



# 北美風沙 The North American LaSallians

Oct 2017

## Global Reunion 2018

### Direct Contacts for Side Trips

#### Item 2.1 – Direct Contact for Side Trips - Miami, Orlando and New Orleans

- For additional nights at Royal Palm Hotel, South Beach, **Miami** – please contact Peter Lai at [laip888@gmail.com](mailto:laip888@gmail.com), he will connect you to our assigned hotel representative.
- For hotel reservation in **Orlando** and **New Orleans** – please contact **Ms. Jennifer Tsou** of Apple Express, Inc. at [appleexpress2008@yahoo.com](mailto:appleexpress2008@yahoo.com), she can also be reached at Tel: (917) 282-2090 Fax: (732) 680-0784. Once again, you will be notified as soon as the official 2018 hotel rates become available.

#### Item 2.2 – Travel Brochure for Cuba Side-Trip (Aug 7-10, 2018)

Details of the Cuba package is now available for your review and action. If you are interested, please contact **Ms. Karin Eckhard** of ESPIRITU TRAVEL directly and exclusively, she can be reached at [karin@espiritutavel.com](mailto:karin@espiritutavel.com), and is responsible to assist you in all travel related matters.

The brochure is illustrated in Page 2 for your information and action.

#### Item 2.3 – 2018 Global Reunion Registration

Don't forget to make your 2018 Reunion Cruise reservation before the end of August 2017 to guarantee your cabin and cost. Many thanks in advance for your support.

## About this newsletter

This newsletter is aimed at providing an electronic platform for communication among La Salle College old boys residing in North America. However, it shall not be used as a tool to promote any personal agenda. The editorial board therefore reserves the right to review and edit all submissions to ensure that no inappropriate contents appear in any issue of this newsletter. The editorial board also reserves the right to reject any submission that is not in line with the objective of this newsletter. Please send all your communications to [editors@lscobaedm.org](mailto:editors@lscobaedm.org).

To subscribe to this newsletter, please email (with subject line : subscribe) to [newsletter-lscobaedm.org-subscribe@lscobaedm.org](mailto:newsletter-lscobaedm.org-subscribe@lscobaedm.org).

Newsletter Committee comprises of the following members :

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| East Coast (USA)       | Christopher Tse (1965), Peter Lai (1967)                  |
| Edmonton               | Calvin Chan (1971)  |
| San Francisco Bay Area | Ephrem Fung (1976), Ambrose Lee (1998)                    |
| Southern California    | Eddie Shek (1985)   |
| Toronto                | Felix Leung (1985), Kevin Kwok (1988), Jimmy Chang (1966) |
| Vancouver              | Nick Domingo (1963), Richard Choo (1977)                  |

## Reminders

### East Coast (USA)

#### Sunday Dim Sum Lunch

Date every Sunday  
Time noon  
Venue Asian Jewels Seafood Restaurant  
133-30 39th Avenue, Flushing NY 11354  
Tel. 718-359-8600  
Contact [dimsum@nylscoba.org](mailto:dimsum@nylscoba.org)

### Global Reunion 2018

Date August 1 – 8, 2018  
Website [www.2018lscoreunion.com](http://www.2018lscoreunion.com)  
Contact [laip888@gmail.com](mailto:laip888@gmail.com)

### Edmonton

#### Monthly Dim Sum Gathering

Date Oct 6, 2017 (first Friday of each month)  
Time noon  
Venue Urban China Restaurant 潮樓大酒樓  
Contact [billshwong@shaw.ca](mailto:billshwong@shaw.ca)

### Southern California

#### Monthly Dim Sum Gathering

Date every first Sunday  
Time noon to 2 pm  
Venue Empress Harbor Seafood Restaurant  
111 N. Atlantic Blvd., 3/F, Monterey Park

### Toronto

#### Friendly Match with Chinese University HK Soccer Team (60+ game)

Date Friday Oct 6, 2017  
Time 7:45 pm  
Venue Westmont Collegiate  
1000 New Westminister Drive  
Thornhill L4J 8G3  
Contact Kevin Kwok (88) Tel: (647) 928 5880

### New Year's Eve Dinner 2017

Date Sunday Dec 31, 2017  
Time 6:30 pm  
Venue Casa Deluz Banquet Hall  
1571 Sandhurst Circle Unit 107,  
Scarborough  
Cost 98.00



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## Chapter News

### San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

#### Summer 2017 – July Dim Sum Lunch

Reported by Ambrose Lee '98



LSCOBA SF Dim Sum Lunch July 2017

[From the left: Top Row] Mandy & Charles Jok '96; Chris Ngai '78; Andrew Sien '63; Ambrose Lee '98; Homer Yau '85; George Lau '67; Sharky Mok '85; Sandy & David Tong '01; Philip Leung '64; George Law '66; Samuel Chan '68;  
[Bottom Row] Frank Hon '66; John Kwan '59; Stella & David Lee '60; Maggie Hon

It was a great Saturday afternoon!

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 18 LaSallians and friends came together for dim sum at ABC Seafood Restaurant in Foster City. Our gathering is always full of laughter and fun, especially when we meet with newcomers and reunite with long lost friends.

The San Francisco Chapter would like to welcome *Maggie & Frank Hon '66*, who had just moved to the Bay Area; and *John Kwan '59 & Charles Jok '96* for joining our Dim Sum lunch for the first time! We hope you enjoyed our lunch, and will see you at our future events.

On the other hand, thank you *George Law '66*, *Chris Ngai '78* and *Homer Yau '85* for sharing their stories and pictures of their recent Hong Kong visit.



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## Bay Area LaSallian Gathering in Hong Kong, June – July 2017



June 16<sup>th</sup> 2017

[L-R] Dominic Wong '08; Thomas Ku '09;  
Edward Ma '89; Warren Wu '89  
Colin Cheung '93; George Law '66;  
Kelvin Chan '94; Robert Yan '91



June 19<sup>th</sup> 2017

[L-R] George Law '66;  
Bernard Cheng '03; Anthony Liu '03



July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017

[L-R] Kelvin Chan '94; Calvin Tin '01;  
Warren Wu '89; George Law '66;  
Anderson Lee '96; Yolanda & Chris Ngai '78;  
Mimie & Ephrem Fung '76; Claudio Chan '09

## Welcoming Dinner for Maggie & Frank Hon '66



[From the left: Top Row] Joshua Law '63; Stanley Leong '66; George Lau '67; William Fong '66; [Bottom Row] Maggie & Frank Hon '66; Cathy & Philip Leung '64; George Law '66; John Kwan '59

Maggie & Frank Hon '66 had just moved to Bay Area from the East Coast. A group of Bay Area Lasallians hosted a welcoming dinner for them on August 5th in San Mateo.





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## LSCOBA SF - September Luncheon in Milpitas CA

Reported by Ambrose Lee '98

*"Our lunch was always full of laughter."*



*[From the left] Stella & David Lee '60; Homer Yau '85; Jesse Lim '85 & family; Maggie & Frank Hon '66; Sharky Mok '85; Frank Lo '66; George Lau '67; Ephrem Fung '76; Fulcan Fong '82; Yolanda & Chris Ngai '78*

*"This time we hosted our lunch at South Bay to catch up with LaSallian over there."*

**On Sept 9<sup>th</sup>**, our chapter hosted our bimonthly dim sum lunch at Mayflower Seafood Restaurant in Milpitas. 16 LaSallians and friends were there joining us for a relaxing afternoon.



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## Golf Outing 2017

Photo Credit: George Law '66  
Reported by Ambrose Lee '98

Thank you for coming!! We hope you had a fun day and enjoyed the beautiful golf course at the Peninsula Golf & Country Club!!



[Attendee: Samuel Chan '68; Joseph Kwok '61; Stanley Leong '66; Francis Nguyen '64; Phil Ozorio '75; Vasco Rosario '66; George Lau '67; George Law '66 ]

On Aug 26<sup>th</sup>, 8 LaSallians got together to play golf at the Peninsula Golf and Country Club in San Mateo.

It was a whole day outing, a "... gorgeous day amongst LaSallians on a beautiful private country club golf course ..." said our event coordinator George Law '66.

"We had brunch at the club before we tee off at noon", 4 hours+ golfing on the beautiful course, "we then stayed behind to have dinner together."

"It is my genuine pleasure to be amongst fellow LaSallians!"



The Chapter would like to thank *George Law '66* in coordinating the event and special thanks for the courtesy of *Joseph Kwok '61* and *Dr Samuel Chan '68*. As members of this private golf & country club, they make the use of this facility possible!

## LSCOBASF BBQ Picnic 2017 Announcement: Oct 29<sup>th</sup>

Our next gathering will be our annual BBQ Picnic. It will be held on Oct 29<sup>th</sup> at Fremont Central Park. Details of the picnic will be announced momentarily. See you there!

Yours in La Salle,

**LSCOBASF Bay Area Chapter**

Our official Facebook webpage: [www.facebook.com/lscobasf](http://www.facebook.com/lscobasf)

**East Coast USA Chapter**





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## Joint School Alumni BBQ

John Ng (65)

Another successful event organized and arranged by LSCOA/NY chapter on a beautiful Saturday afternoon on Governor's Island, with the Statue of Liberty as a backdrop. The event was enjoyed by close to 100 participants from Wah Yan, Maryknoll Convent School, Saint Paul Convent College, St. Joseph, St. Clare, St Stevens, HKU and Ying Wah Girls that we called the HK School Alumni Association.



Some of Our Ladies Auxiliary



Food, Food, and More Food



Our First Lady Loading the Truck

As someone said, how you manage to gather so many Hong Kongers at one event is so amazing. Yes, we did it. The supply filled 6 shopping carts, and with utensils, accessories, even a wheelchair, we packed a 14 footer van to the roof. Thanks to Simon Wai, our President in arranging the van for use for the day.

Food was tasty and abundant, as one can witness the guys gathered around the grills, trying to show or brag about his own cooking skills and mingle.

The age group ranged from infant to 70s. People are finding new friends as well as long lost ones. For the next 3 days after the event, I still received praises, 'Thank-you's, and urges for the next event. LSCOA is always the leader of the pack. La Salle is always something more!



The La Salle Crew

## Toronto Chapter

### Friendly soccer game with Wah Yan Kowloon alumni

Chris Fong (1994)

Toronto old boys played against Wah Kan Kowloon old boys on September 10. We had so much fun on Aug 20 and decided to do a round 2 on Sep 24.





## Special Contribution

This 10-part series, contributed by William Lai (1961), is based on his trip to Israel and Jordan in 2016. There are many Biblical quotes in the article. William wishes to note that he uses King James Version for the quotes.

Our readers are also encouraged to express their views here in the Newsletter any time. Please send your contributions to [editors@lscobaedm.org](mailto:editors@lscobaedm.org). The Editorial Board of this Newsletter reserves the right to edit submissions to ensure quality and the right to make final decisions whether to publish any article or not to protect the integrity of this Newsletter.

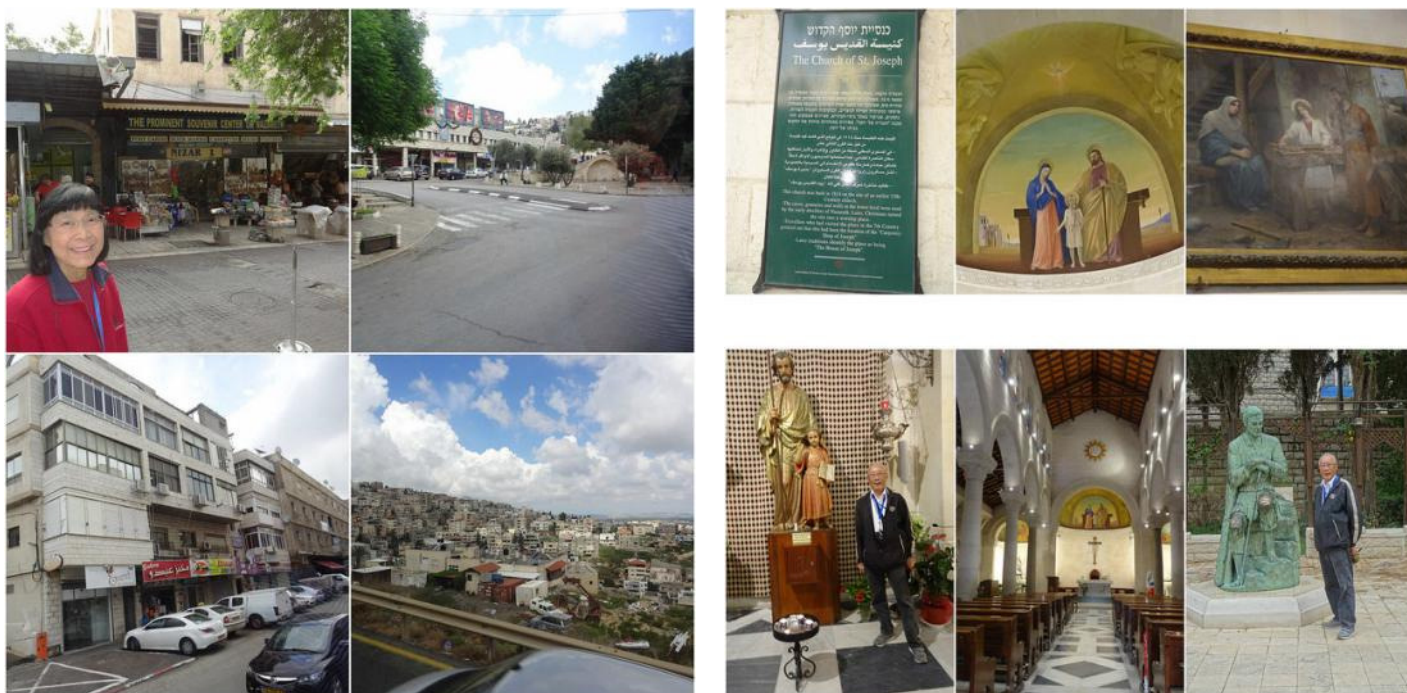
Editors

### The Promised Land (Part 5 of 10)

William Lai (1961)

#### Nazareth

Nazareth was Jesus' hometown. "*....they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth*" (Luke 2:29). Joseph had a carpentry shop there. It is now called the Saint Joseph's Church. The tour brought us there as well.



Modern-day Nazareth with Mary's Well (top right)

Joseph's woodworking shop, now The Church of St Joseph

The family did flee to Egypt for a while to dodge Herod's killing spree of young children amongst whom Herod believed would be the future King of Jews poised to overthrow him. (Matthew 2:16).

Otherwise, not much is known about Jesus' childhood. It is often assumed that he received both the usual religious education for a Jewish boy as well as some training in carpentry from his father. Luke's only comment was that "*the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him*" (Luke 2:40).

The only record of an actual event in Jesus' childhood in the New Testament was one documented by Luke (2:41-52). Jesus was 12 years old when he went with his family to Jerusalem for Passover. As they returned after the festivities, Jesus was found missing on the way home. In some panic, Joseph and Mary doubled back to Jerusalem to find Jesus. "*They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing him, and asking them questions, And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers*" (Luke 2:46-47). An irate Mary asked his son: "*Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have*





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sought thee sorrowing" (Luke 2:48). Jesus' reply was: *"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* (Luke 2:49). But Mary and Joseph did not have a clue as to what the heck Jesus was talking about: *"And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them"* (Luke 2:50). In any case, they just went home together and Jesus resumed being the deferential kid that he apparently was, and the Mom never brought the subject up again: *"his mother kept all these sayings in her heart"* (Luke 2:51).

It is somewhat difficult to interpret the significance of this incident. Some have proposed that it illustrates the normal life of a family with young children and the parents' concern for their welfare, and shows a precocious Jesus who had found his calling. As a result of this experience, *"Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man"* (Luke 2:52).

There is a huge information gap between the pre-puberty Jesus and the 30-year-old dude who suddenly showed up at the Jordan River to be baptized by his cousin John the Baptist. St John, the gospel writer, made a rather cryptic statement about Jesus' doings: *"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen"* (John 21:25).

Well, that leaves a huge room for speculation and imagination.

## The missing years

Taking all the sayings attributed to Jesus in the gospels, one cannot but be amazed by his vast knowledge and wisdom. That level of intellect could only be attained by studious effort, although in Jesus' case there might have been a divine guidance factor. But what that implies is that he must have had some form of stable residency in order to acquire this knowledge. That seems to be what Luke was saying (2:40).

However, with all due respect, not everything Jesus said was original. Some of his teachings appear in other religious texts. It seemed as if he had been influenced by a variety of moralities and schools of thought.

One not-too-outrageous suggestion was that Jesus did a fair amount of out-of-country travel in the "missing years". One theory proposed by several authors traces his route to what is now Nepal and northern India. He was known by the name of St Issa, or Isha. Apparently, he studied Buddhism and Hinduism.

There is another story to the effect that Jesus had followed his uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, to Glastonbury in England. Some believe that Joseph, Jesus' surrogate father, had died in Jesus' early teens and Joseph the uncle had taken on the task of looking after his nephew. Joseph the uncle was in the metal business which brought him frequently to the Glastonbury area which had then-valuable mineral mines. Allegedly, the uncle (actually Great Uncle as Joseph Arimathea was the uncle of Jesus' mother, Mary) would have brought the nephew to this area on his business trips.

When you think closely about some of the Biblical quotes of Jesus, you can see some very striking similarities with other faiths. For example, the "turning the other cheek" advice by Jesus (Luke 8:29) is also found in the Buddhist writing Majjhima Nikaya (21:6). Books have been written about the parallels between Jesus' and Buddhist sayings. The other clue indicating some form of relationship between Christianity and Buddhism was that "Doubting Thomas", after casting off his doubts, went to India to, for some, re-establish the Christian mission started by Jesus years earlier. The gospels are unclear if Jesus personally commanded Thomas to spread his word in India, although Jesus did tell his disciples to *"Go ye therefore, and teach all the nations...even unto the end of the world"* (Mark 28:19-20). It is also not unreasonable to expect Jesus' disciples to have some knowledge of Jesus' life before his ministry in Galilee. All these could be speculation but it is known that Thomas did die, some believed, murdered, in India, and you can go visit his tomb in Chennai, India.

There are some other more modern pilgrims to the northern India region who came back with great insights. The Beatles went there in the mid-1960s, studied under some guru named Maharishi, and allegedly smoked pot there as well. After this Eastern enlightenment, The Beatles came back to the West and sang songs like *"All you need is love"*. Jesus, perhaps similarly inspired whilst in the East, came back to his homeland and told people: *"thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"* (Mark 12:31). Question: did Jesus also smoke pot? Read on.

## Baptism

That Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist is not in doubt. The exact location where the rite took place has seen some discussion.

The act of John baptizing Jesus is mentioned in all four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Matthew and Mark simply indicated some place in Jordan, presumably meaning the River Jordan. *"Then cometh Jesus From Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be*





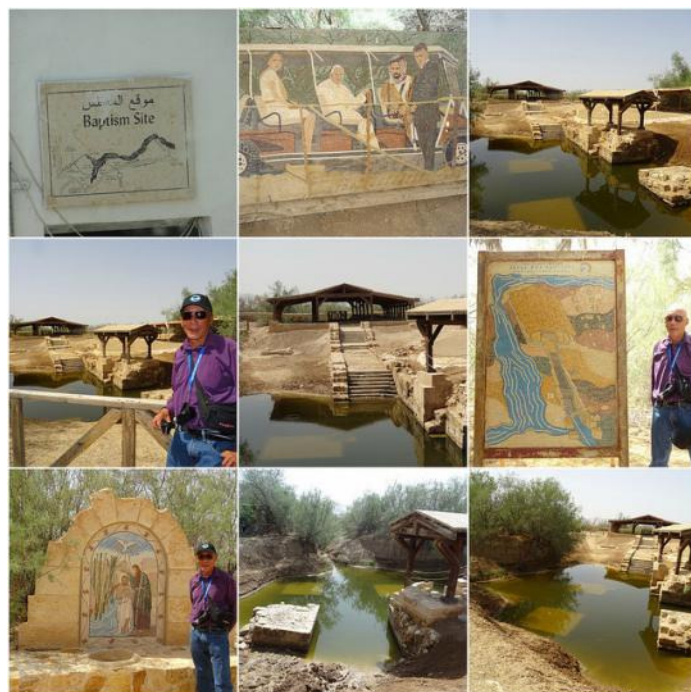
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baptized of him" (Matthew 3:13). "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan" (Mark 1:9). Luke recounted that John was practicing his craft "in the wilderness" and "into all the country about Jordan" where "Jesus also being baptized" (Luke 3: 1-2, 21).



The River Jordan 2000 years after Jesus' baptism  
(people still doing it, in dirty water)



Bethany Beyond the Jordan, Mosaic  
commemorating Pope John Paul II's visit 2000

In The Gospel According to St John, the location was specified as "Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing" (John 1:28). In other versions of the Bible, Bethabara is replaced by Bethany. In these and other texts, Jesus' baptism site is often referred to as "Bethany beyond the Jordan". That's on the other side of the Jordan River, where it is now the country of Jordan.

We visited the site. We weren't quite impressed, to be honest. First, the Jordan River is not even a shadow of its Biblical self. It looks more like a muddy and murky stream along most of it. There are some wider stretches but The Rio Grande it is not.

The alleged spot where John the Baptist dipped Jesus' head into the water is actually a little culvert off the main river. Sad to say, the spot looks like a dirty slough mired in muddy water and debris. It was very hard to imagine that it was/is a holy site. There are some remains of Byzantine churches around the site, but there is really nothing attractive about the location. The only thing that seemed to have remained from Biblical times was the thickets along both sides of the river. These lush plants along the Jordan were described as "the pride of Jordan" in Zechariah (11:3).

There is a contender to the Bethany-beyond-the-Jordan baptism site. Some people believe that the baptism took place at Yardenit, a point on the Jordan River south of the Sea of Galilee, quite far from the other site. The Bethabara referred to in the King James Version was thought to have been near Yardenit. The argument for this site also suggests that the northern site was too remote for Jesus to

have travelled to for the ritual. We also visited this site which is more built up and pleasant. The river is wider and the water is cleaner. There is an amphitheatre and baptism pools that can be



The competing Baptismal Site at Yardenit, with cleaner water



booked to conduct private baptismal ceremonies, and there is a gift shop that sells you bottles of Jordan River water amongst other usual tourist fare.

It is interesting to note John's reaction as he met Jesus in the baptismal site. John saw Jesus coming but said he didn't know him (Jesus): *"John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith.....And I know him not"* (John 1:29-31). That's a little odd. John's mother, Elisabeth, and Jesus' mother, Mary, were cousins, as noted previously. They seemed to enjoy a fairly close relationship. John and Jesus were second cousins. It's hard to imagine that these two second cousins had not met before. It wouldn't have been unusual for these two families to have some form of gatherings periodically where the kids would learn to play and socialize with each other. The other possibility was that Jesus had been away for so long that John could not recognize him. That would add credence to the theory that Jesus had been travelling away from home since he was very young and had just returned for the baptism.

Something happened to Jesus right after John finished baptizing him.

*"And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him"* (John 1:32)

*"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Matthew 3:16-17).

*"And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him; and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Mark 1:10-11).

*"that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased"* (Luke 3:21-22).

The baptism must have been some sort of a high for Jesus. Right out of the water, he was seeing things and hearing voices. But not only did he receive compliments, he also received walking papers (words) from "the Spirit": *"And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness"* (Mark 1:12). Jesus was sent into the desert for forty days and nights.

## **The Temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness**

Compliant as Jesus was, he did go into no man's land as in the deserts of Israel. The location was believed to be close to the city of Jericho. We did not visit the actual site, but had a view of it from a distance. We did pass through some desert areas on our tour, and we had quite an impression of the hardship one would endure if left in the wilds for any length of time.

The main narrative of the story is that Jesus was successful in resisting Satan's temptations. His success in overcoming this ordeal raised his profile and reputation in the region facilitating his preaching: *"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all"* (Luke 4:14-15).

Matthew (4:1-11) and Luke (4:1-15) gave similar accounts of Jesus' encounter with the devil in the desert. Both noted that Satan showed up only after Jesus had fasted for forty days. *"Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him...."* (Luke 4:2-3). *"And when he has fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred"* (Matthew 4:2). Then Jesus began his big chat with Satan who tempted him four times promising power and glory if Jesus would be willing to do the devil's bidding.

So, what do we have here? Jesus basically starved himself for forty days and saw things and heard voices (again?). It is well known now that extreme starvation can lead to hallucinations and illusions, especially about food. And what was Satan's first temptation? *"If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread"* (Matthew 4:4). *"And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread"* (Luke 4:3). Jesus was so starved that he misperceived the stones as potential bread, but of course the stones could not be bread. But he took credit for resisting Satan's temptation and challenge by refusing to turn stone into bread. Do you see a logical problem here? This episode did give us a memorable quote, in Jesus' response, that is commonly used to express the idea that man's existence is more than physical but also spiritual: *"Man shall not live by bread alone"* (Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4).

The starvation wreaked havoc with Jesus' well-being. At the end of the period, he needed some angelic EMS to help him recover: *"Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him"* (Matthew 4:11).





Jericho and surrounding desert from a distance – where Jesus was supposed to have been tempted by Satan

## Water into wine – the first miracle

Not long after this desert ordeal, Jesus and his mom and a few others went to a wedding in Cana. For whatever reason, the wedding party did not stock up enough booze for the big crowd they invited. We are all familiar with the story of Jesus turning water into wine at the urging of his mother (John 2:1-12). The apparent metamorphosis of water into wine on the word of Jesus was/is called a miracle. Words like “moonshine” or “bootleg”, or “hooch” did not exist at the time.

There is a slight twist to this story. It has been noted that Jesus addressed his mother in a way that appeared to be disrespectful: *“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come”* (John 2:4). Jesus was first reluctant to do anything about the wine situation and essentially told his mother: “hey woman, what do I have to do with this? It ain’t my time to do miracles yet”. There is some theorizing in the literature about why Jesus chose to call his mother “woman”. One theory was that he was already beginning to put some distance between him and mom as he already knew his ultimate fate. On the cross, Jesus called his mother “Woman” again as an indication that he was now leaving her in the care of his disciples: *“When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!”* (John 19:26-27). It appeared that even in the early days of the Cana wedding, Jesus already had some inkling of what was going to happen to him.

The place where the Cana wedding and the water-into-wine happening took place still exists. It is now a “Wedding Church” where bookings for a wedding have to be made years in advance. No promise of water or wine is included in the wedding reservations. But there are many wine shops surrounding the site whose merchants are quite willing to turn your cash into wine.

We visited the site, but did not make any wedding bookings or try to change cash into wine. We did see the big jars that supposedly Jesus would have ordered to fill with his concoction.



Cana Wedding Church  
– location of first miracle changing water into wine



Inside the Wedding Church and a wine jar possibly used by Jesus  
– note the wedding scene above altar





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Modern-day Cana and store changing cash into wine

## Cleansing of the Temple – the first time

Shortly after this Cana event was Passover. Jesus went into Jerusalem for the occasion. Once he reached there, however, he was enraged by the merchants and money-changers hawking their wares. So what did he do? He made himself a whipping cord and flogged the venders and overturned their stalls: *“And (Jesus) found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting; And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrow the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise”* (John 2:14-16).

Those side-walk merchants must have been shocked by this outburst. After all, they were just trying to make a living and the best pedestrian traffic was by the temple. Even if one did not want the sellers to come too near the temple, that ferocious reaction seemed a bit overdone.

There is a subplot to this story. After his ranting and raving, some people asked Jesus what sign or authority he had that allowed him to uproot the merchants: *“What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing thou doest these things?”* (John 2:18). Jesus’ reply: *“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”* (John 2:19). That answer did not make a whole of sense to those who asked him the question: *“Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?”* (John 2:20). So, they asked him how come he had the authority to erupt on the merchants and Jesus said he could rebuilt the temple in three days. He’s not answering the question, was he? John tried to reconcile this incongruity by saying: *“But he spake of the temple of his body”*, foreshadowing his rise from the dead in three days (John 2:21). But that seems a weird way of forecasting one’s future death. He had done this more than once. Remember the time when people asked him about his authority to do miracles and he replied by equating Jonas’ release from the fish in three days to his rise from the dead in three days. Repeatedly, Jesus alluded to his future passing, even when it’s out of context. That sounds like rumination.

## The Nazareth fiasco

Armed with *“the power of the Spirit”* (Luke 4:14) acquired in the desert, Jesus first tried to start his ministry in his hometown, Nazareth. But disaster soon struck. On one Sabbath day, he went into the synagogue and chose to read a passage from Isaiah 61:1-2 which essentially said: *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me.....to preach”* and to do other tasks of healing and deliverance. Then Jesus proclaimed to the crowd: *“This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears”* (Luke 4:21). In other words, Jesus appointed himself as the “anointed” one who fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah. The congregation couldn’t believe their ears and asked: *“From whence hath this man these things? And what wisdom is this which is given unto him that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?”* Because Jesus at least spent his childhood in Nazareth, people knew him and they asked further: *“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary..?”* (Mark 6:2-3). Translation: who the hell is this carpenter guy claiming to be our Messiah (the anointed one) and why is he qualified? To make matters worse, Jesus continued with the stories of Elias and Eliseus who elected to help only pagans (Luke 4:25-28). At this point, the crowd felt the final straw and *“were filled with wrath...and thrust him out of the city”* (Luke 4:28-29). Some had wanted to throw him off the cliff *“headlong”*. But Jesus simply beat a quick retreat, *“passing through the midst of them went his way”* (Luke 4:30). He became a persona non grata in his home town.

*to be continued...*