

The Defining Series

Mighty Scenarios

How do we relate to God's extreme scenarios, which display His sovereign interventions in the affairs of men? Do we understand them?

How do we handle and relate to God's judgment and grace, His righteousness and mercy?

This document is meant to be a personal contribution for a more accurate understanding, for a greater freedom in our relationship with God, a clearer interest in what He sovereignly does as well as creating a space for partnership with Him.

The Scriptures give us a deep insight into quite phenomenal sequences of events recording some of God's most dramatic decisions and moves in the global community of nations.

The famous stories about Israel's exit out of Egypt, the journey through the wilderness and the re-conquest of the land given by the God of their forefathers, are not the narratives focused upon in this document. Neither is it the supernatural assignments given to the Judges or the unusual lives of the kings and their spectacular or seditious regimes. The attention of the reader will be led to the much more famous 'christian' celebrations: Christmas, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ, and Pentecost. These are recorded in our calendars, at least in the Western nations.

Christmas is celebrated by the millions every single year and it is a challenge to look away from the presents, the Christmas tree, the carols, and the joyful family-gatherings. All of this is definitely dear to our hearts and represent fundamental stones in Western civilisations. To challenge their presence, even to remove them from our minds and cultures would have unexpected and deep negative effects. Maybe so irreversible that our coming generations would wander around in life without the spiritual and moral compasses essential to a society built on hope, justice and compassion. Neither Halloween, Valentine's Day or Black Friday come close to compensate for the absence of these celebrations. Actually, their increasing success is a symptom exposing their absolutely hopeless poverty and emptiness.

Easter is also a well-known event telling the narrative of the death of Jesus on the cross and the following Resurrection. We know quite well the big lines. Maybe we are not in the same state of mind as in the case of Christmas, but we do have the invasion of rabbits, eggs and a dream about better weather linked with a legitimate longing for true Spring and the following Summer.

When it comes to Pentecost we might be even less clear; both in our contemporary society and in quite substantial parts of the Christian Church. Here carnivals have made their entrance.

There is not much to say about the Ascension... well... He left them and went back to Heaven.

In this document we will dig deeper in order to take a more comprehensive look into these events and reach an understanding. There is, however, a challenge in cleaning up the mess, filling the holes in our insight and addressing superficial knowledge. New understanding must replace previous understanding. There must be some serious adjustments and corrections made in the light of the new or updated insight. It is an expected scenario in normal life. Continuous evaluation, adjustments and corrections are necessary. Something similar is necessary regarding the issues of the Kingdom of God.

It is a tremendous help to consider Christmas at a totally different time than Christmas. Otherwise the tree, the decorations, the presents, the good food and our excited descendants might distract us from the core and very intense reality of the event.

Then there is the barn, the animals, the star, the men from the East, the incense and myrrh, and the gold. In our pursuit for understanding it is definitely helpful to separate Christmas from the celebrations in family and church.

The same is the case when it comes to Easter and its scenario in the garden of Gethsemane, the walk from Herod to Pilate, the open-air trial, the horror of the Roman torture and the bestiality of crucifixion. Then the empty tomb and what followed. Our minds can easily get overwhelmed and our emotions overstimulated by pictures we have seen and movies we have watched.

We are familiar with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the sound of a mighty wind in the upper room, the disciples' speaking in tongues, Peter's words followed by mass-baptism. Of course, we especially love to dream and speak about the thousands who were born into the Kingdom.

These outstanding events with their different scenarios and similarly different components inspire, stir and tell us a lot. They are extremely rich in details and meaning. They speak so loud that it is difficult to hear and see anything else. But we have to. I had to and I did. The discoveries are absolutely liberating.

1. Easter and Ascension

When Jesus came from Galilee, where His family lived, and stepped out in the public sphere, this happened:

"When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."" Matt. 3,16-17

The Spirit of the Father came upon Him.

The voice of the Father was heard.

The Father came near.

The Father vindicated the Son's first 30 years.

The Father proclaimed the validity and excellence of the Son's life-patterns.

This repeated itself later:

"While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"
Matt. 17,5

Once again the Father was near and He revealed Himself. And in the whole process from the time of His birth until they settled in Nazareth, the Father looked after Him and after His parents Mary and Joseph.

Jesus was very conscious about this already at a very young age. He was in the temple and debated zealously with the even more zealous teachers of the Law. And He was just twelve years old. He listened to them, He asked questions, He showed deep insight in the answers He gave them:

"Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed;"
Luke 2,46-48

His parents were looking for Him in Jerusalem, surely in the neighbourhood of the temple. They found Him inside the temple. An interesting conversation between them and Him followed:

"His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them."
Luke 2,48-51

His parents did not understand His answers, because there were things they neither saw or knew about... namely the already deep relationship between Him and His Father, a relationship whose nature, strength and intensity had developed while His relationship with His earthly parents also took form... He was obedient to them.

It is exactly in this light, Jesus was speaking, when He said: "I must be about My Father's business". Not one word about the teachers or the debated issues. No comment about the situation, people or about anything else. He was already fully conscious about the fact that whatever He did, had to happen in the context: my Father's business. The debate took place physically in the temple, but for Him it took place inside His Father's agenda.

The Father was close to Him in Gethsemane.

The next points reg Easter and Ascension are:

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The next chapters are:

2. Christmas and Pentecost

3. Scenarios and dynasties... here we get closer to a definition of the 'gates of hell'

Conclusion:

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