Friday Service
- 4/16- 9:00 a.m. Easter Sunday Service

## Ash Wednesday

Please join us on Ash Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> when the Women's Society will be serving supper from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A free will offering will be taken.

**LENTEN SUPPERS:** If anyone is willing to provide the suppers the remaining Wednesdays in Lent please check out the sign up sheet by the office door. If you sign up you will be responsible for the set up, the meal, and the clean up. If you have any questions please call the church office at 723-6380.

## KWIK TRIP SCRIP AVAILABLE



for the support of our Youth Group. We are currently offering \$10, \$20, \$25, & \$50 Gift Cards. On sale during office hours Tuesday through Friday and also on Sunday mornings.



Women's Society met on Thursday, February 9th at 1:00 p.m. Table prayer was said. Rosa Blake and Arlene Hakes served strawberry shortcake and ice cream. Lynn Amundson furnished the strawberries. Very delicious!

Pastor Yunghans opened devotions with a prayer. Devotions pertained to a study of what God truly seeks in our sacrifices. We closed with prayer.

President Arlene Hakes called the meeting to order. Roll call was 8 present plus Pastor Yunghans.

Treasurers Report:  
\$852.03

Old Business:  
Nothing determined on "mikes" as yet. Doreen to check on tea pots on Amazon.

New Business:

Ash Wednesday is March 1<sup>st</sup>. We will serve that Lenten meal.

*Hot Dish:* Dianne, Lyn, Cookie

*Meat:* Christine

*Cheesy Potatoes:* Rosa

*Fruit:* Doreen, Lynn

*Salad:* Carol, Anita

*Dessert:* Lois, Kathy, Marlys

Next month we will meet Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. Hostesses will be Lynn Amundson and Lyn Brace. Please join us for dessert, devotions and to learn more about our society. Guests are always welcome!

