

# No One Comes to the Father Except Through Me

## John 14: 5-14

### The Upper Room Discourse

Late Friday evening the fifteenth of Nisan

**DIG:** Put Yeshua's statement in verses 6-7 in your own words. What is the force of the claims of Christ made here? How does John 1:18 relate to what Jesus is saying here in John 14:9? With what tone of voice do you imagine Him speaking in verses 9-14? What evidence does the Lord give for His claims? Do you feel the promises Christ makes in verses 13-14 are "blank check" promises about prayer? Or are there some conditions to them? What does Messiah mean when He says that believers will do **even greater things** than even He did? How could this be?

**REFLECT:** In light of John 14:6, how would you respond to someone who said, "there are many ways to God?" In troubled times, what promises of HaShem give you hope and courage? How has Yeshua been **the way and the truth in your life**? How tolerant are you of other ways to salvation? Does it matter? How so? How do you align your prayers with God's will? Does ADONAI always answer your prayers? How so?

When Yeshua stated to His apostles that He would soon leave them and that it would be impossible for them to come with Him (John 13:33), **it raised four specific questions that Messiah, in turn, answered.** First, Jesus answered Peter's question: Lord, where are you going (John 13:36)? The Master's answer was: **In My Father's house are many dwelling places . . . I am going there to prepare a place for you** (John 14:2 NASB). But this raised another question in the mind of Thomas. When Christ said: **You know the way to the place where I am going** (John 14:4). Thomas was left in doubt.

**This led to the second question.** Thomas asked Jesus: Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way (John 14:5)? There was an apostle sitting there whom we call "doubting Thomas" (see Cy - **These are the Names of the Twelve Apostles**). He had a question mark for a brain, and it took our Lord a long time to turn it into an exclamation mark out of it! He would remain puzzled until he put his **hand into the side** of the resurrected Lord (John 20:28). But I'm really glad that he was there and he asked the question, because it's a good question. I would have wanted to ask it if I had been there. If he hadn't asked the question, we would never have had Messiah's wonderful answer, which is the Gospel in a nutshell.

He answered: **I AM the way and the truth and the life** (John 14:6a). This is the sixth of Jesus' seven **I AM's** (John 6:35, 8:12, 10:7, 10:11, 11:25, 15:1). The article in the Greek is an adjective. Yeshua said: **I AM the way**. He is just not a person who merely shows **the way**, but He, personally, **is the way**. No church, messianic synagogue, or ceremony can bring you to **ADONAI**. Only **Christ** can bring you to **God**. He is **the way**. Either you **believe** in the Lord or you don't have Him; either you trust in **Messiah** or you don't. Also **Jesus** said that He is **the truth**. He isn't saying that He tells **the truth** (although He does do that), **He is the truth**. And He is **the life**. He isn't simply stating that He is alive. He is the source, the origin of **life** from the lowest vegetable plane of **life** to the highest spiritual plane of **life**.

**No one comes to the Father except through Me** (John 14:6b; Acts 4:12). He made a dead-end street of the cults and "isms." He says the only way to **God** is through Him. That is a dogmatic statement, but the truth has to be dogmatic. J. Vernon McGee relates a humorous analogy. He said, "I had a teacher who was the most dogmatic, narrow-minded person I've ever met. She insisted that 2 plus 2 = 4. It didn't make any difference what you had two of - two apples or cows or dollars - she always insisted that 2 plus 2 = 4. She was dogmatic. I have found a bank I do business with operates the same way. Only in my case it's 2 - 2 = 0, and they're dogmatic about it. Friend, let me say to you that one of the characteristics of **the truth** is that its dogmatism. Now, not all dogmatism is **truth** - there's a lot of ignorance that is dogmatic. However, that which is **truth** has to be dogmatic."<sup>1425</sup>

In his book *The Glories of Mary*, the Catholic Bishop Alphonse de Liguori, one of the greatest devotional writers of the Catholic Church, gives us a glimpse into how much of the **official Catholic doctrine differs from the Word of God**. The editor says, "Everything that our saint (Bishop Alphonse de Liguori) has written is, as it were, a summary of Catholic tradition on the subject that it treats, it is not an individual author, it is, so to speak, *the church herself that speaks to us*. No other book appears to be more worthy of recommendation in this respect than *The Glories of Mary*' (1931 edition; Redemptorist Fathers, Brooklyn). And it wasn't like he was merely some run-of-the-mill Catholic author. Pope Gregory XVI canonized him in 1839 and Pope Pius IX proclaimed him Doctor of the Church in 1871. Today Saint de Liguori is the patron saint of confessors.

This same doctrine is taught in Catholic churches and schools today. Most people outside the Catholic Church do not understand these teachings and wrongly believe that the doctrine of the Roman Church is orthodox. In citing these examples I do not mean to infer that there are not millions of Catholics who are saved. There are. But I am saying that a believer, someone raised in the Catholic Church would have to act counter to her doctrine to be saved.

**Mary is given the place belonging to Christ.** The Roman Catholic Church teaches that she is truly the mediatrix of peace between sinners and God. Sinners receive pardon by Mary alone (pages 82-83). Mary is our life. Mary in obtaining this grace for sinners by her intercession, this restores them to life (page 80). The one who fails and is lost is the one who has no recourse (a way out, a source of help) from Mary (page 94).

**However the Bible teaches that Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6).**

**Mary is glorified more than Messiah.** The Holy Roman Church commands the worship particular to Mary (page 130). Many things are asked from God, and are not granted; however, they are asked from Mary and are obtained, for she is even Queen of Hell, and Sovereign Mistress of the Devils (pages 127, 141, 143).

**But the Scriptures teach that in the name of Jesus Christ . . . salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved (Acts 3:6, 4:12). His name is above every name . . . not only in this world, but also in that which is to come (Ephesians 1:21 KJV).**

**Mary is the gate to heaven instead of Jesus.** The pope teaches that Mary is called the gate of heaven because no one can enter that blessed kingdom without passing through her (page 160). The way of salvation is open to none otherwise than through Mary, and since our salvation is in the hands of Mary, the one who is protected by Mary will be saved, and will not be lost (pages 169-170).

**But Jesus says: I AM the gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved (John 10:1, 7, 9). Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).**

**Mary is given the power of the Lord.** The Catholic Church teaches that all power is given to her in heaven and on earth so that at the command of Mary all obey - even God. And so God has placed the whole Church under the domination of Mary (pages 180-181). Mary is also the advocate of the whole human race, for she can do what she wills with God (page 191).

**God's Word, however, teaches all power is given to [Jesus] in heaven and in earth** so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that in everything He might have the supremacy (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 1:18). But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins (First John 2:1-2).

**Mary is the peacemaker instead of Jesus Christ our peace.** Catholic schools teach that Mary is the peacemaker between sinners and God (page 197). We often more quickly obtain what we ask by calling on the name of Mary, than by invoking the name of Jesus. She is our salvation, our life, our hope, our counsel, our refuge, and our help (pages 254 and 257).

**But the Holy Spirit teaches:** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ, for He Himself is our peace (Ephesians 2:13-14). (John 16:24). **Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, for whatever you ask for in My name, My Father will give you** (John 16:24). We wait for the blessed hope - the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

**Mary is given the glory that belongs to Messiah alone.** The Catholic Church teaches that the whole trinity, O Mary, gave you a name above every other name, that by your name every knee should bow, the things in heaven, on earth and under the earth (page 260).

**However the Bible says:** Therefore God exalted [Jesus] to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth (Philippians 2:9-10).

The titles given Mary are in themselves a revelation of Roman Catholic sentiment toward her. She is called: Mother of God, Queen of the Apostles, Queen of Heaven, Queen of the Angels, The Door of Paradise, The Gate of Heaven, Our Life Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, and many others that ascribe to her supernatural powers.<sup>1426</sup>

In 1962 through 1965 the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) took up all Marian issues. The final vote of 1114 to 1074 resulted in the treatment of Marian issues in the Catholic Constitution, as chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*, a summary of the Catholic doctrines on Mary (which does not claim to be complete). Some observers interpreted this to be an attempt to minimize the effects of Mary on the Roman Catholic Church, others interpreted her inclusion as a chapter into the Church document as emphasizing her role for the Church. With the inclusion of Marian issues within the Constitution of the Church rather than in a separate document, many believed that her influence was emphasized, namely that Mary belongs "within the Church." The perceived impact of concessions to ecumenicalism made at Vatican II did not, however, impact the fundamental loyalties to Mary within Catholicism and their attachment Marian veneration. Devotion to Mary had not been reduced in any significant manner since Vatican II, despite the various statements made about its *perceived* impact on Catholics.

Tolerance. A prized virtue today. The ability to be understanding of those with whom you differ is a sign of sophistication. **Yeshua**, also, was a champion of tolerance. Tolerant of **the apostles** when they doubted. Tolerant of the multitudes when they misunderstood. Tolerant of us when we fall. But there was one area where **He** is intolerant and dogmatic . . . As far as **He** is concerned, when it comes to salvation, there aren't several roads. There is only one road. There aren't several paths. There's only one path. And that path is **Jesus Himself**. That's why it is so hard for people to believe in **Messiah**. It's much easier to consider **Him** to be one of several options rather than **THE** only option.<sup>1427</sup>

**If you really know Me, you will know My Father as well (John 14:7a)**. The conditional construction implies that **the talmidim** did not **really know Christ** and, accordingly, **they** did not **know** the **Father**. While **verse 6** declares the cardinal truth of the Gospel, this is a rebuke. This was not a new teaching. **The apostles** had been watching and listening to **Jesus** for more than three years, yet some disciples understood **His** teaching better than **they** did (**John 11:24**). In a sense, of course, **they** had known **Yeshua**. **They** had known **Him** well enough to leave **their** homes and friends and livelihood to follow **Him** wherever **He** went. But **they** did not **know Him** in **His** full significance. To **really know Him** was to **know His Father**.

Up to this point all had been preparation. **They** had not really come to the full knowledge of **Jesus** and **His** significance. But **from now on**, it will be different, **you do know Him and have seen Him (John 14:7b)**. This is to be understood in terms of **John 1:18**, where the inspired author wrote: **No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is Himself God and is in the closest relationship with the Father, has made Him known. God cannot be seen in a literal sense. But to know Yeshua fully is to see the Father**. This is a promise, which looks beyond the cross and the resurrection.<sup>1428</sup>

**The statement about Christ's relationship with His Father raised a third question in the mind of Philip**. While **Philip** was intimately associated with **Christ**, **he** felt that **he** did not know **the Father**. And so **he** asked, in an indirect way, for **Yeshua** to reveal **the Father** to them: **Lord, He said stroking his thick beard, show us the Father and that will be enough for us (John 14:8)**. **Jesus answered: Don't you know Me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father**.

Should a man see only popularity, he becomes a mirror, reflecting whatever needs to be reflected to gain acceptance. Though in vogue, he is vague. Though in style, he is stodgy . . .

Should a woman see only power, she becomes a wolf - prowling, hunting, and stalking the elusive game. Recognition is her prey and people are her prizes. Her quest is endless . . .

Should we see only pleasure, we become carnival thrill-seekers, alive only in bright lights, wild rides, and titillating entertainment. With lustful fever we race from ride to ride, satisfying our insatiable passion for sensations only long enough to look of another . . .

The end result for those who seek popularity, power and pleasure is the same - painful unfulfillment. Only when we seek our **Father** do we truly become whole. For only in seeing **the Son**, do we catch a glimpse of what we were intended to be.<sup>1429</sup>

**How can you say, "Show us the Father?" Don't you believe that I AM in the Father, and that the Father is in Me?** This showed that the apostles still didn't get it. Jesus reminded Philip and the others that He is the perfect representation of **the Father**. In other words, **the Father** cannot take a visible, audible form more suitable than **the Son**. So because they are the same essence, everything **the Son** says or does reflects **the Father's words** and **works**.<sup>1430</sup> Christ revealed **the Father** in two ways. First, **His words** had been a revelation of **the Father** (John 3:16). **The words I say to you I do not speak on My own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in Me, who is doing His work.** Second, **His works**, the miracles of healing and those coming to faith, had been a revelation of **the Father**. **Believe Me when I say that I AM in the Father and the Father is in Me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves** (John 14:9-11).

**Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and in fact they will do even greater things than these, because I AM going to the Father** (John 14:12). The apostles were to go forward with His works. His departure, far from being a calamity, would enable them through His intercession to do **even greater things** than He had done for **the glory of the Father**. The talmidim would not necessarily do more astonishing miracles than Jesus did, but their outreach would be greater. During His lifetime **the Son of God** never preached outside of Palestine. But the apostles and their disciples would take the Gospel all over the world. He would send **God the Holy Spirit** to assist them with this ministry (John 16:7).

The releasing of these new energies was linked to their (and our) prayers. **And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it** (John 14:13-14). The apostles had direct access to Jesus in prayer. This was a great assurance to them as He was on the verge of His departure. Their **greater things** would depend on true, constant, and faithful effort in prayer. They were to pray in **Yeshua's name**, but what does that mean? There is no *magic power* in **the name** of Jesus.<sup>1431</sup> It is not a blank check to play **God**. I want a new house? No.

To pray in **His name** is to identify one's self with **Him** and **pray according to His will**. If your baby girl is dying and you pray in **Jesus' name** that she will live, but she dies. Does that mean that **God** is mean or ambivalent to your suffering? No. Does it mean that you're not following all the commandments? No. It means that it wasn't **His** will that she live. It doesn't make sense to us in this life (**Romans 8:28**). Why couldn't **He** just save her life? We don't know. That's where faith comes in. This will be one of the many questions for **God** once we get to heaven. But when **Jesus** says, **and I will do it, He** means **and I will [carry out My will]**. Basically, we have to align our prayers with **His will**. *Then* our prayers will be answered. Sometimes that answer will be "no." But our prayers will *always* be answered. And the goal of answered prayer is to bring **glory** to **the Father**.