

Jesus Gives Us a Hint

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There's no doubt whatsoever that Jesus was the greatest teacher of all time. To establish that fact, let's go to John 1—the gospel of John—and read verses 44-48. I'll read this out of the New King James. If I don't mention the translation, it will be out of the King James. Christ was in the process of calling disciples.

John 1:44 *Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.*

45) Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46) And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? (NKJV)

It would be like us saying, if you lived in Kennewick, can anything good come from Pasco? It probably didn't have the best reputation in the area.

46 continued) ... Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48) Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49) Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. (NKJV)

Rabbi is Strong's #4461 and from The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament by Spiros Zodhiates says it can mean "a doctor", but it can also mean "a teacher or master". Zodhiates goes on to say,

A title of honor in the Jewish schools which continues until modern times.

So he recognized him as his teacher and obviously as his master too. He was noted as a teacher. That's what He did, He went around teaching for 3½ years. We have a question we need to think about in reading His teachings in the gospels. How many times, Jesus quotes the Old Testament in our Bibles where Christ says, "It has been said" or some reference to the Old Testament. We look and we find a marginal reference, in our Bible, in the center column or on the side. We see that and see it's referring to that scripture and He is indeed quoting the Old Testament, but we stop right there. We don't go any further. Or we may look up that specific scripture to see that specific verse but we don't look up the context where that verse resides. All the scriptures before and all of them after. We call it good and go back and continue reading in the New Testament. What that does, as we're going to find out today, is

severely limits our deeper understanding of what Jesus is teaching. We've all done it—we just take a cursory look and off we go.

Why does our stopping and not going back to the Old Testament and looking at the context, limit us and our understanding? The reason is, because quite often, Jesus taught in a manner that required the listener in His day and reader in our day, to fully understand the Old Testament reference that He was referring to—to fully understand it. He would only give a portion of the context of the Old Testament incident that He was referring to.

Let me give you a modern-day example to put it into context. If I say today, "*Houston, we have a problem.*" What does that sentence mean to most of us? It was spoken during Apollo 13 and their mission to the moon—on the way to the moon—and it occurred just after a mission threatening explosion. Mission commander Jim Lovell understated the issue and what he actually said was, "Ah, Houston, we've had a problem". The 1995 film, Apollo 13, popularized this phrase because they are out in the middle of space and had this explosion. The commander calmly comes on and says, "*Houston, we've got a problem.*" The phrase has been used to describe the emergence of an unforeseen problem in our lives. Often with a sense of ironic understatement. James used that in his sermon not long ago. That sentence, "*Houston, we have a problem*" is a hint. It's just a hint today of a greater issue—a greater problem. We need to keep this thought in mind that what Jim Lovell said was just a hint. That's going to be important through the sermon. That hint leads us to reach a conclusion—those of us who are aware of how that comment was originally stated and when—that there is a big unforeseen problem. We understand that because we were there when it happened. When we say, "*Houston, we have a problem*" it means I have a problem and it applies to what I'm talking about today.

This giving of a hint was often used as a teaching method of Jesus. He used it quite often. Centuries later, during the Middle Ages, that teaching method was given a label or a term called a *remez*—that's a Hebrew word. Today, by understanding Jesus' use of a *remez*, the Bible can become alive to a greater degree than we have previously realized or never experienced. That leads us to the title today:

Jesus Gives Us a Hint

We're going to cover it in two points. The first thing we want to do of course is define our terms. Let's ask the question:

1. What is a *remez*?

What is this hint we are referring to? Jesus, as I said, used this teaching technique of giving a hint with His disciples and with the Jews and the leadership of the Jews and the priesthood, wherever He spoke. This teaching method was called—not then, but hundreds of years later—a *remez*; a Hebrew term. In His teaching, He would use part of a scriptural passage as a hint to teach a lesson. Then, He was assuming—rightly so—

that the audience that He's speaking to—certainly the priesthood and all the Jews around Him—has knowledge of the Bible, that would allow them to deduce for themselves the fuller meaning of His teaching. A *remez* is a *hint* which leads to a broader understanding, but it relies on the ability of the listener to make connections with what Christ was saying with the Old Testament and concepts He was teaching with the Old Testament. They had to be familiar with the Old Testament, which the Jews obviously were—as a nation they were.

Here's another modern-day example. Let's say you're having a picnic. It's a beautiful day at the park, sky is blue, sun is out, and then, all of a sudden clouds come in, the sky turns dark, lightning flashes across the sky, hail starts to fall and someone says to you, "*I don't think we're in Kansas anymore.*" For the younger generation, that probably doesn't mean much, but for those of our generation—most of the generation of the church—*I don't think we're in Kansas anymore*, has meaning. To a whole younger generation, they would kind of roll their eyes and not understand. It's a reference to the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, which was first produced in 1939. When Dorothy, the main character, gets in a tornado and is picked up out of Kansas and lands in this magical world of Oz. She turns to her dog Toto and says, "*I've got a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore*", which was obvious. What that term means to those of us that have lived with that term, that something has radically changed. We're not in Kansas, we're in some new place or some new condition that didn't exist before. For somebody familiar with the movie, this one hint—this *remez*—of a sentence, conveys the exact meaning of what was intended by the author who wrote the script for the movie. This form of teaching was perhaps the favorite teaching method that Jesus used. For us today, there is a problem with that teaching method.

Let's say 2000 years from now, in 4022, we come across the writings of someone who used the sentence, "*Houston, we have a problem.*" We have no context but we know that somebody said at that time—2024—*Houston, we have a problem* and it was important. Or somebody said, *I don't think we're in Kansas anymore*. We don't have the context, just the sentence. Perhaps you could understand that somebody can conclude that after reading the sentence about Houston, that there was some kind of disaster in this ancient city of Houston. Houston, we have a problem—what could that be? Or if you read the one about Kansas and think that the author had just left Kansas and was not in Kansas anymore. You don't know because you have no context. You can see how easy it would be to draw an erroneous conclusion based on a sentence like that if you don't have the context. That is the precise problem that we have when we read Jesus' words in the New Testament and He quotes something in the Old Testament and we don't have a clue of the context. We might go back and read the specific scripture, but if we don't have the context of that scripture, then how can we come to the proper conclusion that Christ is trying to teach us? We are lacking the context for us today 2000 years later. The fact is that the audience that Christ was teaching, or were listening to Him, would have immediately been familiar with the context that He was discussing. They would know it and the whole nation understood. We have to realize that the whole nation of Judah in Jesus' day, knew the scriptures. They studied the scriptures; they knew the scriptures as a nation. I guess the best analogy we could draw today would be

one that shows how far we've sunk. There is a generation of people today who know every word to dozens of popular songs. They were popular when they grew up as teenagers and young adults and they can sing right along if that song is played over the radio or something like that. It shows how far we've gone downhill, but the Jews would know exactly those scriptures. If Jesus was quoting something in Jeremiah, they would know exactly what He is referring to. They could sit and quote it back. So Jesus could utter one sentence and the entire audience would know from the Old Testament—assuming He's referencing the Old Testament—exactly what He was referring to and exactly what he meant and where He was heading with His teaching method. He was giving us a hint, later to be titled a *remez*, that everyone knew—everyone in His audience knew. Today, we should to, as God's people, but the world doesn't understand. So, we've seen what a hint is—what a *remez* is.

The second point—and we'll spend the rest of the time today on this:

2. Let's look at four examples of Jesus' teaching using a hint—using a *remez*.

As we go through the scriptures, I hope we can all see that if we look at the context of the Old Testament scriptures that Jesus is referring to, it will open up our understanding of the meaning of what He was saying to the disciples and the Jews and the religious leaders of His day. It will open up our understanding of where He was going when He was talking to them and obviously where He was going when He is talking to us today.

2A. Luke 19.

This is the example of Jesus throwing the money changers out of the Temple. Just to give you some background on the money changers, money changers in Jesus' day were an absolute necessity. For example, if you were a Jew living in Greece and had to travel in Jerusalem to attend the high Holy Days, you needed to be able to convert your Greek currency into shekels and use those to buy a sacrifice—a bull, a goat, or a bird. That was all fine and good, having a money exchange in Jerusalem was a good thing—it was a service. The problem is, the money changers and sellers of animals were charging outrageous markups for the exchange of that currency. They were taking advantage of the worshippers. The worshippers didn't have any choice—they had to buy it. They were being scalped by the locals.

Let me give you a similar example that happens today. A recent article in the New York Times on December 13 of last year was on Disney World and some of the issues that are going on. They gave a specific example of a mother who was in shock because she took her daughter to Disney World and their first morning there they went to breakfast at the hotel on the property and she had to pay \$69 for a bowl of frosted flakes. Think about that. She is a travel agent by profession—her name was Caitlyn and she had a 4-year-old daughter and they dined at Cinderella's royal table resort restaurant at Disney World. The issue was, this resort charged \$69 for a child's breakfast no matter what they ordered. Can you imagine \$69 for a child's breakfast? The little girl just wanted her frosted flakes and be done with it. This is similar to being taken advantage of in a

situation that we find in the Temple during Christ's day. Let's pick up the commentary in Luke 19:45-46. I'll read this out of the New Living Translation.

Luke 19:45 *Then Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people selling animals for sacrifices.*

46) *He said to them, [here we get into a hint] "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be a house of prayer', but you have turned it into a den of thieves."* (NLT)

He's quoting Old Testament scripture. So we're reading this and you just think superficially—Jesus is angry and just called them thieves, and we go on and read. But while that is true—He is angry and He does call them thieves—it misses the point of what Jesus is trying to get across. If we go a little bit deeper, most of the translations have a marginal reference which quotes Jeremiah 7:11, so let's turn there. I'll read this out of the New King James. This is what specifically what Jesus was referring to.

Jeremiah 7:11 *Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the LORD. (NKJV)*

So we turn to Jeremiah 7:11, we just confirmed that Jesus was indeed quoting the Old Testament. But we often just stop there and then go back, to the New Testament scripture and read the balance of Luke 19, which leads us to miss much of the point that Jesus was making. What was He actually saying by quoting, "My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves"? It's a similar situation to, "*Houston, we have a problem*". His Jewish audience would have known exactly what He meant by quoting just one sentence, as we know today, *Houston, we have a problem*. We know what is being referred to. They would have known He was not just referring to not just Jeremiah 7:11, but the entire chapter. So let's see what He really meant. Let's go to Jeremiah 7:1. Remember, the Temple is still standing at this point.

Jeremiah 7:1 *The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2) "Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!'"*

3) *Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your doings, [Yehovah is saying, you are doing something that isn't right] and I will cause you to dwell in this place.*

4) *Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.'* (NKJV)

What the religious leaders were doing was committing atrocities—that the Temple was still here and they say the Temple justifies our existence. So, we can do whatever we want, but we have the Temple and we're administering at the Temple. We're going to find that the priesthood was practicing evil when they should have been shepherds. They were acting like wolves instead of being shepherds. They were using the Temple as a defense, saying "God is with us", irrespective of their behavior.

5) *For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor,*
6) *if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place [which was apparently happening], or walk after other gods [which we know was happening] to your hurt,*
7) *then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. (NKJV)*

The implication here was that they were doing all these things that were mentioned in verse 6. Evil things—oppression the weak, murder, pursuing false gods.

8) *Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit.*
9) *Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, [indicating they were doing all of this]*
10) *and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations?' (NKJV)*

Verse 11 we come to the scripture that Jesus quoted.

11) *Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the LORD. (NKJV)*

Now verse 12, notice how much more is there.

12) *"But go now to My place which was in Shiloh [isn't that interesting], where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. (NKJV)*

At the time of Judges, Shiloh is in the land of Ephraim and where Yehovah placed the Tabernacle—the tent, with the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. Because of the sins of the people and those who had ministered and tended the Tabernacle, Shiloh was later destroyed and abandoned. To this very day, as well as in Jeremiah's day, there is nothing but desolation and scattered ruins in Shiloh. It remains a fulfilled prophecy today.

13) *And now, because you have done all these works," says the LORD, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer,*
14) *therefore I will do to the house [which was standing right then] which is called by My name, in which you trust [by saying the Temple, the Temple, the Temple], and to this place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. (NKJV)*

Yehovah brings up an example from Israel's history to make a point—that the sons of Eli abuse their priestly position for personal gain and idolatry was rampant in the land and Yehovah completely destroyed Shiloh as a result. Let's go back and see that in 1 Samuel 2:12-17. We're going to see that the priesthood put themselves ahead of Yehovah. I'm going to read this out of the New International, it has some interesting wording.

1 Samuel 2:12 *Eli's sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the LORD.*

13) Now it was the practice of the priests that, whenever any of the people offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was being boiled

14) and would plunge the fork into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. [The priest came first.] This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh.

15) But even before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, "Give the priest some meat to roast; he won't accept boiled meat from you, but only raw." [Because it would taste better]

16) If the person said to him, "Let the fat be burned first, and then take whatever you want," the servant would answer, "No, hand it over now; if you don't, I'll take it by force."

17) This sin of the young men was very great in the LORD's sight, for they were treating the LORD's offering with contempt. (NIV)

Keil and Delitzsch's commentary says this of these scriptures:

Of these offerings, the portion that legally fell to the priest, as his share, was the thigh and the breast. This he was to receive after the fat portions of the sacrifice had been burned upon the altar. To take the flesh of the sacrificial animal and roast it before this offering has been made was a crime which was equivalent to a robbery of God and is therefore referred to here as being the worst crime that the son's of Eli committed.

They were taking for themselves, something that belonged to God Almighty.

We see here that the priests were stealing from Yehovah; putting themselves ahead of Almighty, yet thinking that they have the Tabernacles. Then later, "we have the Temple"—as though they would somehow save them. That is exactly what they were doing in Christ's day when He called them all thieves. When we understand this background, look at how much more meaning we can derive from Jesus saying that they were just thieves. When you go back into it, there's a lot more at stake. The location of this Temple and it being destroyed. Look at what the sons of Eli and Samuel did. All of that came in context to the Jews that were hearing Him and they knew that immediately. If we don't go back and look at it, we won't. By uttering this one sentence like He did in Luke 19, the audience would immediately refer back and know Jeremiah 7, which points to the legacy of Shiloh being completely destroyed because of the corruption of the priesthood. Jesus was saying, because of your corruption, like Shiloh,

this place is going to be destroyed. They understood that and knew His intent. If we don't read that today, we don't have that understanding and concept. Clearly Judah's and Israel's confidence in the Temple was misplaced. This is a *remez*. This is a powerful hint.

Let's go to a second example of a *remez*.

2B. Luke 11

This is about the finger of God which is very interesting. We're going to read verses 14-20 and I'll read it out of the New King James.

Luke 11:14 *And He [referring to Jesus] was casting out a demon, and it [referring to the person who had the demon] was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.*

15) But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." (NKJV)

We see that the vast majority of the audience marveled at this miracle. But the cynics and the doubters—likely the priesthood—challenged Jesus by inserting doubt that He was the Son of God; saying He was basically from Satan.

16) Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.

17) But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls.

18) If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub.

19) And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges.

20) But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. (NKJV)

What did Christ mean by referencing the finger of God? Why would He even bring it up and what's His point? The crowd immediately knew it was a hint of something in the Old Testament. He was referencing Exodus 8:16-19. The context is the plague of lice. I'll read this out of the New King James. The people there, when He said the finger of God, would immediately know this goes back to Exodus.

Exodus 8:16 *So the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'"*

17) And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

18) Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast.

19) *Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." (NKJV)*

They couldn't duplicate it so they realized this was from the very finger of God Almighty. Pharaoh's magicians had been able to replicate the previous two plagues—the water turning to blood and the frogs—but not this one and they remarked, this was from "*the very finger of God*".

19 continued) ... But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said. (NKJV)

So even though Pharaoh's magicians recognized Yehovah's Hand at work, Pharaoh did not. And here, the average Israelite realizes—when Jesus is saying the "finger of God"—He's telling the Jewish religious authorities that their heart was just as hard as the Pharaoh's heart from the Exodus. The very single person in their history who they despise the most—the Pharaoh that wouldn't set them free—He is telling, by this hint, this *remez*, that in His day—Christ's day—He's saying you guys have a heart just like Pharaoh. He said it by just this one phrase, "*the finger of God*". This is a powerful *remez*, a powerful hint just quoting four words. But the people would know and would understand. Look at the greater meaning once you understand the context that Jesus is referring to.

Let's look at a third example of a hint.

2C. Luke 19

We were there before but this is about Zacchaeus the tax collector. We'll read verses 1-10. I'll read this out of the New King James.

Luke 19:1 *Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. [Which is 20 miles east of Jerusalem]*

2) Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

3) And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature.

4) So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree [it's interesting the detail Luke gives] to see Him, for He was going to pass that way.

5) And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

6) So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

7) But when they saw it [obviously referring to the religious leaders of the day], they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." (NKJV)

Well, we're all sinners. They didn't realize that, they were self-righteous.

8) *Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord [he must have realized there was some opposition there in the crowd around him], I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."*

9) *And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham;*

10) for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."
(NKJV)

Keep those words in mind; *to seek and to save that which was lost*. This is the hint. On the surface of the story, it appears to say that Jesus saw it and saved sinners and Zacchaeus happened to be one. That is a very superficial understanding of what Jesus is referring to. While it's true, it misses the entire point. When He said seek and save, the crowd would immediately know He was quoting Ezekiel 34. We have often referenced Ezekiel 34 as a condemnation of the priesthood and the religious leaders back in the day, but also a combination of the modern day church leaders and some of the events and shenanigans that went on in this day. Let's go to Ezekiel 34; we're going to jump around in Ezekiel a little bit. We'll quote verses 1-6 and then 11-12 and then 16, 22, and 31. Again out of the New King James.

Ezekiel 34:1 *And the word of the LORD came to me [referring to Ezekiel], saying,*

2) *Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel [that means the priesthood, the ones that are supposed to be taking care of the flock], prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! [Sounds like just what we heard in Samuel's day and earlier in the Old Testament] Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?*

3) *You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock.*

4) *The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, [now we come to what Jesus was quoting in the New Testament] nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. (NKJV)*

We're going to beat you up if you don't let us put this hook in the pot and take the best of the offering.

5) *So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered.*

6) *My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."* (NKJV)

The shepherds were not fulfilling their priestly duties; they were not doing what they were ordained to do. Verse 11.

11) *For thus says the Lord GOD: [notice this] “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. (NKJV)*

I myself; Yehovah will now take over as the Great Shepherd. I will search them out.

12) *As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. [Referring to our times today.] (NKJV)*

Verse 16.

16) *“I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong [referring to the priesthood], and feed them in judgment.” (NKJV)*

Verse 22.

22) *therefore I will save My flock [what a comforting understanding], and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.(NKJV)*

Verse 31.

31) *You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord GOD. (NKJV)*

So when Jesus said, *the Son of man came to seek and save the lost* in Luke 19:10, everyone listening would know He was referring to Ezekiel 34 where Yehovah condemns, in the starkest terms, the religious leaders for putting themselves before the flock. Remember the context in the New Testament, Jesus had previously declared that He was the Son of the God who they worshipped. He was the Son of the God and had come to do His Father’s will. We notice here that He didn’t say, I’m the Chief Shepherd. He said I’m the Good Shepherd. We just read that Yehovah—or God Almighty—took over the job of being Chief Shepherd that we just read in the Old Testament. Jesus came to undo what the shepherds of Israel had done and set us an example of service and love that they were not setting. In Ezekiel 34 Yehovah declares that He was the Chief Shepherd of Israel. We know His Son would become the Good Shepherd, both loving and caring for the sheep. Setting straight what are the duties of the priesthood and today of the ministry. When Jesus declared the Son of man came to seek and to say which was lost in Luke 19, He did so by a hint; by a *remez*. Those listening there knew He was referring to Ezekiel 34 and everything that the chapter said, not just the verse; the whole chapter.

In the time remaining, let's look at the final example of a hint or *remez*. One where there are just four words. Jesus could well have given His most powerful sermon—in four words—in this hint that we're going to look at now.

2D. Matthew 27.

We have covered this set of scriptures before but not from the viewpoint of a hint or of *remez*. It becomes more important as Passover approaches. We're going to read verses 45-46 and then go back and read 41-43. I'll read this out of the New King James.

Matthew 27:45 *Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.*

46) *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"* (NKJV)

He uttered just four words. Why did He do that? What was He trying to get across? Most churches explain this by saying that at that moment, Christ became sin for all mankind. Rather than taking on the sins of all mankind, He became sin for all mankind. Since He had become sin, the Father cannot be in the presence of sin, therefore the Father had to abandon Him. And that is entirely bogus!

We have a sermon on our website from August 3, 2019 which explains it, but you can explain it by just thinking with your own mind. If the Father can't be in the presence of sin, then how come He allowed Satan to be in His throne with Job? How could He allow that? Or more importantly, how could He and His Son make His abode inside us and we're sinners? It's just completely bogus. But that's how most of the churches explain what Christ said; that the Father had abandoned Him. Check out that sermon from August 3, 2019 if you want a detailed explanation.

The Father would never abandon His Son at His most critical time, as He will never abandon us when we reach a critical time. Notice something else is going on here with a deeper meaning—a deeper understanding. The question is—this doesn't often come up because it disproves the error in people's thinking—what scripture did the High Priest quote at Jesus while He was hanging on the cross? Attempting to prove that He was not the Messiah. The High Priest quoted a scripture. He's saying it in front of all the people and using it as a proof text that Jesus was not the Son of God Almighty. Let's go up a few verses to verse 41 and I'll read this out of the New King James.

41) *Likewise, the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders [so they're all mocking Jesus, not trying to get to the truth—they have an agenda], said,*

42) *"He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.* (NKJV)

Now they are quoting Psalm 22:8.

43) He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.' (NKJV)

So we see here that the religious leaders are quoting to Jesus—and the crowd around—Psalm 22:8 and using it to justify that God is not coming down and rescuing Jesus. They were attempting to prove that He was not in fact the Son of God. They were mocking and they were ridiculing, not trying to seek the truth. They quoted Psalm 22:8 so let's go there and see what they threw up in Jesus' face. Again, out of the New King James. This was what the High Priest and others were saying while Jesus was up on the cross and self-righteously defending themselves.

Psalm 22:8 *He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since [the King James Version has in the margin instead of "since", it's the word "if"] He delights in Him!*" (NKJV)

I'll read it again. They are calling into question, saying He's not the Son of God. Yehovah does not delight in Him because He's not rescuing Him. He would come down and lift Him off the cross. They were quoting Psalm 22 attempting to show that Jesus was not the Son of God. What did Jesus do in response? He quoted Psalm 22 right back to them. When He said, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, everyone there—the whole audience—knew that that was from Psalm 22. The very chapter that the religious leaders were using to try to show that Jesus was not the Son of God. This four word hint—just four words—would get the Jews attention that He was now quoting Psalm 22. These four Hebrew words were a hint to all listening. Instead of Psalm 22 proving He was not the Son of God, actually proved that He was and is the Son of God. Notice what would have come to the people's minds next when Jesus quoted Psalm 22. What came next was an exact description of the very person hanging on the cross in front of them. A prophecy of the Messiah. Look at verse 14, New King James. This would come to the average person's mind when Jesus said those four words. He's pointing them back to Psalm 22.

Psalm 22:14 *I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me.*

15) My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.

16) For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; (NKJV)

These people are watching it, they understand.

17) I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.

18) They divide My garments among them [that apparently had just happened], And for My clothing they cast lots. (NKJV)

These scriptures would come to mind as a function of Christ's hint when He said those four words. And I can't help but wonder how many of them thought to themselves, I'm seeing prophecy fulfilled right before my eyes this day. They are standing in the crowd and looking. Jesus brought them back to the rest of Psalm 22 and they would undoubtedly remember these prophecies of the Messiah. The lightbulb would have had to come on among many of them, saying I'm watching this with my own eyes, right now, because of this hint. All things describing the Messiah on the cross, I am looking at right now. Remember the question Jesus asked in verse 1, *My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?* He goes on to answer it in verse 24. The Father did not abandon Him.

24) For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He [referring to the Messiah] cried to Him, He heard. (NKJV)

He answered His own question. We know the Father chose not to intervene on Jesus' behalf. Jesus knew that because that was part of the plan of salvation. But we read He did not abandon Him and we can take comfort in that, that He will not abandon us. By Jesus uttering just a hint of four words, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, with His dying breath, He preached an entire sermon. He was saying to the priests, look at the rest of Psalm 22. The priests are saying I am not the Messiah, but Psalm 22 is very graphic and very pointed and very specific. It actually proves that I am the Messiah because you are seeing it right now, right in front of your eyes. Look at Me. Prophecy is unfolding right before your eyes. Look and think. While it may look like God is abandoning Me, He is not and He will not abandon you. Jesus knew and they knew that a resurrection was coming. They didn't know all the details, but they knew a resurrection was coming. So here is an incredibly powerful use of a hint—of a *remez*—that speaks a sermon all on its own.

Let's conclude now. We've seen that Jesus is the greatest teacher that ever walked this earth. And that He used a teaching method that later became known as a *remez*. It was later labeled that in the Middle Ages. It's a Hebrew word meaning "a hint". We saw just four examples of Jesus' teaching by this hint—by this *remez*. So when we understand Jesus' teaching methods, the Father's Word opens up more widely to us. We have a greater understanding of where He's leading us and what He wants us to understand. So let's not just look at the margins that say, "there's an Old Testament reference" and just go on in the New Testament. Just proving that He was quoting the Old Testament. But rather, let's look at the Old Testament context to gain a fuller understanding of what He was teaching. Let's slow down in this fast-paced society. "I have to study this chapter in the New Testament—I have to finish it today." That's the pace we keep. But let's slow down and read the entire chapter Jesus was quoting to see what His New Testament audience would already know. They would already know—we don't 2000 years later. We want to go back and get caught up with the context. The context doesn't readily jump to our mind from our vantage point, 2000 years down the road. Let's ensure that we appreciate these hints that Jesus has left us and use them to have a more deep and rich understanding of our Father's word.