

Great Adventure Matthew Questions (2011):

Q1. What does A.D. Mean:

- A. Anno Domini (abbreviated as AD or A.D., sometimes found in the form Anno Domine) and Before Christ (abbreviated as BC or B.C.) are designations used to label or number years in the Julian and Gregorian calendars.
 - 1). The AD or the Christian calendar era is based on the traditionally reckoned year of the conception or birth of Jesus of Nazareth.
 - 2). The term Anno Domini is Medieval Latin, translated as In the year of (the/Our) Lord. It is sometimes specified more fully as Anno Domini Nostri Iesu (Jesu) Christi ("In the Year of Our Lord Jesus Christ").
 - 3). Because BC is the English abbreviation for Before Christ, it is sometimes incorrectly concluded that AD means After Death, i.e., after the death of Jesus.
- B. There is no year zero in this scheme, so the year AD 1 immediately follows the year 1 BC. This dating system was devised in 525, but was not widely used until after 800, and even after that, other systems were still widely used throughout Europe.
- C. Because both Gospel accounts agree that the birth took place before the death of Herod, historians generally assume Jesus was born around 4 BC or slightly before.

Q2. Why not use CE. instead of A.D.?

- A. In recent times, the terms BCE (Before the Common Era) and CE (Common Era) have gained prominence because they do not refer to Jesus' birth specifically. Thus, BCE/CE are a secularization of the Christian BC/AD.
- B. A.D. is the Latin for Anno Domini, which means "in the year of Our Lord." C.E. stands for "Common Era." Both take as their starting point the year in which Jesus Christ was, by convention, born. The year 2010 C.E. is the equivalent of A.D. 2010. A.D. precedes the date, C.E. follows.
- C. BC, AD and BCE, CE are labels for the same year references. The aim of using BCE, CE as opposed to BC, AD is to be religiously sensitive to those who are not Christians since BC, AD refer directly to Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, both sets of year numbering systems refer to the exact same years.

Q3. If a couple (one Jewish and one not) has a child the child is Jewish if the mother is Jewish. If the father is Jewish then the child is not Jewish. So if Tamara, Ruth and Rahab are gentiles why are their sons Jewish?

- A. In the Bible, Jews were called Hebrews or Children of Israel. The terms "Jew" and "Judaism" come from the tribe or kingdom of Judah. "Jew" now refers to all physical and spiritual descendants of Jacob.
- B. The word "Jew," as understood now, and as understood in ancient times defines a Jew as one of three things:
 - 1). Someone who is matrilineally descended from Jacob (AKA Israel) and any of his wives,
 - 2). Someone who has properly converted
 - 3). Someone who is matrilineally descended from a proper convert.
- C. Tamara, Ruth and Rahab were all converts.

Q4. What Are The Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church?

A. There are four Marian dogmas:

- 1). Divine Motherhood - Council of Ephesus 431
- 2). Mary's Virginitly
 - a) Virginal Conception through the Spirit- Baptismal symbols since the 3rd century.
 - b) Perpetual Virginitly (virginal birth and no other children) - Baptismal symbols since the 4th century (first in the Eastern Church)
- 3). Immaculate Conception (Mary's freedom from original sin) - Pius IX 1854
- 4). Mary's Assumption (body and soul) into heaven - Pius XII 1950

Q5. The Virginitly of the Blessed Mother?

A. "It seems clear that the two evangelists traditionally known as Matthew and Luke believed that, in conceiving Jesus, Mary remained bodily a virgin and did not have intercourse with Joseph... Neither evangelist knew the other's infancy narrative, and the fact that a virginal conception through the power of the Holy Spirit is one of the few points on which they agree means that this tradition antedated both accounts."
Raymond, E. Brown

B. From the first formulations of her faith, the Church has confessed that Jesus was conceived solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, affirming also the corporeal aspect of this event: Jesus was conceived "by the Holy Spirit without human seed." The Fathers see in the virginal conception the sign that it truly was the Son of God who came in a humanity like our own. CCC 496

- The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginitly even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. In fact, Christ's birth "did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it." And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as *Aeiparthenos*, the "Ever-virgin". CCC 499

C. The first insight regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given by the Church Fathers was the vision of Mary as the New Eve.

- 1) The Virgin Mary "cooperated through free faith and obedience in human salvation." She uttered her yes "in the name of all human nature". By her obedience she became the new Eve, mother of the living. CCC 511
- 2) The name Eve is taken from the Hebrew word, HAWAH, a verb that means, "to live." "The man called his wife Eve, because she became the mother of all the living."(Gen. 3:20) Eve, the first woman, was a virgin and immaculate at the time that she was tempted by the serpent in the garden. Thus, Eve, a virgin, conceived disobedience and death, whereas, Mary, a virgin and immaculate, conceived the Word in obedience and brought forth Life.
- 3) Because Mary is the New Eve, she, like the New Adam (Jesus), was born immaculate, just as the First Adam and Eve were created immaculate. Because she is the New Eve, she is mother of the New Humanity (Christians), just as the first Eve was the mother of humanity. Whereas the First Adam and Eve died and went to dust, the New Adam and Eve were lifted up physically into heaven.
- 4) Jesus Christ is the New Adam, the Lord of the New Creation (I Cor. 15:45-49) and Mary the New Eve who undid what the first Eve had done. The first Eve disobeyed

God and thereby brought sin and death into the world. The New Eve, Mary, obeyed and believed God's message which was given to her at the Annunciation (Lk 1:26-38), and brought salvation and life to the world in her son, Jesus, who crushes the head of the serpent. Mary, like us, shares in this victory.

D. Besides the fact that the Church has taught that Mary was always a virgin from its earliest days before the New Testament was even written, it continues to do so today, because of what this fact says about Jesus.

- From the cross, Jesus shared his Mother with us all. However, her womb was a tabernacle for Him alone. We would not think of using the tabernacles in our churches to house anything but the Eucharist because it is the sacred body of Christ; so too with Mary's womb. It is all about who Jesus is. Mary is special because of how much more he is special. She is all about him!

Q6. Mary, the Ark of the Covenant As Revealed in Mary's Visit to Elizabeth By Steve Ray

Golden Box: Ark of the Old Covenant	Mary: Ark of the New Covenant
The ark traveled to the house of Obed-edom in the hill country of Judea (2 Sam. 6:1–11).	Mary traveled to the house of Elizabeth and Zechariah in the hill country of Judea (Luke 1:39).
Dressed as a priest, David danced and leapt in front of the ark (2 Sam. 6:14).	John the Baptist—of priestly lineage—leapt in his mother's womb at the approach of Mary (Luke 1:41).
David asks, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" (2 Sam. 6:9).	Elizabeth asks, "Why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43).
David shouts in the presence of the ark (2 Sam. 6:15).	Elizabeth "exclaimed with a loud cry" in the presence of the Mary (Luke 1:42).
The ark remained in the house of Obed-edom for three months (2 Sam. 6:11).	Mary remained in the house of Elizabeth for three months (Luke 1:56).
The house of Obed-edom was blessed by the presence of the ark (2 Sam. 6:11).	The word <i>blessed</i> is used three times; surely the house was blessed by God (Luke 1:39–45).
The ark returns to its home and ends up in Jerusalem, where God's presence and glory is revealed in the temple (2 Sam. 6:12; 1 Kgs. 8:9–11).	Mary returns home and eventually ends up in Jerusalem, where she presents God incarnate in the temple (Luke 1:56; 2:21–22).

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church echoes the words from the earliest centuries: "Mary, in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion in person, the Ark of the Covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is 'the dwelling of God . . . with men'" (CCC 2676).

Q7. Did Mary have labor pains? I heard that she did not because of her immaculate conception.

A. The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. In fact, Christ's birth "did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it." And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as Aeiparthenos, the "Ever-virgin". CCC 499

B. Even before the terms "original sin" and "immaculate conception" had been defined, early passages imply the doctrines. Many works mention that Mary gave birth to Jesus without pain. But pain in childbearing is part of the penalty of original sin (Gen. 3:16). Thus, Mary could not have been under that penalty. By God's grace, she was immaculate in anticipation of her Son's redemptive death on the cross. *Catholic Answers*.

Q8. Brothers and Sisters of Jesus?

- A.** Against this doctrine, the objection is sometimes raised that the Bible mentions brothers and sisters of Jesus. The Church has always understood these passages as not referring to other children of the Virgin Mary. In fact, James and Joseph, "brothers of Jesus", are the sons of another Mary, a disciple of Christ, whom St. Matthew significantly calls "the other Mary". They are close relations of Jesus, according to an Old Testament expression. *CCC 500*
- B.** Jesus is Mary's only son, but her spiritual motherhood extends to all men whom indeed he came to save: "The Son whom she brought forth is he whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren, that is, the faithful in whose generation and formation she co-operates with a mother's love." *CCC 501*

Q9. Mary's Queenship?

- A.** "The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society." The Gebirah is the Hebrew term for the Queen Mother. The title "Queen Mother" was a royal title and an office, which was bestowed upon the mothers of the Kings of Israel, but limited to those Queens who were mothers of kings in the line of King David. When the Queen Mother walks in, the king, because he is her son, pays filial homage to her and establishes her at his right hand, upon a throne as Queen Mother.
- 1). The queen mother had a special role in the kingdom of Israel - advocate. She brought the needs of the people before the king.
 - 2). When Solomon was king of Israel, he had over seven hundred wives, and hundreds of concubines, so who was his queen. They could not all be queen. King Solomon had only one mother, Bathsheba. Thus, the mother traditionally reigned over Israel with the king, her son. She was called Gebirah, or "queen mother."
- B.** "This is the theological paradigm for Mary's Queenship. Jesus is the Son of David and the genealogy in Matthew links Mary to the Davidic line. Being the Son of David makes her the Queen Mother." It is in this sense that Catholics call her "the Queen of Heaven"

Q10. Apparent inconsistency between Matthew 3, in which John the Baptist recognizes Jesus as the one worthier than he, proclaimed as God's son, and Matthew 11, in which John sends messengers to Jesus to ask if he is the "one who is to come."

Most Likely Interpretations:

- A.** The question probably expresses a doubt of the Baptist that Jesus is the one who is to come (cf Malachi 3:1) because his mission has not been one of fiery judgment as John had expected (Matthew 3:2).
- MT: [5-6] Jesus' response is taken from passages of Isaiah (Isaiah 26:19; 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1) that picture the time of salvation as marked by deeds such as those that Jesus is doing. The beatitude (blessed is the one who takes no offense at me) is a warning to the Baptist not to disbelieve because his expectations have not been met. Jesus preached the Gospel of divine holiness with divine love.
- B.** Some believe that the question was asked, not for John's sake, but for the sake of John's disciples. John could have been telling his disciples to go for themselves and see what Jesus is doing so they would not have any doubts.

Q11. What happened to the Gifts that the Magi brought?

What subsequently happened to these gifts is never mentioned in the scripture, but several traditions have developed:

- A. One story has the gold being stolen by the two thieves who were later crucified alongside Jesus.
- B. Another tale has it being entrusted to and then misappropriated by Judas.
- C. In the Monastery of St. Paul of Mount Athos there is a 15th century golden case containing purportedly the Gift of the Magi. (Donated to the monastery in the 15th century by Mara Branković, daughter of the King of Serbia Đurađ Branković.) Apparently, they were part of the relics of the Holy Palace of Constantinople and it is claimed they were displayed there since the 4th century AD. After the Athens earthquake of September 9, 1999, they were temporarily displayed in Athens in order to strengthen faith and raise money for earthquake victims.

Q12. If Elijah went up in a flaming chariot, ~ where did he go and is he still there? Did he die, will he return to earth?

- A. Where did Elijah go? First we must remember what our Lord said, “No one has gone up to Heaven except the One who came down from there– the Son of Man” (John 3:13). Christ descended from Heaven in the Incarnation. Through His saving action, He opened the gates of Heaven, which had been closed due to the Original Sin of Adam and Eve.
- B. If the gates of Heaven were closed at the time of Elijah, and if “no one has gone up to Heaven except... the Son of Man,” where then did Elijah go?
 - What was the "heaven" to which Elijah was taken? St. Paul mentioned three heavens: (2 Corinthians 12:2). From Sacred Scripture, the three heavens would be delineated as follows:
 - 1) First heaven is the earth's atmosphere (Genesis 1:8). The Hebrew word shamayim may be translated as “heaven,” but more appropriately refers to the sky. Another Hebrew word for this first heaven is shachaq, which is more accurately translated in English as “clouds” or “sky.”
 - 2) The second heaven is “outer space,” where one finds the stars and the planets (Genesis 15:5).
 - 3) The third heaven, as described by St. Paul, is Paradise, where God resides and the heavenly sanctuary exists (2 Corinthians 12:2-4).
- C. From these delineations, and given that the gates of Heaven were closed, Elijah may have somehow been taken up in the first heaven (earth's atmosphere) - allowing his associate, Elisha to step into the office of the chief prophet to Israel.
- D. Letter to Jehoram after being taken up in fire and wind:
 - 1) In the fifth year of Joram's reign, Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, became King of Judah (II Kings 8:16). Jehoram “received a letter from the prophet Elijah...” (2 Chronicles 21:12). How could he receive a letter from Elijah if Elijah had been taken into Paradise? In the letter, Elijah recounted the past sinfulness of Jehoram and then prophesied the diseases he and his family would suffer.
 - 2) An interesting note is that fire and wind are manifestations of the Spirit - remember the fiery chariot and the whirlwind. So too Elijah could have been transported through the first heaven by the Spirit to another place..., perhaps back to Mount Carmel (where he could have written the letter to Jehoram), where he died, went to Sheol (the land of the dead) and awaited the Messiah.

E. The next part of the mystery is whether Elijah died or not. If Elijah had not died but went to Sheol on the fiery chariot, we would have to conclude there was an “assumption” like that of our Blessed Mother. This position would be wrong since our Blessed Mother's assumption is predicated on the fact that she was immaculately conceived without the stain of Original Sin and shared from the first moment of her life in the saving events of our Lord's life.

F. What then about the prophecies? Through the prophet Malachi, the Lord said, “Lo, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and terrible day...” (Malachi 3:23)

1) Jesus Himself later addresses this position. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, Jesus identified the “Elijah who is to come”: MT 11:13-15: “All the prophets and the law prophesied up to the time of John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, the one who is to come. Whoever has ears ought to hear.”

2) (Matthew 17:10-13) The disciples ask our Lord, “Why do the scribes claim that Elijah must come first?” Jesus replied, “Elijah will indeed come and restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.”

3) Jesus then teaches that the prophecy is fulfilled not in Elijah of the ninth century B.C. returning (or being reincarnated), but St. John the Baptist standing in the stead of that great prophet.

G. We are still left with some mystery surrounding Elijah. However, we may conclude several points:

1) Elijah was taken up by a fiery chariot in a whirlwind.

2) His office of prophet was passed onto the disciple Elisha.

3) Having undergone some kind of death, he too awaited in Sheol for the Messiah, who would conquer sin and death, and open the Gates of Heaven.

4) In the Transfiguration scene of our Lord, Elijah and Moses appeared with Jesus (Matthew 17:1-8); together they awaited the fulfillment of the prophecies and their deliverance from Sheol. Then at the appointed time, Christ who had suffered on the cross descended into Sheol and brought those holy awaiting souls to Paradise (See Catechism, #633).

H. Information from Article “Who is Elijah?”, by Rev. William P. Saunders

<http://www.holyspiritinteractive.net/columns/williamsaunders/straightanswers/elijah.asp>

Q13. Since Jesus and John The Baptist were cousins, why didn't John recognize Jesus when he came to be baptized?

A. Twice in John 1:31-34 did John the Baptist say that I did not know him: “I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel.” John testified further, saying, “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.’ Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God.”

- As we know, John was a relation of Jesus and he must have been acquainted with him. What John is saying is not that he did not know who Jesus was, but that he did not know what Jesus was. It had suddenly been revealed to him that Jesus was none other than the Son of God.

B. Matthew 3:13-14 at The Baptism of Jesus: Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?"

- 1) When Matthew describes the arrival of Jesus at the place where John was baptizing, John obviously did know of Jesus. While John had not yet received the revelation that Jesus was the Messiah, he must have known that Jesus (in contrast to the hypocritical Pharisees and Sadducees) was a truly righteous man.
- 2) John, humble man that he was, felt as though Jesus were his superior, and because of this he protested that he should not be the one baptizing, but the one to be baptized. Jesus convinced John to proceed with the baptism, and it was in the course of our Lord's baptism that divine confirmation of Jesus' identity as the Messiah was given.

Q14. Is the Bible True

A. Key principles for reading Scripture

These three points are essential to a basic understanding of the bible:

- 1) God is indeed the principal author of Sacred Scripture.
- 2) God made use of specific people that wrote in a human language, and did so at a particular time and place in history.
- 3) At times we have to work carefully to determine exactly what a sacred author is asserting to be true, distinguishing that from something he is using as an image to help us understand the truth more clearly.

B. To whom is given the task of authentically interpreting the deposit of faith?

The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the deposit of faith has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone, that is, to the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome, and to the bishops in communion with him. To this Magisterium, which in the service of the Word of God enjoys the certain charism of truth, belongs also the task of defining dogmas which are formulations of the truths contained in divine Revelation. This authority of the Magisterium also extends to those truths necessarily connected with Revelation. (see CCC 85-90, 100)

C. Why does Sacred Scripture teach the truth?

Because God himself is the author of Sacred Scripture. For this reason, **it is said to be inspired and to teach without error those truths, which are necessary for our salvation.** The Holy Spirit inspired the human authors who wrote what he wanted to teach us. The Christian faith, however, is not a "religion of the Book", but of the Word of God – "not a written and mute word, but incarnate and living" (Saint Bernard of Clairvaux).

The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) said it well: "everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit" (*Dei Verbum*, #11).

In composing the sacred books, God chose men and while employed by Him they made use of their powers and abilities, so that with Him acting in them and through them, they, as true authors, consigned to writing everything and only those things, which He wanted.

(Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), 11) See also CCC (105-108, 135-136)

D. Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

107 The inspired books teach the truth. "Since therefore all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, **we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures.**"⁷²

III. The Holy Spirit, Interpreter Of Scripture

110 In order to discover *the sacred authors' intention*, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking and narrating then current. "For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetic and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression."⁷⁶

The Second Vatican Council indicates three criteria for interpreting Scripture in accordance with the Spirit who inspired it.⁷⁸

- 1) **112** *Be especially attentive "to the content and unity of the whole Scripture"*. Different as the books which compose it may be, Scripture is a unity by reason of the unity of God's plan, of which Christ Jesus is the center and heart, open since his Passover.⁷⁹
- 2) **113** *Read the Scripture within "the living Tradition of the whole Church"*. According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God's Word, and it is the Holy Spirit who gives her the spiritual interpretation of the Scripture ("according to the spiritual meaning which the Spirit grants to the Church").
- 3) **114** *Be attentive to the analogy of faith.*⁸² By "analogy of faith" we mean the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation.

Q15. Why did God create the Devil? There is not mention of the devil in the OT until Isaiah.

A. God did not make the devil. He created the angel Lucifer, or light-bearer, a name which indicates great beauty, who later of his own free, through pride, rebelled against God; and was cast out of heaven making himself into the devil.

- 1). Just as Genesis tells us that God created everything inherently good, it was after that humans and some angels became evil of their own free choice. Other religions contend that there has always been an eternal struggle between good and evil, between God and the devil. That is not Christian teaching.
- 2). Scripture speaks of a great heavenly battle between the Archangel Michael and the other angels, Lucifer and the third of the angelic host who followed him (Rev 12:3-9). The fallen angels were cast into hell and, once there, became known as devils or demons, whereas the two-thirds of the good angels went to heaven and are still called angels.
- 3). If God knew beforehand that Lucifer would be bad, why create him at all? Why not just spare the universe the devil in the long run? Fair question. Again, remember that God creates good. Only creatures with free will can choose evil and sin, and then face the consequences of their choice.

- 4). If God prevented the devil from being the devil from being created merely because later, after being created, Lucifer would freely choose to go bad, then it is the same as not having a free will at all. If only those who choose good are allowed to exist, what freedom is that?
- 5). Were the evil people and angels not allowed to exist before they even made a choice, it would not be just. It would be condemning a person before they commit the crime. Punishment must come after the fact, not in anticipation of it. That would be like a parent disciplining a two-year-old child for bad behavior she will commit as a teenager.

- Answer from “The Catholic Answer Book: The 300 Most Frequently Asked Questions” by Rev. John Trigilio and Rev. Kenneth D Brighti.

B. St. Augustine recognized this possibly more clearly than anyone else: Evil is the privation of being, not a being. Pure evil would be nothing. We can look at Exodus – when God encounters Moses, he says “I AM” – I am not one being among others, I AM being. I am the one who is. God is that from which other things receive being. So, the more we depart from God – through sin, through evil – we more we depart, not only from God, but from existence itself. Evil arises from our free will to depart from God.

Q16. Why did Jeff Cavins describe himself as “dead” when speaking to a group of prisoners? What did he mean by that?

A. Jeff Cavins just quoted from Gal 2:19-20 before his comments on visiting the prison:

“For through the law I died to the law, that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.

B. “St. Paul had tried the way of the Law (OT) ... All the law had done was to show him his own helplessness. ... It was the law, which had driven him to God. ... So great was the change (in him) that the only way to describe it was to say that he had been crucified with Christ so that the man he used to be was dead and the living power within him now was Christ Himself.” (*Barclay*)

- Jeff Cavins was saying the same thing as St. Paul. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

C. We must realize that we must surrender our wills to the will of Christ. We do this by allowing His word to dwell in us and we obey the Gospel to allow Christ to live in us. We do this by allowing His word to dwell in us. To be totally committed to Christ is allowing Him to guide us in our lives. Doing and living the way He lived, following the examples that He set (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Peter 2:21-22).

D. Jeff was also referring to the many Scripture passages that speak of Christians as being “dead to sin.” In the third chapter of John’s gospel, Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be “born again” of water and the Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God. Paragraph 628 of the Catechism teaches that Baptism “signifies the descent into the tomb by the Christian who dies to sin with Christ in order to live a new life.” St. Paul writes: “We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.”***Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as being dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.” Romans 6:4 & 11. See similar references in Colossians 2:12-13 and 3:5; Philippians 3:10; and Ephesians 5:14 (by Tom Meister)

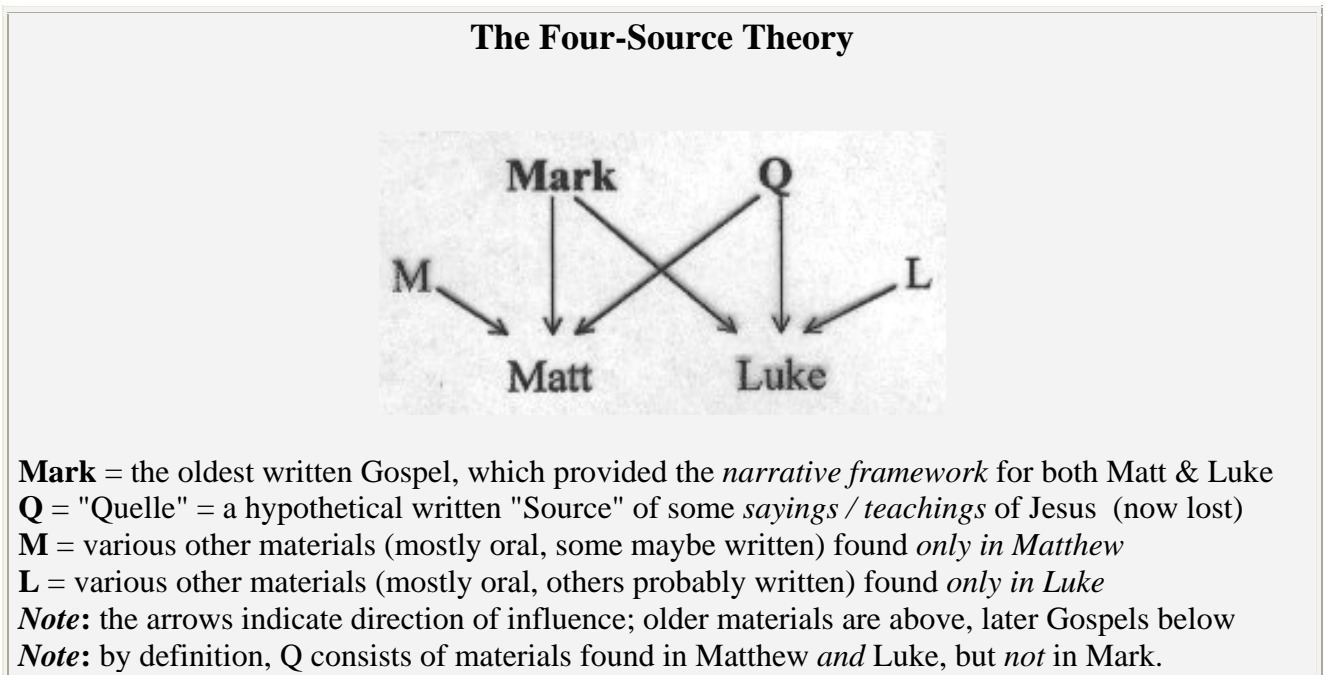
Q17. In Matthew 8:12 what was meant by “Wailing and Grinding of Teeth?”

- A. The term "gnashing (grinding) of teeth," based upon its clear usage in the Bible, signifies anger, rage, pain or anguish.
- B. Wherever you find the expression "weeping and gnashing (grinding) of teeth" in the New Testament, know of a certainty that it is a description of the judgment and doom of lost, unsaved men who will not inherit and not even enter the kingdom. It is never used to describe the fate of saved people.
- C. MT 8:11-12: Matthew inserts into the story a Q saying (see Luke 13:28-29) about the entrance of Gentiles into the kingdom and the exclusion of those Israelites who, though descended from the patriarchs and members of the chosen nation (the children of the kingdom), refused to believe in Jesus. There will be wailing and grinding of teeth: the first occurrence of a phrase used frequently in this gospel to describe final condemnation (Matthew 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30). It is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in Luke 13:28.

Q18. Who or what is Q?

- A. The Q source (also Q document or Q) is a hypothetical written source for the Gospel of Matthew and Gospel of Luke. Q (short for the German Quelle, or "source") is defined as the "common" material found in Matthew and Luke but not in Mark. This ancient text supposedly contained the logia or quotations from Jesus.
- B. Along with Markan priority, Q was identified by 1900, and it is one of the foundations of modern gospel scholarship. B. H. Streeter formulated a widely accepted view of Q: that it was a written document (not an oral tradition) composed in Greek; that almost all of its contents appear in Matthew, in Luke, or in both; and that Luke more often preserves the original order of the text than does Matthew.

C. The Four-Source Theory (the solution accepted by most scholars today):



Q19. The Pharisees were well known for fasting. How often did they fast?

A. Luke 18:11-12: "The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity--greedy, dishonest, adulterous--or even like this tax collector. **I fast twice a week**, and I pay tithes on my whole income.'"

B. The Didache (The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles) is one of the earliest written documents of the Church other than Scripture itself.

It was written sometime between 90 and 110 AD. It may have been compiled from the Apostolic Teaching as a kind of early catechism and a summary of the essential moral tenets of the Faith.

C. Didache Chapter 8. Concerning Fasting and Prayer (the Lord's Prayer)

1). "Let not your fasts be with the hypocrites, (Matthew 6:16) for they fast on Mondays and Thursdays, but do your fast on Wednesdays and Fridays" (8:1).

2). Matt 6:16 "When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.

D. Link to view the **Didache with Commentary**:

- <http://ministries.tlquest.net/theology/apocryphas/nt/didache.htm>

Q20. Custom of fasting on Wednesday and Friday?

A. From the time of the Holy Apostles, Christians have fasted on Wednesdays in remembrance of Christ's betrayal, and on Fridays in remembrance of His Crucifixion.

B. Pope's Lenten Message for 2009 "Fasting Is a Great Help to Avoid Sin and All That Leads to It"

"The faithful practice of fasting contributes, moreover, to conferring unity to the whole person, body and soul, helping to avoid sin and grow in intimacy with the Lord... Denying material food, which nourishes our body, nurtures an interior disposition to listen to Christ and be fed by His saving word. Through fasting and praying, we allow Him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God." Pope Benedict, 2009

Q21. Why was Capernaum referred to as Jesus' Town in Matt 9:1 "He entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town?"

A. MT 4:13-14: 4:13 "He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled:"

1). Isaiah's prophecy of the light rising upon Zebulun and Naphtali (Isaiah 8:22-9:1) is fulfilled in Jesus' residence at Capernaum. The territory of these two tribes was the first to be devastated (733-32 B.C.) at the time of the Assyrian invasion.

2). In order to accommodate Jesus' move to Capernaum to the prophecy, Matthew speaks of that town as being "in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali" (Matthew 4:13), whereas it was only in the territory of the latter, and he understands the sea of the prophecy, the Mediterranean, as the Sea of Galilee.

- B.** Jesus home was in this little city of Capernaum, beside the sunlit waters of the Galilean Lake. Capernaum is called Jesus' own city and His favorite town by the sea. Jesus used Capernaum as His headquarters during most of His Galilean ministry. It was His town as well as Nazareth was Joseph's.
- C.** Several of the Apostles - Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew, James son of Zebedee and his brother John - lived in the village, and Matthew (Levi son of Alphaeus) was a tax collector there.
- D.** Capernaum became the central point of the ministry of Jesus Christ, and many of His miracles occurred in or near the city, including numerous healings of believing people: Peter's mother-in-law (Matt 8:14-15), the centurion's servant (Matt 8:5-7), and a paralyzed man (Matthew 9:2-7). The miraculous feeding of the 4,000 from only 7 loaves of bread and a few fish occurred nearby (Matt 15:32-39), as did many other miracles.

Q22. What did Verse MT 10:23 mean – “When they persecute you in one town, flee to another. Amen, I say to you, you will not finish the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”

- A.** In the first part of the verse, Jesus is telling His disciples there must be not wanton waste of Christian lives. They must not throw their lives away pointlessly and needlessly.
 - 1) Jews would recognize Jesus statement (i.e.): If a Roman soldier were to seize a Jew tell him to “Eat Pork” just to humiliate and to make a fool of him; then the Jew may eat, for “God’s laws are given for life not death.”
 - 2) However, in the same example if the Roman soldier asked the Jew to “Eat Pork” as a sign that you renounce Judaism, then the Jew must die rather than eat.
- B.** In the second part of the verse “before the Son of Man comes”, it is difficult to know for sure what Matthew understood it to be: perhaps the "proleptic parousia" of Matthew 28:16-20, or the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, viewed as a coming of Jesus in judgment on unbelieving Israel. NAB
- C.** However looking at other similar verses in the Gospels, we find a focus on the Kingdom of God. Even Matt 16:28 we find “Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”
 - 1) Matt 16:28 “Amen, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”
 - 2) Mark 9:1 "Amen, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come in power."
 - 3) Luke 9:27 “Truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

Within thirty years of the Cross, the message of the Crucified and Risen Christ had swept across the world and reached Rome the capital of the world. People were being swept into the Kingdom of God. Since Mark was written before Matthew, it is possible that Matthew was referring to the Kingdom without using those words.

- D.** It is also possible that Matthew meant that the divine plan of Israel’s salvation would not be completed before the parousia because of their unbelief to the message of Jesus.

Q23. Was Judas Saved?

- A. Catholic Church has officially proclaimed many people to be in heaven, we call them saints. However, the Catholic Church has never proclaimed a single person to be in hell. The Church simply does not know who is in hell. Christ wills that all be saved. He will try to save us right up to our last living moment.
- B. Judas is one of the least attractive characters in history, yet Christ loved Judas and wanted him saved. Judas hanged himself, becoming a suicide as well as a traitor. In those last moments of consciousness, with the rope around his neck, it is possible his thoughts were of remorse and reconciliation. If he repented his sins, even Judas could have been saved. Only God knows if there was any good news for Judas between the tightening of the noose and his sad death seconds later. Whether he did, we do not know.
- C. The Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena is a work dictated by Saint Catherine of Siena during a state of ecstasy while in dialogue with God the Father. According to St Catherine of Siena, God the Father pointed out Judas's eternal punishment when He explained to Catherine the meaning of the sin against the Holy Spirit. God said:
 - 1) "This is that sin which is never forgiven, now or ever: the refusal, the scorning, of my mercy. For this offends me more than all the other sins they have committed. So the despair of Judas displeased me more and was a greater insult to my Son than his betrayal had been. Therefore, such as these are reprov'd for this false judgment of considering their sin to be greater than my mercy, and for this they are punished with the demons and tortured eternally with them" (No. 37, emphasis added).
 - 2) Thus, Judas perished not simply because of his part in Jesus' trial, but because of a final act of "despair" or "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" (Mk. 3:29) at the "moment of death," says St. Catherine.
- D. In the end, we do not know, whether Judas is now with the Lord or not. Only God knows and that is the way it is for all of us. Only God in His mercy knows the final resting place for each one of us. He has given us free will and the ability to choose Him or not. As Jesus has been telling us in the Gospel of Matthew – will you do everything for My Father?

Q24. What was the value of the alabaster jar of costly perfumed oil in Matthew 26:7?

- A. In Mark 14:4-5 "Why has there been this waste of perfumed oil? It could have been sold for more than three hundred days' wages and the money given to the poor."
- B. In John 12:4-5 "Then Judas the Iscariot, one (of) his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said, "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?"
- C. Denarius: This was the common Roman coin in Jesus day. It was made of silver and worth about .16 cents. The workers in the vineyard each received a Denarius for their day's wage. **Matthew 20:2-13**The Good Samaritan paid the Inn Keeper two denarii for looking after the wounded man. **Luke 10:35**. It was the Denarius, which Jesus requested when he was asked if it was right to pay taxes to Caesar. **Mark 12:15**.
- D. The plant that produces nard at this time was grown only in the Himalayas, a thousand miles and half a year away by caravan so the perfume is very expensive. The stated value of three hundred denarii would be about \$17,400 in the US today: 300 times one-day's minimum wage. Nard was literally a gift for a king.

- E. Matthew tells us the amount of money Judas was offered was 30 pieces of silver, was probably worth three to four denarii each. So the total value was about 100 denarii, or about \$5800 for us today. So the chief priests paid Judas about one-third of the value of the perfume made of pure nard that the woman poured out on Jesus.

Q25. Did Jesus Descend into Hell?

- A. In approaching this question, we must examine the word hell. Usually, when we hear the word hell, we immediately think of the place of eternal damnation for those who have rejected God in this life and have committed mortal sins without repentance.
- B. However, in the Old Testament, hell (or Sheol in the Hebrew texts or Hades in Greek texts) referred to "the place of the dead." This hell was for both the good and the bad, the just and the unjust. It was the nether world, a region of darkness. In the later writings of the Old Testament, a clear distinction is made between where the good resided in hell versus where the bad were, the two being separated by an impassable abyss. The section for the unjust was named Gehenna, where the souls would suffer eternal torment by fire.
- C. **CCC 632** The frequent New Testament affirmations that Jesus was "raised from the dead" presuppose that the crucified one sojourned in the realm of the dead prior to his resurrection. This was the first meaning given in the apostolic preaching to Christ's descent into hell: that Jesus, like all men, experienced death and in his soul joined the others in the realm of the dead. But he descended there as Savior, proclaiming the Good News to the spirits imprisoned there.
- D. **633** Scripture calls the abode of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down, "hell" - *Sheol* in Hebrew or *Hades* in Greek - because those who are there are deprived of the vision of God.

Such is the case for all the dead, whether evil or righteous, while they await the Redeemer: which does not mean that their lot is identical, as Jesus shows through the parable of the poor man Lazarus who was received into "Abraham's bosom": "It is precisely these holy souls, who awaited their Savior in Abraham's bosom, whom Christ the Lord delivered when he descended into hell." Jesus did not descend into hell to deliver the damned, nor to destroy the hell of damnation, but to free the just who had gone before him.

- E. **635** Christ went down into the depths of death so that "the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." Jesus, "the Author of life", by dying destroyed "him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and [delivered] all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage." Henceforth the risen Christ holds "the keys of Death and Hades", so that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth."
- F. **636** By the expression "He descended into hell", the Apostles' Creed confesses that Jesus did really die and through his death for us conquered death and the devil "who has the power of death" (*Heb 2:14*).
- G. **637** In his human soul united to his divine person, the dead Christ went down to the realm of the dead. He opened heaven's gates for the just who had gone before him.

Q26. Why the difference concerning Judas in Acts 1:16-19 and Matthew 27:3-10?

There are at least three explanations for this difference.

- A.** The first explanation is the most commonly held. In this one, Judas hangs himself and the part about him falling and his guts splitting open refers to what happened after Judas hung himself, which is that hanging there in the hot Mideast sun, the rope broke and his bloated body hit the ground and burst.
- B.** In the second explanation the 'ancients' had a different meaning altogether when they said "hung himself". They meant the person would climb onto a rock or a stool and then jump off onto a spike, and then 'hang' there impaled.
- C.** The third explanation is the whole 'gut spilling' thing is a metaphor that people of the time would have understood and not been the least bit confused. The first passage about hanging is about how Judas died in the flesh and the second is about how Judas died in the spirit. To get your brain around the symbolism, you have to understand that the Jewish people equated compassion with the gut or bowels, the way we equate the heart with feelings of love. Now you have an image of Judas "falling" from God and losing his compassion on a field of blood.
- D.** Luke records a popular tradition about the death of Judas that differs from the one in Matthew 27:5, according to which Judas hanged himself. Here, although the text is not certain, Judas is depicted as purchasing a piece of property with the betrayal money and being killed on it in a fall.
 - 1) Perhaps here, the following maxim holds - "He who does a thing by another, does it himself." That is, yes it was the chief priests who actually bought the field, but Judas had furnished the occasion for its purchase. Thus, the verse in Acts could be employing a figure of speech where we attribute to the man himself any act which he has directly or indirectly procured to be done.
 - 2) Notice too that the text does not say that Judas died as a result of hanging. All it says is that he "went and hanged himself." Luke however, in Acts, tells us that "and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out."
 - 3) This is a pretty clear indication (along with the other details given in Acts - Peter's speech, the need to pick a new apostle, etc.) that at least after Judas' fall, he was dead. So the whole concept that Matthew and Luke both recount Judas' death is highly probable, but not clear cut.
 - 4) The Bible doesn't say exactly how Judas died, so any of these explanations are possible, but they are not contradictory.