

"The Way"

by Wayne Goff

"Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2)

When did Christianity begin to be referred to as "*the Way*"? We see it repeatedly in the book of Acts, an historical document of the beginning and growth of the Lord's church. Was it a name given to the church by its enemies? Did it refer to the *singular nature* (Jn. 14:6) of Christ's message and church? Was it used in derision? Or was this a description used by brethren of the gospel? We may never know the exact answers to these questions, but the description was indeed used of the Lord's church.

In Acts 19, Paul preached the gospel of the kingdom of God for three months (v. 8). However, "...when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of **the Way** before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus" (v. 9). See also verse 23.

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From a biblical perspective, we can find numerous references to God's "*way*" in contradistinction to any other "*way*." For example, in the Old Testament we read in Psalm 1:6, "*For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*" And in Psalm 18:30 we read, "*As for God, His way is perfect;...*" God teaches the humble **His way**, Ps. 25:9. So we might summarize these Scripture to say that "**the way**" refers to the rule of walking after God's commandments.

Prophetically Speaking

The Old Testament prophets referred to the coming kingdom and its Gospel message as "**the way**." "*And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*" (Isaiah 35:8, KJV). "*They shall be My people, and I will be their God; then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them*" (Jer. 32:38-39).

Though the particular wording may slightly vary, the obvious concept in all of these references is that there is **one right way** -- **God's!** There is no concept of a multitude of right ways, but rather that there are *many wrong ways* and one right way.

The New Testament Warning

The way is both right and narrow. "*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it*" (Matt. 7:13-14).

Why is this the case? Because men naturally will not accept God's revelation and will. They will rebel against it, argue against it, fight against it, and substitute for it. It seems harsh, limited and bigoted to the worldly man. But God's ways and thoughts are not ours! So even though it is *easy* to see and understand, it will be made *difficult* by man's obstinacy.

Jesus is the way. "*Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'*" (Jn. 14:6).

There is no way to soften this truth. Jesus is the one and only way to our heavenly Father, to obtain eternal life, to be successful in eternity. There is **no other Name** under heaven given among men by which we must be saved! Acts 4:12. Believe it and be saved; reject it and be lost, Mark 16:16.