

A RABBI'S-QUEST

The word **Quest** is an interesting word.....it means to seek....to hunt....to pursue.

Throughout man's earthly existence he has relentlessly pursued a **quest** for eternal life.

We see proof of this in the archaeological finds of the great pyramids.....

.....where the Pharaohs had their abundant treasures **entombed** with their bodies so they could take their great wealth **into** the "afterlife."

Throughout history we see this same **pursuit** to live forever.

We see countless religions throughout the world trying to procure eternal life.

We see it in the culture of the **American Indian**, we see it in the **New Age** spiritualism which permeates today's society.....

And more recently we saw it in the news as **38** participants of the "**Heaven's Gate**" cult committed suicide in an attempt to meet a

“spaceship” that was to take them to the “after-life.”

.....man is on a **quest**.....he is on a **crusade** to find eternal life!

And Judaism is **no** different because at it's very core it **concerns itself** a with a **quest** for resurrection and eternal life.

In fact.....part of a **prayer** that's frequently recited in various branches of Judaism contains these words:

“All Israel has a share in the world to come.”

The “world to come” means the life hereafter.

And there are **other** phrases which occur in Judaism which have the same meaning.....

.....phrases like.....”The Kingdom of God” or “The Kingdom of Messiah.”

PAUSE

Maimonides the great rabbi and theologian of the 12 th century included belief in the resurrection in his Thirteen Articles of Faith.

To the Jewish people the Thirteen Articles of Faith is a doctrinal declaration without equal.....even to the present day.

One of the thirteen articles reads this way:

"I believe with perfect faith in the resurrection of the dead."

The TALMUD is no different as many of its entries concern life hereafter...

The Talmud.....is a compilation of **explanations** and **traditions** of the Jewish civil and canonical laws....

....and this **too** has a lot to say about eternal life and resurrection.

In fact, the Talmud contains a very interesting statement about eternal life and its relationship to **circumcision** and to father Abraham.....

"Circumcision causes an angel to save the Israelites from the pangs of Gehenna to which they are consigned."

The **misguided** belief that one can be saved through circumcision comes from a misinterpretation of **Ezekiel 32:24**.....it reads:

"Elam is there and all her multitude around her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised to the lower parts of the earth....."

And **another** entry in the Talmud says:

“Abraham who sits at the gate of Gehenna to save the circumcision.”

Yes, the Talmud gives much time and energy for the **attainment** to eternal life.

By way.....the Bible though is quite clear.....eternal life is **not** determined by circumcision!

The **Tenach**....the Hebrew Scriptures does **not** contain any such promise!

In support of this the prophet **Ezekiel** writing under the inspiration of the Ruach Ha-Kodesh...the Holy Spirit says this in **Ezekiel 18:4**:

“Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die.”

Circumcision than is **not** a condition upon.... which one can **acquire** eternal life.....

.....**nor** can circumcision be an atonement for sin.

PAUSE

A basic teaching in the TORAH is **that** an innocent victim had to **die** as a sacrifice for our sin.

...**Sin** in both the *Older* and *New Covenant* had to be atoned for **only** by the shedding of blood.....for Leviticus 17:11 tells us:

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.”

Every human being, Jew or Gentile, who **thirsts** for eternal life must receive by faith the sacrifice that was made for the atonement of our sin.....

.....that sacrifice being the voluntary sacrifice of God's only begotten Son....the Messiah Jesus!

The Tenach gives us **this** admonition concerning those who **thirst** for life eternal. In Isaiah the 55th Chapter we are told this:

**“Ho! Everyone who thirsts come to the waters...
Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.”**

And speaking to the **Samaritan** woman who offered Him a drink...our Lord said this:

“Everyone who drinks of this water SHALL thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

PAUSE

In the Book of John in the New Covenant we also see another QUEST for eternal life...

John records a very interesting incident in the life of the **Rabbi Nicodemus**.....who by the way is also mentioned in the Talmud.

We're told in John 3:1....

“Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;”

But before we look at this Rabbi's **quest**.....let's discuss what a Pharisee was and what it meant in the time of Jesus.

In the Book of Matthew we're told that Jesus referred to the Pharisees as a standard of **measure** for righteousness.

In Matthew 5:20, Jesus said:

“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

16 pt.

So what was the righteousness of the Pharisees like?

For the answer, please turn with me to Acts 23, verses: 6-7...

READ PASSAGE:

Acts 23:6 - 7 (NASB) ⁶But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul *began* crying out in the Council, “Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!” ⁷As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.

16 pt.

A Pharisee believed the Word of God....he believed in the coming of Messiah...

....he also believed in the resurrection of the dead....

....and in miracles, angels and spirit.

A Pharisee was also **very careful in his observance** of every letter of the Law.

He was a **separatist** in the full meaning of the Hebrew word "**porahs**"which means to separate.

The **life** a Pharisee was hard and **very stringent**.....
.....and a great deal of his life was occupied in prayer.

The daily life of a Pharisee ^{WENT} ~~was~~ something like this:

Upon rising each morning, he washed only his **eyes**.....

.....and then with his **tallis**, his prayer shawl.....his **phylacteries** and his **prayer book** under his arm..... he would hurry to the synagogue.

In the course of his morning prayers, he would read a portion of the Torah and the Prophets.....

.....when he finished his morning prayers he would return home..... wash.... dress for work or business and have his breakfast....thanking God for the meal.

If the weather was inclement, and a thunder or lightning storm would occur....he would **thank God** for the preservation of his life.

Again at lunch he would pray....and an hour before sunset he would return to the synagogue for **further** prayer.

Following this.... he and the **other** men present, including the Rabbi, would **further** study the Scriptures.

When the sun would set and three stars were becoming visible in the sky.....the men would **regather** for evening prayer.....this lasting for another half-hour.

After this the Pharisee went home for dinner.

He washed....sat down at the table....and poured a cup of wine.

He and the **family** prayed over it and each took a sip as the cup was passed to them,

The Pharisee's wife then draped a towel over her arm.....and with a basin of water she would pour the water **over** her husband's extended hands and wrists.

He would then dry his hands and prayed to God....**thanking Him** for the washing of his hands.

Before eating his meal....the Pharisee took a piece of bread.....**salt** out of the **salt-celler**.....**not** a salt shaker....
....and then would sprinkle it on his bread....

....he then would **thank God** with this following prayer:

***“Bo-ruch Attah Ah-doh-noy Elo-he-nu Me-lech
Ha-olom Ha-mo-tzee Le-chem Min Haw-aw-retz.”***

**“Blessed art Thou, Jehovah our God, King of the Universe,
Who brings forth bread from the ground.”**

He then ate his dinner with his family.

After dinner...he took fifteen minutes or longer to thank God for his **food** and **sustenance** that was provided for him during that day.

Before retiring for the night he would read a portion from the **Psalms** and would pray briefly.

By the end of the day a Pharisee would have spent a minimum of **2 ½ hours** in prayer, Bible reading and study!

And such a Pharisee was **Nicodemus**....a Pharisaic Jew.....a Rabbi....

....and **much more** than this...a “master” in Israel.”

Nicodemus’s life was a life of dedication and devotion.

He was an instructor in Pharisaic Judaism....and his day was spent in God’s service.’

He was not only “a master of Israel,”but as **John 3:10** tells us....he was also “the teacher of Israel.”and the “Head Rabbi” in his area.

Other rabbis would come to Nicodemus for counseling and instruction on Biblical questions.

To them he was the **embodiment** of holiness and integrity....and he was loved and respected in his community!

In other words....he was far from being a “slouch!”

PAUSE

Turn with me to John the 3rd chapter: **READ PASSAGE** (thru verse:21)

John 3:1 - 21 (NASB) ¹Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; ²this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” ³Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus said* to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷“Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸“The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹Nicodemus said to Him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? ¹¹“Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. ¹²“If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³“No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. ¹⁴“As Moses lifted

up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; ¹⁵so that whoever ^obelieves will in Him have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ²⁰“For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹“But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

PAUSE

Nicodemus “came to Jesus by night.”

And He showed Jesus **respect** as he addressed the Messiah as “**Rabbi!**”

I believe that he came with an enquiring mind and a searching heart.

We **know** that Nicodemus **believed** in the Word of God....he **believed** in the coming of the Messiah....

....he **believed** in the resurrection.....miracles.....and angels.
He undoubtedly heard of the **many** miracles that Jesus had performed **because** he told Jesus:

“Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

We don't know **how long** this part of the conversation lasted or **what** led the Messiah Jesus to say:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

To a Pharisaic Jew....a Rabbi....these words must have sounded like **blasphemy!**

I mean, Nicodemus could **not** only SEE the “kingdom of God,”he believed that he **WAS the** “kingdom of God.”

To a Pharisee.....circumcision gave him the right to the “kingdom of God.”

He believed and taught that his WAS the “kingdom of God!”

Circumcision placed him “**in the kingdom**” and in his covenant relationship to God.

As I stated earlier...**daily**..the Pharisee would **pray**:

“All Israel has a share in the world to come.”

Concerning the **three** divisions of Judaism.....the **Orthodox**....the **Conservative**....and the **Reformed**.....

.....it's the Orthodox Jewish people of today that have very similar beliefs to the Pharisees of Messiah's day.

To the Reformed Jewish people, the Orthodox Jew is a **Pharisee**.....

.....**and** to the Orthodox Jewish people.....the Reformed Jew is a **Sadducee!**

PAUSE

Whatever Nicodemus felt regarding Jesus' words that one cannot see "the kingdom of God" unless he was "born again"he misunderstood!

He answered Jesus:

"How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

For most of us here tonight....we probably find it strange that such a man as Nicodemus could **not** understand what it **meant** to be "born again" or "born anew."

For us to **fully understand** Nicodemus's bewilderment.....it's necessary for us to **examine** the term....."born again" or "born anew."

The **only** explanation that's given to us in the New Covenant to being "born anew" or being "born again" is found in **verse: 5** of our text.....

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We have to **remind** ourselves, that at the time of Nicodemus's meeting with Jesus the New Testament **hadn't** been written as yet.....

.....and there was **no** written record of their conversation.

So we have to sort of **put ourselves** in Nicodemus's **place** to properly understand these words and **why** he was so "**baffled**" by them.

In Rabinnical writings there are **six** different meanings to the term "born anew" or "born again."they are as follows:

First of all.....when a non-Jewish person accepts the Jewish religion and has completed all the **rituals** and **ceremonies** of the Jewish faith.....including circumcision....

...on **that day** he is "born anew" or "born again."

Secondly....when a Jewish boy makes his **Bar Mitzvah** on his 13th birthday.....he is "born anew."

Prior to this his father takes the **guilt** of his son's sins.....

.....**but** from the **day** that he makes his Bar Mitzvah.....the **son** is responsible for his own sins.

He now becomes a full-fledged member of the congregation of Israel and is "born again."

Thirdly....when a man takes a **wife**....he is "born anew" on his wedding day.

His wife is **now** his closest kin and **not** his mother and father.....

Concerning this Genesis 2:24 tells us:

"For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."

Fourthly....when a man is **ordained** as a **rabbi** he is "born anew" or "born again."

Fifthly....when a man becomes the head of a college or rabbinical school.....or the head rabbi of an area.....he is "born anew."

And finally....when a man becomes a **king** he is "born anew" or "born again" when he is coronated.

These were **six ways** that Nicodemus understood **how** a Jewish person can be “**born again.**”

Is it any wonder than that Nicodemus was puzzled by the Lord's words?

“You must be “born again??”

It was so natural than for Nicodemus to than ask.....”**How can a man be born when he is old?”**

Let's now consider **each** of these meanings **as** they would apply to Nicodemus.....

....we'll **skip** numbers one and six.....they **wouldn't** apply to him. At the **age** of twelve or thirteen...Nicodemus took **vows** to observe the Law and to become accountable for his **own** sins.....

.....making his Bar Mitzvah he became a full-fledged “son of the Law” and was “born again.”

PAUSE

He was **married**.....

.....It's frowned upon in Orthodox Judaism for a man to remain **unmarried**.....

.....in fact, if he doesn't marry.....he **cannot** become a Rabbi.

Therefore, Nicodemus was married....and for the **second** and **third** time in his life he was "born anew."

PAUSE

He was "**the** teacher of Israel" or... "a master of Israel".....this means he was an instructor in Pharisaic Judaism.

As I mentioned earlier.....Nicodemus was much more than a Rabbi.....he was the "HEAD Rabbi" in his area.

So for the **fourth** time in his life.....he was "born anew."

Having achieved the highest honor by becoming a "master of Israel" and "**the** teacher" of other teachers.....~~and being~~ "born again" for the **fourth** time.....
HE WAS NOW

.....so it was quite natural for him to ask.....

“How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”

In reply to his question the Messiah said to Nicodemus....

“...unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

What did this **mean** to Nicodemus?

As I mentioned earlier....the New Testament **hadn’t** been written as yet....

....but even if it had been...this wouldn’t have **meant much** to a Pharisee like Nicodemus.

Did being “born of water” mean anything to him at all?

Possibly it did....but **only** as it related to **physical birth**.

It’s possible that Nicodemus knew a lot about **childbirth** and **how** a child who comes into the world may be “born of water.”

Maybe he had often used this term in reference to a physical birth.

The provisions of nature from **conception** to **delivery** include what is known as an **am-niotic sac**.

This fluid in the womb is sometimes known as the "water bag"....and when it breaks it makes for a baby's **easily** delivery.

I believe that this fluid, which is known in Rabbinical writings as "born of water" **is what** Jesus undoubtedly meant!

Nicodemus understood this....**he understood** that "born of water" had to do with **natural** birth....**or** being born in the world **physically**.

Job referred to it as.."**Man, that is born of a woman.**" (Job 14:1)

But Jesus **meant** something **more than** being "born of water."

He said in verses:6-7....

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which born of the Spirit is spirit."**"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'**"

What our Lord was saying to Nicodemus was this:

The fact that you **were** born Jewish, and were circumcised.....

....and even though you took your vows and **made** Bar Mitzvah...

....and even though you are a **Pharisaic Rabbi** and "the teacher of Israel"

.....all this does **NOT** **entitle you to** the "kingdom of God."

You must be born again!

Nicodemus was on a Quest to find eternal life....did he ever find what he was so vigorously searching for??

Let's take a close look.

We don't know a lot about Nicodemus. His name is **Greek** and means "conqueror of the people."

He is mentioned **only** in the Gospel of John.

Three different times he is mentioned and each time he is identified as the one “**who came to Jesus by night**”.....

.....we read the **first** reference in John the 3rd chapter.

He is mentioned again in John the 7th chapter where he showed **more courage** by protesting against the condemnation of the Jesus.....

.....the **final** reference is in John the 19th chapter where he anoints the body of the Messiah.

Let's begin by turning to John chapter 7....beginning in verse 40
.....READ PASSAGE: (thru verse:53)

John 7:40 - 53 (NASB) ⁴⁰Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.” ⁴¹Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? ⁴²“Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” ⁴³So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. ⁴⁴Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him. ⁴⁵The

officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?” ⁴⁶The officers answered, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” ⁴⁷The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you? ⁴⁸“No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? ⁴⁹“But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.”

⁵⁰Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) said* to them, ⁵¹“Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” ⁵²They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

⁵³*[Everyone went to his home.*

In the **midst** of the Feast of Tabernacles there arose a debate between **three** different groups of people.

There were the **Jewish leaders** who lived in Jerusalem and were attached to the Temple ministry.

The **second** group were the people.....the “**festival**” crowd that had come to Jerusalem to worship.

And the **third** group was the Jewish people who **resided** in Jerusalem.....they probably sided with the religious leaders.

They were **arguing** about His character.....**but after** Jesus began to teach openly in the Temple.....the debate shifted to His doctrine.

Character and doctrine go together.....it would be foolish to trust the teachings of a **liar!**

The religious leaders **sought to** "seize Him," and probably had sent the guard out.

BUT...Nicodemus spoke up!

No doubt...Nicodemus had been doing a lot of **thinking** and **studying** since his conversation with Jesus.....

.....and he was not afraid to stand for truth!!

Nicodemus was sure that the council was **not** giving Jesus an honest hearing.....

The rulers **had already** passed judgement and were trying to **arrest** Him **before** He had a fair and lawful trial.

Maybe **Nicodemus** was thinking about the teachings of the Tenach....where in **Deuteronomy 1:16-17** we're told this:

“Then I charged your judges at that time, saying, ‘Hear the cases between your fellow-countrymen, and judge righteously between a man and his fellow-countryman, or the alien who is with him.’ You shall not show partiality in judgement; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgement is God’s. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to Me, and I will hear it.”

What was it that Nicodemus wanted the council to know?

I believe he wanted them to know Jesus’ **Words** and His **works**.

It was Jesus the Teacher and the Miracle Worker that attracted Nicodemus in the first place.

In fact...hadn’t Jesus had pointed to His works as **proof** of His Deity.....

.....and He repeatedly urged the people to pay attention to His **Words**.

The **two** go together.....for the **Miracles** point to the Messages.....and the **Messages** interpret the spiritual meaning of the **Miracles**.

The Rulers **refused** to admit that Nicodemus was **right** in asking for a fair trial.....

...and with **sarcasm** and **disdain** they challenged him to **search** the prophecies and **see if** he could find any statement that a prophet would come out of **Galilee**.

It's ironic though.....**Jonah** was from Galilee.....and Jesus said that **Jonah** was a picture of Himself in **death**.....**burial**.....and **resurrection**.

I'd like to think that Nicodemus read **Isaiah 9:1-2**

“But there will be no more gloom for her who is in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Nephtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.”

I'd like to think that Nicodemus read this passage and **traced** many other great Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures.....

.....**Because if He did....he became convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the **very** Son of God.**

Let's follow this Rabbi's **Quest** as we read about him for the **last** time in **John the 19th chapter**.....

Read John 19:30-42

John 19:29 - 42 (NASB) ²⁹A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a *branch of hyssop* and brought it up to His mouth. ³⁰Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. ³¹Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. ³²So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; ³³but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. ³⁶For these things came to pass to fulfill the

Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN." ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED." ³⁸ After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret *one* for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. ³⁹ Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds *weight*. ⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

When the soldiers were finished with their **gruesome mission**.....our Lord's **friends** took over.

And as far as the **record** is concerned.....from that point on**no unbeliever touched** the body of Jesus.

God had designed for **two** high ranking men to prepare His body for **burial** and place it into the tomb.....

.....Joseph of Ari-mathea.....**AND**....."the teacher of Israel".....Nicodemus.

We know that Joseph of Ari-mathea was a **believer**.....

.....for John informs us that Joseph was a “**secret disciple for fear of the Jews.**”

In other words.....Joseph was God's “**secret agent**” in the Sandhedrin

And with Joseph is Rabbi Nicodemus!

At the critical council meeting that we just discussed in **John the 7th chapter.....**

.....Nicodemus **boldly stood up** and **defended** the Savior!

The others **ridiculed** him for thinking that a prophet could come out of Galilee!

“**Search and look**” they said.....and that's **exactly what** Nicodemus did.

And it's likely that Joseph of Arimathea **quietly joined him** and revealed that **he too** was **more** and **more** convinced.....
..... that Jesus was **indeed** Israel's Messiah.....**the Son of God**.

As Nicodemus and Joseph **searched** the Tenach.....they would find hundreds of Messianic prophecies.....
.....and they would **discover** that they were fulfilled in Jesus.

They would discover that He **was** "the Lamb" that God promised to provide and **who** would be sacrificed at Passover.

Hadn't Jesus **already** **told** Nicodemus in their conversation that He would be "lifted up??"
.....**being** "lifted up"the meaning..... **being crucified**.

And since the Passover lambs were slain at **3:00** in the afternoon.....

.....the two men would **know** the **exact time** when God's Lamb would **die** on the cross!

Amazing! The man who started off with confusion at **night**.....ended up with open confession in the **daylight!**

Nicodemus came out of the darkness and **into** the light....and with Joseph, was **not** ashamed to publicly identify with the Messiah Jesus.

When the two men **touch**ed His dead body.....they defiled themselves and could **not** participate in Passover.....

.....**but so what**.....They had found the Lamb of God didn't they??

Earlier we mentioned that according to Rabbinical Writings....**Nicodemus** had been "born again" **four** previous times.....

But now as the **Rabbi's Quest** was over.....Nicodemus "the Teacher of Israel".....was.... born again" for the **fifth** time!

Nicodemus found the **real meaning** of being "born again."

He was now **born of water** and **of the Spirit**.

When **we** are "born again" in this manner.....its as though we've entered into a **new existence**.....

.....for we have accepted and received **by faith** Jesus the Messiah, who is the Son of God.

As we're told in 1 John 5:12.....

“He who has the Son has the life.....”

Unless **YOU** have the **Son** you do **not** have eternal life!

Your **Quest** for eternal life will **never be fulfilled** unless you receive Jesus the Messiah as your Personal Savior and Lord.