

Thoughts on “the Passion of the Christ”

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Movie-going for Christians has always been a bit controversial. Should we avoid them altogether or take them in moderation? Should we carefully choose or sample all kinds? Do they truly add to us or take away? Are they a complete waste of time in a world where people are dying outside Christ?

And religious movies! “Biblical” films, to be exact. How proper is it to attempt to portray Deity? Many holy men and women of God resolutely resist viewing anything so blasphemous as a human representing Jesus Christ. Why, they say, how does this differ from Popery? Is it not forbidden by Moses himself?

I understand the conflict in all of the above, and have wrestled with issues concerning the media all my life. Without entering into the fray at present, I can say this much about some movies, whether or not I “should” have allowed myself to see them:

- It was during a viewing of the Billy Graham film *Shadow of the Boomerang*, listening to Billy’s preaching, when I first truly experienced the forgiveness of Christ, becoming fully aware of my wretched condition. Now it was the preached word that saved me. Going to a Crusade would have had the same effect. But I can’t deny that it was the movie that got my attention.
- Among other things, Graham’s *The Hiding Place* motivated me to seek out and help those suffering in Communist countries. Perhaps the “other things” would have been enough, but it was the movie that built the fire.
- My wife and I both remember childhood viewings of *Ben Hur* and that last scene where the blood of Jesus is seen mingling with the rain and symbolically touching the lives of mankind. We were not theologically seasoned in those days, but a truth of Scripture found its way into our hearts through General Wallace’s tale of the Christ. Yes, we could have read the book. But we didn’t. We saw a movie.
- Even *The Sound of Music* had a way of refreshing me and making me want to serve the Lord more, though in those days I had no educated idea of the dangers of Romanism.
- *The Jesus Movie* is used around the world and reportedly is instrumental in bringing untold numbers of people to Christ. I found the movie somewhat refreshing if not “perfectly” accurate in all places.

I hope I make the point here, that in many lives, though perhaps God would have preferred simple presentations of the Gospel through preaching or personal testimony, nevertheless, “Christ is preached.” And we must rejoice over every soul that comes to God.

The case before us today is somewhat in the same genre. Many will come to know Christ, or at least of Him. Questions will be raised. The true ministry can be performed after the movie, and servants of Christ should be at the ready for this unique opportunity. It still

could be argued that our God would prefer the method He taught us, but one cannot disagree with persons using what is in their hand to glorify Christ. May Christ be uplifted in all things. And may all of us find our way to lift up Jesus in our world.

Why this paper, then, and what needs to be added to the above? If a project is being undertaken for God's glory and God gets that glory, can we not be content?

I would suggest that many things are attempted in our world and have been in every century, "for the glory of God" and one way or another God got what He wanted from them, but to put His stamp of approval on these things would be to miss the mark. "Promise Keepers" comes to mind. Many friendships in Christ were created. Many came to Christ. Christ was uplifted in the media. But then came those "after-meetings" where grown Christian men began to sit around and discuss their sex lives. Then the realization that there were strong ties to Catholic influence in the entire venture.

Similar problems arise in the movie project known as *The Passion of Christ*. With all the good stated above, there are several very serious problems with this multi-million dollar cinema. I pray that my reader will patiently and prayerfully examine the following evidence.

The **first and clearest** defect in all of this venture is that the movie and the "push" behind it is very much Roman Catholic. I offer the following documentation:

1. Both director Mel Gibson and Christ-portrayer James Caviezel are ardent Roman Catholics. Mel is a part of a Catholic sect that denies the authority of the past several Popes, but he is Catholic through and through regardless. As for lesser known James Caviezel, this internet piece will suffice to introduce him:

"In Hollywood, Caviezel is known as Gentleman Jim. The devout Catholic and devoted husband to his schoolteacher wife, Kerri, politely refused to do a love scene with Jennifer Lopez in last year's *Angel Eyes*..."

Caviezel says, regarding the present role, "Right now, it's an absolute necessity to pray all the time. And I don't just pray with my head, but from the heart. It's the only way I can find any peace..."

"(he) apparently never takes off a cross-shaped scapular that declares, in the event of mortal emergency, I am Catholic, please call a priest..."

"I believe there are no coincidences. The fact Mel came to me when I was 33 years of age [the same age Christ died], there was a reason. I believe that Our Lord meant it. I believe He has a great hand in this film. That's why I'm continually asking Mary for help, to show me the perfect way to be her son."

"Caviezel believes God and Sts. Genesius of Arles and St. Anthony of Padua showed him the way, and helped him land plum parts. Mary led him to choose acting over basketball. He believes that saying the rosary before auditioning for the part of the spiritual hero Witt in *The Thin Red Line* helped land him that breakthrough role..."

(all from www.cin.org/archives/cet/200301/0015.html)

2. The film database describes the plot summary in these words: "Adaptation of the diaries of Anne Catherine Emmerich, collected in the book *The Dolorous Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Mary of Agreda's *The City of God* and the New Testament Gospels..." Anne and

Mary are Catholic mystics who claim they were given visions that filled in details of New testament occurrences. These details, from Catholic tradition, find their way often into the movie. See below for a review of Emmerich's book, which is one of the primary bases for the movie.

From the same website as previous: "Much of the script, which Gibson co-wrote, is based on the diaries of St. Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824)... The screenplay was translated into Latin and Aramean by a Jesuit linguistics scholar based in Los Angeles."

Anne Catherine was a German. Some Jews have had problems with that fact, especially since the Roman tradition is so anti-Semitic. In fact it was only in the 1960's that the church officially denounced anti-Semitism and even apologized for its sordid history of Jew-hating. Trouble is, Mel Gibson does not accept the changes made at Vatican II, out of which this apology flowed. His conservative Catholic group denies the validity of the reign of Popes all the way back to the period before that Church conference. It has led some to believe, in the light also of his father's denial of the Holocaust, that Mel Gibson may be a traditional Catholic in more ways than one.

Quoting from beholdtheman.com/mboard/posts/963.html: "Emmerich's revelations include learning that Jews had strangled Christian children to procure their blood..." I will document some of her anti-Semitic exaggerations later.

3. The word "passion" is Biblical but is the term used by Roman Catholicism to refer to the suffering of Christ. More modern translations render this word "suffering."

4. As might be expected from number two above and from a Catholic director, the role of Mary is elevated and distorted until one feels that this movie is in part about the passion of *Mary*. This is in line with current Roman attempts to have her declared "co-redemptrix" with Christ. It should not have been surprising for me to read on the jacket of Emmerich's *Dolorous Passion*...

"...illuminating is its description of Mary's participation in the sufferings of her Son, so that this book gives the reader a poignant understanding of why Our Lady is often called our "Co-redemptrix" and "Queen of Martyrs."

5. One Catholic website I visited urged its readers to pray for Mel Gibson, in spite of his present separation from the true Holy Father, that his efforts will bring many wandering sheep back into the Roman fold.

Second, and following from the first, is the fact that this movie is ecumenical in its scope, and has persons of all religious persuasions working on a common project. While it always seems good to have people "put aside their differences" to serve Christ together, there is always the danger that many of the converts, as in Graham crusades, will be ushered into Romanist or liberal Protestant churches.

Third is the issue of reliability. The difference of this movie from the ones which have preceded it is that all of the others were billed as imperfect, where this one seems to carry a weight of authenticity that is misleading. How many years will it take even the best of saints to "unlearn" all the false additions to the life of Christ here portrayed. As is typical of Roman concoctions there is a deadly mix here, portrayed by a powerful medium. One thinks immediately of the *Left Behind* movies that have people absolutely convinced that Jesus is going to make them bypass the Tribulation, though not one Scripture clearly indicates such.

The following internet article is insightful: “The scholars have had a field day. They say the soldiers of imperial Rome would not have spoken Latin, as they do in Gibson’s film, but Greek. Then there is the question of sourcing. Gibson has admitted that his screenplay was based not so much on the Gospels as on the reinterpretation of a 19th century nun... whose hypnotic visions of the Passion included frankly anti-Semitic details missing from the Gospels. According to his critics, Gibson has the Jews clamouring for the death of Jesus in ways that neither the Bible nor the historical record suggest.” (www.rickcross.com/reference/hate_groups/hategroups361.html)

No one can take blame away from Jews or any Gentile groups either for the death of Jesus. But the Scriptures are sufficient to prove this point.

Fourth is the unprecedented union of Church and culture, Church and Hollywood. Is Mel Gibson a born again Christian? One doesn’t know for sure, so “judging” is not allowed. He seems to be morally straight, and certainly is a man of some measure of faith, but is he associated with the spreading of the Gospel in other aspects of his career? And is it not true that the same man who wrote the musical score for *Bruce Almighty* is writing for *The Passion of Christ*? This is a world that hates Jesus Christ, by and large. Why is it suddenly in love with Him? Why do we need worldly methods to bring people to Jesus? Recently in my Church, the pastor preached a simple but powerful message exposing the truth of God and the hearts of men. Five people responded to the invitation. Is this not any longer acceptable ?

Fifth is the violence. How bloody is the Bible story? The blood has been saving men for these many centuries, without Gibson’s, that is, Emmerich’s, blood and guts portrayal. God has gripped the hearts of men with a still small voice about His undying love. As Bill Jackson of Christians Evangelizing Catholics says, “even graphic photography cannot capture the reality of Christ’s atoning sacrifice.”

Sixth, consider the “mysteries” associated with this film. What of lightning striking the main character and his full recovery? What of the healings purportedly associated with the making of this film?

I can only answer with another question: What of the healings and other attested mighty miracles associated with the alleged appearances of Mary throughout the world and throughout history?

This is a Catholic event. The Catholic religion is no stranger to the miraculous. Is this confirmation of the truth of Romanism? Rather, have we not been warned that the enemy will be working miracles alongside believers? False Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders so as to deceive if possible the very elect (Matthew 24:24). Does not the Lamb-like beast of Revelation 13 perform great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men (Revelation 13:13) ? “And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do...”

We must cling to God’s Word and let no man deceive us. Saying “No!” when everyone else is saying “Yes” is not easy, but it is often necessary. One day it may be a matter of life and death. This movie is just another testing ground to see whether God’s people are going to start

using discernment or are going to be swept along with the flow.

Seventh is an issue I alluded to earlier, but that I am not yet qualified to describe. It has to do with whether a human being should ever portray Christ in anything but words. For this I refer readers to former priest Richard Bennett. E-mail him at richardbennett@austin.rr.com

Now let's take a detailed look at Emmerich's book to see just how faithful her "visions" are to the Scriptures. The things I list for my readers are by no means a complete collection. Every page is filled with assumptions, explanations, and "revelations" simply not given to the Gospel writers. Where did it all come from? That ought to be the subject of another research paper.

**A Close look at
*The Dolorous Passion
of our Lord Jesus Christ*
of Anne Catherine Emmerich**

The book is dedicated to "The Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, Help of Christians, and refuge of the Human Race." Soon after, the familiar "nihil obstat" and "imprimatur" declare to all the Catholic faithful that this book is free of doctrinal error and therefore acceptable for all to read.

There is a short preface, then an introduction by the one who supposedly received from Anne Catherine the "revelations" therein contained. Then follows a lengthy history of the "saint" herself. There are nine preliminary "meditations" mainly about the Last Supper, then sixty-six chapters that delineate the final hours of the life of Jesus from the Garden to just after the resurrection. I would like to take my readers on a brief journey through this book, pointing out those portions which I felt were either extra-Biblical or anti-Biblical. My purpose is to suggest that any telling of the life of Jesus Christ based on this work is certain to be flawed. It is to me a sad thing that such a monumental undertaking as this film has been, must be so infested with the poison contained in one of its sources. And if we understand the statements made in the press properly, it was this book that formed the basis for all.

The Preface:

From the Abbe de Cazales comes the preface to the French edition. (But the book is of German origin, 1823.) He assures us from the beginning that no fault can be found either in the saint, her book, or her secretary. He suggests their complete holiness of life as the reason for this assurance. He states further that the way to discern true from false spirits is by their fruits. He says that upon examining the revelations themselves it must be seen whether anything found therein is contrary to faith and the revealed Scriptures. It is never suggested by him that items outside the Biblical sphere ought to be suspect. Merely, can it be proved that any supposed occurrence did not happen? One can only imagine what chaos such a philosophy would bring into the Church. All one needs to do is make a statement that cannot be disproved, and it must be allowed as a possible truth. It is through this philosophy that a long list of falsenesses has entered

the Roman tradition. The book before us will have its own litany of errors.

The good father makes the Catholic distinction in his final paragraphs between “matters which we are simply permitted to believe,” and “those which are of faith.” But of course the question must come, “If we are ‘permitted’ to believe something, are we not being told that that thing is true?” How can a church “permit” belief in that which could be destructive? Why should a church promote a book which might very well upon further examination be found false? How much more critical is it when the speaker of these truths believes she is hearing from Heaven? Will not simple-minded persons of every generation swear by her words when they read of her holy life? How do the uninformed differentiate between these varying degrees of “inspiration”? It is the problem one is always dealing with in Romanism. When backed against a wall and presented with evidence that utterly refutes a matter, the answer comes back, “But we never *really* believed that. It was not a matter of *faith*.”

Introduction by Clement Brentano

The abbe quoted earlier suggests that this Brentano was quite a literary person and was stooping beneath his dignity to do such a menial task as serving as secretary to the bed-ridden Anne Catherine. As I was reading the book it occurred to me often that perhaps the talents of this great writer were blended in with the story teller. The book reads as a novel. If indeed it had been so introduced, I would have found it most fascinating and delightful. But all along the assertion is made that Anne Catherine is receiving visions from God. Now, having said this, allow me to share with you the first startling statement of Brentano:

“It is our duty here plainly to affirm that [these visions] have no pretensions whatever to be regarded as *history*. They are but intended to take one of the lowest places among those numerous representations of the Passion which have been given us by pious writers and artists, and to be considered at the very utmost as the Lenten meditations of a devout nun...written down in the plainest and most literal language, from her own dictation. To these meditations, she herself never attached more than a mere human value...”

Now that is curious. If it is true as he says, why does any of it figure in as a basis for picturing the true experiences of Christ before the entire world? If it is not true, but he is merely trying to be humble, then where did Mary Catherine receive all these intricate details?

Interesting Points in the Life of Anne Catherine

Born 1774, Flamske, Germany of peasant stock and pious upbringing.

Her Guardian Angel and Jesus Himself often appeared to her as a child. She had visions imparting divine knowledge from her childhood. Mary and saints also appeared to her. From the cradle she could tell good from evil and from her early youth she had visions showing her the object of her existence and her future sufferings.

If a priest passed by with the “Blessed Sacrament” (communion wafer), she felt a strong attraction in that direction. Also was she attracted to sacred remains of the saints.

From infancy Anne was tireless in relieving the sick. In prayer she would ask God to give her the sickness of someone else. He did. She also endured sufferings in “satisfaction” for the souls of purgatory.

Four years before she was admitted to a convent, she was given by Jesus a crown of thorns. Not to look at, but to wear. Only the marks made by the thorns and the resultant blood were visible to others.

While working in a garden, birds would come and rest on her head and shoulders. Together they would sing praises to God.

Jesus allowed her to feel a portion of His own sufferings. Her hands and feet would become burning and painful. She received on her body the “stigmata” of his cross and crucifixion. From the cross on her chest, blood often flowed. At first it was every Wednesday, then every Friday.

Brentano here adds that to receive such marks from Christ is the “most sublime effect of union with his sufferings.” We prefer to think that the marks Paul received on his back were the true “marks of Christ”, as he suffered in some ways as Jesus did.

There were other suggestions of a bloody revelation of Christ: On Good Friday in 1820, “blood flowed from her head, feet, hands, chest, and side... her face and bosom were bathed in blood, and her body appeared covered with bruises like what the blows of a whip would have inflicted...” One wonders if all this bloodiness influenced the wording of many of her visions, and now influences Mel Gibson and the millions who will see this film. Oh we believe in the blood of Jesus! But aren't the Scriptural accounts sufficient?

We are told also that she for awhile made daily pilgrimages to the Holy Land, albeit in the Spirit. She saw this territory at various times in history and learned many important details through these visits. She learned the minutest details of festivals, customs, everything necessary to paint an accurate picture of the life of Christ.

Then comes the disclaimer by Brentano that she never regarded these visions as being of any historical value! “She knew and believed nothing but the catechism, the common history of the Bible...” What an odd combination of facts. Valueless details given by God in visions? Later we are told she had never even read the Old or New Testaments! Yet her visions are filled with Scriptures.

She refers in her visions to a “guide”. It is interesting to me that that same term is used in reference to present day occult activities. Spirit-guides work on both sides of the aisle.

As her body deteriorated it is said that she became each day more and more absorbed in her sufferings, believing it was her pathway to communion with God. At one point she said “I am on the Cross, it will soon all be over, leave me in peace.”

Some of the mysteries of this woman might have been cleared up at her death. “Unfortunately there was no official post-mortem examination of her body...” A Dutch Doctor offered a high price for the body, but the money was rejected. In place of a clear examination before the world, a “secret” opening of her coffin six weeks after her death revealed that corruption had not yet begun. How strange that her body was wracked with sickness all her life, but not in her coffin.

Such is the account of her life as given in the Tan Publication book. Bear in mind that it is this woman who gave us the information that evangelicals worldwide are now viewing on the silver screen and praising enthusiastically.

The Nine Meditations

Part II of the book is prefaced with the insistent statement that “it can never be sufficiently impressed upon the reader that these writings have no pretensions whatever to add an iota to Sacred Scripture as interpreted by the Church.” It could be that in the last five words of this sentence, *as interpreted by the Church*, is the disclaimer of all. For there is precious little of the Holy Book, I am told, that is officially “interpreted by the Church.” Suffice it to say that much, very much, is added to the Scripture, and it is my intention to share with you my evidence. For those who know their Bible, each listing given below will come as a series of “shocks” . I tremble for those who are ignorant of Scripture and simply drink in whatever is poured, as in spectacles such as Gibson’s latest.

One final thought from the secretary, then to the visions:

“The following pages will appear to the attentive reader rather a simple and natural concordance of the Gospels than a history differing in any point of the slightest importance from that of Scripture.” With our intelligence thus insulted, we proceed:

Extra-Scriptural Additions of Anne Catherine Emmerich

Meditation I

- Nicodemus made a second visit to Jesus.
- The man who lent his “upper room” to Jesus had actually prepared the whole meal the year before: thus the acquaintance. His name was Heli.
- Actually Heli did not own the room, but rented it from joint landlords Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

Meditation II

- The supper room (known to us as the “upper” room) had formerly been inhabited by David’s captains.
- Previous to the building of the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant had been deposited there for awhile.
- The prophet Malachi wrote his prophecies there.
- Nicodemus and Joseph were business partners.
- The “supper room” was divided into three parts, giving it a resemblance of the Temple.
- Above the hearth (symbolizing the altar) was an image of a Paschal Lamb, with a knife in its throat, and the blood appearing to flow drop by drop upon the altar. “But I do not remember distinctly how that was done.” [*Quite often in the narration, Anne selectively “forgets” things that even she cannot explain adequately.*]

Meditation III

- Simeon died in the Temple after the presentation of Jesus. His sons, secret disciples of Je-

sus, lived there now.

- While the disciples are gathering things for the Last Supper they stand in front of the house of “Seraphia”, aka by Catholic mystics as Veronica. She, her family, and the connection to the Lord is described in detail.
- The disciples took from Veronica’s home the special chalice to be used “in the institution of the Holy Eucharist.”

Meditation IV

- The chalice was mysterious in its appearance.
- The chalice was made of an unknown, unmeltable material.
- The chalice was left in the church of Jerusalem. It is still there, and will reappear some day.
- The great chalice formerly was in Abraham’s possession. Melchizedek brought it from the land of Semiramis to Canaan.
- The chalice had actually been preserved in Noah’s Ark.

Meditation V

- Jesus shared with Mary the schemes of Judas, causing Mary to pray for him.
- When Jesus announced to Mary His upcoming death, she begged Him to let her die with Him.
- The son of the poor widow of “widow’s mite” fame became a disciple.

Meditation VI

- There were actually three groups of disciples at the Last Supper. Jesus leads the Twelve in the main room, Nathaniel and twelve others are in a side room, and a former disciple of the Baptist presides in another side room.
- A beautiful little lamb, decorated with a crown, was sent into another building, where met Mary and the “holy women.”
- The Lamb’s throat was actually slit by Jesus while Simeon held his head.
- Jesus and the disciples walked around the Supper Room singing Psalms.
- Simeon, in preparing the Lamb, fastened the front legs on a cross piece of wood and stretched the hind ones along the stake, so as to resemble Jesus on the cross.
- The exact seating arrangement is spelled out, with vivid detail of the food served.
- Another Lamb was cut up by the Lord and carried to the women in one of the buildings of the court where they were seated.

Meditation VII

- When Peter did not want to have his feet washed, it “appeared” to Anne [this is another device she uses to cover her integrity] that Jesus privately assured Peter, “You have merited for my Father to reveal to thee who I am...therefore upon thee will I build my Church... My

power will remain with thy successors to the end of the world.” *[Deliberate and pernicious perversion of the truth. It is material such as this, whether in the movie or not, that will be presented to those weak sheep enticed to “follow up” on what they have seen.]*

Meditation VIII

- While “instituting the Holy Eucharist”, the disciples carried the chalice between them as if they were carrying the tabernacle.
- In commenting on the practice of people in those days to eat of the same loaf and drink of the same cup, she says “I think Scripture must contain something upon this subject.” *[She admits her ignorance of God’s revelation but allows her own to go forth anyway.]*
- She sees Jesus giving the Apostles a complete explanation of the Supper, and of the entire ceremony! Her comment: “I was forcibly reminded of a priest teaching others to say Mass.” *[Now we see clearly that she can only view this last day in Christ’s earthly life through the eyes of Rome, while we who have known His Word have a completely different “vision.”]*
- She goes on to describe the entire ritual of that night, and we are aghast as she perfectly describes a Roman Mass! “I do not remember,” she humbly admits, “whether this was the precise order in which these ceremonies were performed...”
- Then Jesus became more and more “transparent”, until He resembled a luminous shadow.
- She “seems to see” Mary receiving the Sacrament in a spiritual manner. “I do not know how it was done, but I thought I saw her enter without touching the ground, and come before our Lord to receive the Holy Eucharist.”
- When He said “This is My Body,” a brilliant light came on Him, His words were luminous, the bread entered the apostles similarly lighted... Judas alone remained dark.
- Several times during the ceremonies, the apostles bowed to each other! *[Strange that no New Testament writer refers to any of these wonders!]*

Meditation IX

- After more detailed instructions on how to have a proper Mass, Jesus anointed the thumb and forefinger of each of their hands, and marked a cross on their heads with oil.
- After the resurrection, John gave the Sacrament to Mary for the first time.
- After more instructions on proper ritual, and questions from the apostles, Anne Catherine remarks, “The Scriptures must contain much of this last discourse and conversation.”
- As they left the room and entered the “vestibule”, Mary met Him.

Have I yet convinced any of my readers that Anne Catherine’s book is NOT one which ought to be pushed forward as a starting place for a major cinematic representation of the life of Jesus? If not, read on. The evidence compounds.

Following is the material that Mel Gibson and his associates used to write a screenplay for the last hours of Christ’s life.

I have placed an asterisk (*) in front of every statement used by the movie.

The Passion

After a short introduction, the reader is introduced to sixty-six chapters of material covering the time from Gethsemane to Calvary, roughly the last 10-12 hours of his preliminary stay on earth. **Please recall that I am only bringing out those matters that do not conform with Scripture.** There are occasionally beautiful passages in the text, and the simple telling of the story of Jesus is itself worth reading over and over. I strongly suggest that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are to be preferred by far.

Chapter I, the Garden

- The Apostles had keys to the garden, as frequent visitors.
- *There is a detailed history and description of the Garden.
- It was in a cave, or grotto, on Mount Olivet, a part of the Garden of Olives separate from Gethsemani, where Jesus prayed.
- It was in this same grotto that Adam and Eve took refuge when driven out of Paradise.
- *It was hidden from Satan that Jesus was the Son of God, so he tempted Jesus only as the most just of men.
- The sale of some property of Mary Magdalene was given to Lazarus and then to Christ, who spent it on twenty-eight imprisoned debtors.
- One and a half hours passed in the Garden. “True” says Anne, “that Scripture tells us he said, ‘Could you not watch one hour with me?’ but his words should not be taken literally...” [*an arrogant supplanting of Scriptural truth by visionary truth.*]
- Angels showed Jesus, in the Garden, a series of visions of all his coming suffering. [*But Luke 22:43, “Then an angel appeared... strengthening Him.” How much strength is conveyed by showing the coming suffering?*]
- [I found it most enlightening to have the “opening of the side” of Jesus compared to the opening of Adam’s side. In both cases, new life, in the form of a Spouse, came forth. But it was also here that I began to question further the authorship of this entire text. It seems to me that no weak, Scripturally ignorant, bedridden woman could have composed such a detailed accounting, with all the philosophical and theological add-ons to boot.]
- There follows a long monologue (by Anne or her secretary?) concerning the coming history of the Church, including those (Protestants) who were “dragged away and strangled”. Later she sees “bands of men who were separating themselves from the Church, [who] mangled and tore off whole pieces of his living flesh [the body of Christ].” [*A true representation of Catholic mentality as Rome suffers more and more losses in her day.*] She even sees whole nations “snatched out of His bosom.” Those separated are “plunged into the depths of infidelity, superstition, heresy, and false worldly philosophy.” [*It is these very characteristics that Bible believers see in the fold of Rome, not only outside it.*]
- *Jesus cried out in pain and three apostles awoke (Peter, James, John). Peter volunteers to join Jesus in the grotto, but is aghast at the bloody presence of Jesus.
- Anne is upset as she sees in visions the many churches “in which worldly, tasteless, unsuitable ornaments had replaced the magnificent adornments of a more pious age.” [*Here she*

totally exposes the Catholic philosophy that glories in externals and appearances, and that believes that God lives in a house today.]

- During the agony of Jesus, she sees Mary also overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish. She faints several times. Jesus is meanwhile thinking of her, and turning His eyes in her direction as if to seek assistance. There is a spiritual communication between the two! *[Near blasphemy? Why would God the Son turn to anyone but God the Father during this horrendous moment?]*
- While praying, Jesus has a vision of “Limbo.” This is the “borderland”, from *limbus*, border, where all souls (before Christ) go temporarily after death. He saw the “first part” where live Adam and Eve, the patriarchs, prophets, the parents of Mary, and John the Baptist. His death was to open Heaven to these captives. *[One gets the feeling that this little visionary manual is nothing short of a concise history and catechism of Romanism.]*
- Jesus is fed a mysterious food by a higher-ranking angel than we have seen so far, one who “was clothed like a priest in a long floating garment.”
- The traces of Jesus’ body and hands remained impressed on the stone, and were honored later.

Chapter II, Judas

- Three Pharisees accompany Judas to a room where the Temple soldiers had assembled.
- One Pharisee sent seven slaves to fetch wood with which to prepare the Saviour’s Cross. *[So what would normally have been blamed on the Romans can now conveniently fall back to the Jews.]*
- Twenty soldiers selected from the Temple guard and other military under Annas and Caiphas accompanied Judas. Luke mentions that it was a “multitude” that entered the Garden, but Anne Catherine, in her superior wisdom, says otherwise: “It had at first been intended that Judas should be accompanied by a more numerous escort, but he drew their attention to the fact that so large a number of men would be too easily seen...”

Chapter III, Arrest

- Jesus says to Judas something, the sense of which was “It were better for thee that thou hadst never been born.” “However,” says Anne, “I cannot remember the words exactly.” Actually Jesus said that at the Last Supper, and the “exact words” are in Matthew 26:24. *[Why are we dependent on Anne Catherine’s memory when we have the revelation from an apostle?]*
- All the disciples gathered around Judas and called him a thief and traitor.
- When the soldiers fell in the garden, it looked like they were having convulsions similar to those of epilepsy. Later, all those who fell and rose again were converted.
- *Malchus, whose ear was cut off, was instantly converted. He later was a secret messenger who kept the disciples informed of what was going on during Christ’s sufferings.
- *Specific details are given about how Jesus is arrested and controlled.
- *Only John followed Jesus. *[But, Matthew 26:56, “All the disciples forsook Him, and fled.”]*

- *Those who arrested Jesus were most cruel, led Him along the roughest road, through the thickest mire, pulled cords as tight as possible, struck Him with knotted cords, etc. [*When talking about a God who becomes a man, is it necessary to exaggerate? Aren't the bare facts horrible enough? Man has arrested God! Where did these "extra" details originate?*]
- The marks of His feet, elbows, fingers were miraculously impressed on a rock where He fell.
- *Six "brutal" Pharisees walked as close to Jesus as possible striking Him constantly.
- Jesus fell seven times between Mount Olivet and the house of Annas.
- The local inhabitants were grieving over this when Mary walked by and excited them still more to sobs and lamentations. [*In this story, everything that happens to Jesus must happen to Mary, in order for her to be our "co-redemptrix."*]

Chapter IV, the enemy's designs

- Here is discussed the Satanic plot of the Jews

Chapter V, Jerusalem

- *Pilate could not sleep that night with rumours of what was going on coming to him.
- Most demonstrations of grief were in the Northeast, in the section of Jerusalem known as Ophel.
- Most of the Apostles were terrorized and were wandering around the valleys which surround Jerusalem, sometimes hiding in caves there.
- The angels wavered between joy and grief, wanting to assist Jesus, but filled with awe at the miracle taking place before them. Then the author gives us the Apostle's creed through the thoughts of the angels! "For the angels believe, like us, in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, etc..." to the end, "the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting." [*Again I must suggest that this book is a not-too-subtle way of inculcating the masses with Catholic thought. So why are evangelical Christians rushing in to promote Anne's theology?*]

Chapter VI, Annas

- Annas was surrounded by 28 councillors.
- Annas was a thin ill-humored-looking old man with a scraggy beard.
- *When Jesus testified before Annas, the guards and a nearby "menial" struck Jesus so hard that He fell down, blood trickling from His face to the floor.
- Annas took the roll of accusations against Jesus, placed it in a hollow tube, fastened it to the top of a reed and presented all to Jesus as a scepter to give to the High Priest. [*Biblically, only Roman soldiers put a reed in Jesus' hand. Here the anti-Semitism of Catholic Germany escapes.*]

Chapter VII-VIII-IX, Caiphas

- A malicious (Jewish) child pressed his thumb into Jesus' lips, tauntingly bidding Jesus to bite him. This, as He stands before Caiphas' cruel court.
- He is accused of eating the Passover a day early! Nicodemus and Joseph come to his rescue legally, proving their right by pointing out passages from the "archives."
- *When this line of reasoning failed to convince anyone, the Council "looked at Nicodemus furiously."
- Ten soldiers couldn't take it any longer, excused themselves, and eventually joined the disciples.
- When Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, a bright light appeared and Heaven was opened above His head.
- Devils from hell in the form of dog-like creatures with claws entered the bodies of many bystanders as all these proceedings turned against Jesus.
- Somehow John was with him up to this point, but remembering Mary might need some reassurance, he now leaves Jesus to go to her!
- Jewish scum of the earth surround Jesus and treat him with barbarity following Caiphas' part.
- The mob puts a crown on Him, takes off His robe, and also removes His **scapular!** *[More confusion. Again most of this activity was done by Roman soldiers. Then, lo and behold, the scapular. This is 2 small pieces of cloth on a string, worn by some Catholics (such as the "star" of this movie!) as a sort of "magic" protection. It's quite a reach to envision one being worn by Jesus!].*
- They get a basin of dirty water to "wash" him, acting in direct response to the anointing of precious ointment offered by Mary Magdalene, one of the main characters of the book.
- Since there was a halo shining around Jesus' head from the moment He declared Himself to be the Christ, His enemies were incited to even greater fury.

Chapter X, Peter

- It was the brother of Malchus, (whose ear was removed by Peter) who first asked Peter if he had not seen him with Jesus.
- One of the disciples listed in this chapter is called "Simon, who was afterwards bishop of Jerusalem."

Chapter XI, Mary

- *"The blessed Virgin was ever united to her Divine Son by interior spiritual communications; she was, therefore, fully aware of all that happened to him— she suffered with Him..." *[The gloves come off here. Suddenly our author is not so subtle or indirect. A clear statement of Mary's role as co-redemptrix.]*
- "Like Him she suffered in silence."
- *Disciples who saw her during this time, saluted her: "Hail! unhappy Mother— hail, Mother of the Most Holy One of Israel, the most afflicted of all mothers!"

- She asks Peter, “What has become of my son?” Peter has to tell her that he denied Jesus three times, and that Jesus is condemned to death. *[A most poignant moment. But nowhere hinted at in the sacred text!]*
- At the news, Mary falls and her feet and hands leave impressions which remain “to the present day.” Anne notes that she has seen the stones which are indeed preserved somewhere, “but I cannot remember where.” *[Mary falls and faints often during these hours, much like her Son.]*
- When she reaches the spot where Jesus says He is the Son of God, she again faints!

Chapter XII, Jesus in prison

- *Jesus is confined in an underground “vault” for about an hour, where He prays for His enemies.

Chapter XIII, Morning Trial

- *The trial reconvenes at sun-up, as it is illegal to have a night meeting.
- *Jesus’ hands are tied (again) and a chain fastened around His neck.
- *The High priest tries to exclude from the proceedings all those like Nicodemus who were in any way favorable to Jesus.

Chapter XIV, Judas’ despair

- An incredibly detailed Judas scene is described, based on the Scriptural account, but with much more verbage and action.

Chapter XV, XVI, XVII, Pilate

- *Mary leaves no means untried which could enable her to approach Jesus.
- *When the procession heading to Pilate was opposite Mary, Jesus looked on her with an expression of the greatest love and compassion.
- Mary again becomes totally unconscious.
- The famed “marble steps” of Pilate’s palace are mentioned. In later Roman mythology, these steps were miraculously moved to Rome!
- Incredible detail of Jerusalem is portrayed, including “the beautiful house which belonged to Lazarus,” near Pilate’s palace.
- It is in this chapter that Anne Catherine clearly denies what her polite “secretary” declares about the origin and import of these visions: “He it is [God] who reveals to me events which took place so long ago.”
- *Pilate is seen as a gentleman who cannot believe the cruelty of the Jews up to this point. *[Strange he has not heard of the cruelty of the Romans!]* “When Pilate... perceived how shamefully the Jews had treated their prisoner... he addressed them... ‘Why have you ill-treated this prisoner so shamefully? *Is it not possible to refrain from thus tearing to pieces and beginning to execute your criminals even before they are judged?’” *[We take nothing*

from Jewish guilt by saying that this German nun is stretching the truth, pure and simple! It is exaggerated implications of Romanists and their disciples throughout history that have made the Jews to this day hard to the Gospel, assuming that “Christian” means “Catholic.”]

- **“The inhuman behavior of the priests and ancients... increased his [Pilate’s] contempt for them.” This after the Jews drag Jesus brutally up the marble staircase .[This fantasy became the basis for people all over the world crawling up these steps, praying, crying, supposedly re-enacting Jewish ugliness.]*
- The words of Scripture are then used for the interchange with Pilate. Then the “enemies of Jesus” got so angry that they hurled a thousand different accusations against Him!
- When Pilate sent them all to Herod, they ill-treated Jesus even more than before! Curses, blows. *[The danger of this film is that people will be weeping over false facts. This extra Jewish portion of the story simply isn’t in the Scripture. We have been given what we are to believe. Let us not confuse our minds with fables!]*

Chapter XVIII

The “Way of the Cross” (Catholic devotional)

- *When Jesus leaves Pilate to go to Herod, John takes Mary around to the places where Jesus walked. They stop, contemplate, kiss the ground. This is how the devotion originated.
- Mary, the model of spotless purity was the first to show the deep veneration by the Church for Jesus.
- Mary thus laid up in her heart the “merits of His Passion” and offered them to the Father.
- During this whole time Magdalene was as an insane person.

Chapter XIX, Claudia

- *A full description of Pilate’s wife Claudia is offered!
- The Bible says Claudia saw dreams of Jesus. Anne Catherine claims to have seen the same ones. She proceeds to describe them in these pages.

Chapter XX, Herod

- *Herod was a luxurious and effeminate prince.
- *Herod calls the Jews butchers, adding his own insults to Pilate’s.
- Jesus was silent to Herod because Herod was in a state of “ex-communication” because of his adulterous marriage with Herodias *[this effeminate prince?]*, and because of his execution of John the Baptist.
- When Herod would not condemn Jesus, emissaries were sent to the section of Jerusalem where many Pharisees lived to let them know they must assemble near Pilate’s palace.
- Herod’s soldiers put a large cotton sack over Jesus’ head and ridiculed Him.
- Herod’s soldiers were bribed by Jews to torture Jesus in unheard of ways.
- Three times did blows from sticks prostrate Jesus, but angels wept at His side, He was anointed with Heavenly balsam, and survived these otherwise fatal beatings.

Chapter XXI, from Herod to Pilate

- *Soldiers, encouraged by Pharisees, scarcely refrained a moment from beating Jesus.
- *Mary and other women were standing in a room from whence they could see all which took place.
- The specific cause of the ongoing feud between Herod and Pilate is spelled out in two pages of detail.
- Jesus' feet became entangled in His long robe, and He fell on the marble steps, stained with blood from His head.

Chapter XXII, the scourging

- *There were six men assigned to the task of scourging Jesus. They were Egyptians, condemned prisoners. They resembled wild beasts or demons, and were half drunk.
- The scourgers struck Jesus with their fists.
- *Jesus prayed for the men.
- While being beaten, Jesus turned His face to His Mother, and she passed out.
- Servants of the High Priests offered money and strong drink to the executioners.
- *Each pair of torturers beat Jesus for 15 minutes.
- *A thorny stick covered with knots and splinters tore Jesus' flesh to pieces.
- *These "barbarians" had such a thirst for torture that they turned Him around and beat Him on the front of His body too.
- *Jesus' Body was torn to shreds: one huge wound.
- A relative of a blind man Jesus had cured rushed from among the crowd and demanded that the soldiers cease.
- Weeping angels approached Jesus many times.

Chapter XXIII, Mary and the scourging

- *Mary saw and suffered with inexpressible love and grief all the torments He was enduring.
- *Mary's dress was blue, her veil a yellow white.
- *Claudia, Pilate's wife, gives pieces of linen to Mary (the Mother of God).
- After the scourging, Jesus wiped His own eyes, so that He could see Mary.

Chapter XXIV-XXV

The visions interrupted: Joseph as a child, and Mary!

- *Sister Emmerich continues to suffer all the mental and bodily tortures once endured by Jesus.
- On the feast of St. Joseph, Joseph, as a little boy, appears to her. No revelations are mentioned.
- *She sees Mary wiping up the blood of the scourging area. She sees Magdalene also, and describes her in detail.

Chapter XXVI, the crown of thorns

- Anne Catherine feels every sensation she describes regarding the crown of thorns placed on Jesus' head. This "crowning" had also happened to her.

Chapter XXVII, Ecce Homo

- Jesus is led up to Pilate, and when the Jewish leaders see Him their hatred is increased even more
- *Pilate's wife must remind Pilate of his promise not to condemn Jesus.

Chapter XXVIII, reflections

- She enlarges on the curse that the Jews place on themselves, "His blood be on us...". She sees the effect of such a curse for the future of the Jews.
- She speaks of the "holy souls of Jesus and Mary."
- After 241 pages, this justification of omissions and confusion in her descriptions: "Many of these things [*specifically the comments about the Jewish curse and the resultant activity of demons etc*] ...which are related by other persons...are fragments of symbolical interior perceptions... which vary according to the state of the soul of the spectator. Hence the numerous contradictions, because many things are naturally forgotten or omitted...It is easy to see how difficult it must have been... to preserve any degree of connection in her narrations." [*But if this is so , why publish these things at all? Why perpetuate a story that can be picked up by ignorant masses and believed implicitly. And now the whole world is being exposed to these unsubstantiated fables!*]

Chapter XXIX, Jesus condemned

- The cruel Jews almost devoured their victim with their eyes.
- "I cannot exactly remember all that I did see."
- Once more Mary is unconscious.
- Mary begs to be taken to each spot sanctified by the suffering of her Son. Thus the Mother of God took possession of those holy places, by "bedewing them with her tears." [*A not-so-veiled warning to Jews and Muslims of future generations. Unheeded by most, however.*]
- Claudia sends Pilate back his "pledge", and leaves her husband to join the Christians.
- A "friend of the Lord" engraves the words *Judex injustus* (Jewish injustice) on a green-looking stone behind the terrace called Gabbatha. It is still there in the foundations of a church or house at Jerusalem.

Chapter XXX, Carrying the cross

- *When Jesus first approaches His cross, He kneels, embraces it, and kisses it three times.
- Angels assist Jesus in carrying the cross. [*Did Jesus take any advantage over His humanity as He suffered for us?*]

Chapter XXXI, XXXII,XXXIII, The first three “falls”

- **[Roman mythology insists that Jesus fell seven times on the way to Calvary. Anne Catherine sets out to prove it.]* Jesus’ first fall was at a mud puddle covered with a large stone. Impatient Pharisees asked that He be lifted up lest He die “in our hands.” *[Always, the Jews!]*
- **John is able to secure permission for Mary to stand at a place where there was an entry-way to the road where Jesus traveled. It is John in fact that encourages her to stay when she questions the wisdom of such a move.*
- **When she is identified as the Mother of the Galilean, she too is insulted.*
- **After a look of compassion for His Mother, Jesus falls a second time. Mary rushes out and embraces Him.*
- *As she half-faints against a stone near a doorway, an impression of her hand is left. This hard stone was later moved to the first Catholic Church in Jerusalem, near the pool of Bethesda.*
- **At the third fall, Simon of Cyrene is employed to help Jesus. Simon is a pagan, a gardener on his way home from work. His heart is touched by grace after a short while. [Most of the foreigners in town that day were actually Jews coming for the Passover celebration.]*

Chapter XXXIV, Veronica

- **A young girl who was later to be known as Veronica (“vera” + “icon”, “true portrait”), wipes the face of Jesus, somehow finding her way into the midst of a soldier-led pulsating mob of crucifiers.*
- **The likeness of Jesus’ face is imprinted on the veil!*
- *Veronica kept this veil until her death, then gave it to Mary, who gave it to the Apostles, who passed it on to the Church.*
- *Seraphia (Veronica) was the cousin of John the Baptist.*
- *When Jesus was 12, it was this same young girl who sent food to Him every day while He was living in a little inn near Jerusalem.*

Chapters XXXV and XXXVI, Last four falls

- **Jesus is shoved into a stagnant pool. Simon tries to avoid the pool, twists the cross, and Jesus falls.*
- *Here Jesus makes His classic statement to Jerusalem about gathering chicks as to a hen [though unable to move? In Scripture this statement is made before His arrest].*
- **Simon of Cyrene threatens to stop helping Jesus if the Pharisees don’t stop their brutal conduct. [Why is nothing said to the Romans?]*
- **He falls at a sharp turn in the road and upon His arrival at Calvary.*
- *While Jesus awaits the preparation of the cross, He is led to a cave and pushed into it so roughly that his fall on the rough stone floor would have killed Him if once more angels had not supported Him.*

Chapter XXXVII, The women leave

- After recovering from her latest swoon, Mary and the other women go to Lazarus' house. From there they leave to "make the way of the cross."
- Upon seeing Veronica's veil, they all burst forth into unrestrained tears.

Chapter XXXVIII, Nailed to the cross

- The holy women try to bribe a man to allow Jesus to drink some wine that Veronica has made. Instead the men drink it themselves.
- When Jesus is about to be put on the cross, He is stripped of all but a scapular and loin clothes.
- *Each additional torture inflicted on Jesus caused a fresh pang in the heart of Mary.
- *Since Jesus was unable to co-operate in stretching Himself out, the soldiers forced His arms to stretch so that they would reach the appropriate place on the cross.
- There were 36 hammer-blows to put all necessary nails in place.
- Jesus repeated appropriate Psalms as He suffered.

Chapter XXXIX, The cross erected

- The souls in Limbo were filled with expectant hope as the cross went up.
- *The feet of Jesus were sufficiently near the ground for His friends to be able to reach to kiss them.

Chapter XL, XLI, The thieves

- The exact accusations of the Jewish thieves are identified in detail.
- *Their names are given
- Before the soldiers could actually secure the robe of Jesus by casting lots, a messenger sent from Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea let them know that there were persons offering cash for this and other items of Jesus.
- We are told the color of Jesus' complexion, the size of His chest and shoulders, the hardness of His knees, the length of His legs, and much more!

Chapter XLII, First Word

- *We are given the name of the Roman soldiers who presided.
- *When Jesus prays for His enemies, the "good thief" is deeply moved.
- Mary is at first driven from the cross but when she hears her Son's voice she approaches again followed by John and two women.
- Dismas, the good thief, suddenly remembers that it was *Jesus and Mary* who had cured Him of leprosy in his childhood!

Chapter XVIII, Second and Third Word, Eclipse

- “I was shown the exact cause of [the eclipse]... but I have unfortunately partly forgotten it... I was lifted up from the earth, and beheld the stars and the planets moving about out of their proper spheres...”
- *As the darkness increased only Mary and the most faithful friends remained.
- *Mary asks Jesus to permit her to die with Him. She is denied and almost faints again.
- Instead, Jesus says “Woman, behold thy Son.” Anne Catherine’s comment : “I do not know whether Jesus really pronounced these words but I felt interiorly that He gave Mary to John as a mother... it did not appear to me in the least surprising that Jesus should call the Blessed Virgin, ‘Woman’, instead of ‘Mother’. I felt that He intended to demonstrate that she was *that woman* spoken of in Scripture who was to crush the head of the serpent...” [*Here, Anne Catherine, or whoever it is who is speaking to us, shows her ignorance of a clear New Testament text regarding John and Mary, but an eloquent knowledge of the Catholic interpretation of Genesis 3.*]
- Jesus, by giving her as a mother to John, gave her also as a mother to all who believe in him... [*There is neither any logic or Scriptural support for such an idea, but this is classic Romanism being explained for us in the guise of a vision from Heaven.*]
- “These things are much easier to feel by the grace of God than to be expressed in words.” [*But is the truth of God to be at the mercy of the feelings of one woman in 18th century Germany? How far would this method of exegesis take us into chaos of beliefs? For an answer, one’s gaze need go no further than the city of Rome.*]

Chapter XLIV, Fourth Word

- Inside Jerusalem, all is eerie. Birds fly low, and even fall to the ground.
- Once more Jesus speaks, and once more Mary cannot restrain herself, and returns to the foot of the cross.

Chapter XLV, Three more “words”, death

- After saying “I thirst”, Jesus adds, but to the disciples, “Could you not have given Me a little water,” that is, when it was dark and no one would have prevented them. The disciples reply that “We did not think of doing so, O Lord.”
- John is now at the foot of the cross, wiping Jesus’ feet with his scapular!
- After Jesus’ death the centurion Abenadar leaves Calvary and announces the death to the disciples.
- Mary hears of the death and falls to the ground. “...well might she at this moment be termed ‘the queen of martyrs.’”

Chapter XLVI, Earthquake and Apparitions

- She sees the soul of Jesus penetrate the earth at the foot of the cross.
- Angels cast evil spirits into the abyss.

- Souls in Limbo are ordered to re-enter their earthly bodies.
- Jeremiah appears near the Temple altar, claiming that the ancient sacrifice is at an end.
- All the angels of the Lord instantly leave the Temple.
- 32 Pharisees who went to Calvary shortly before Jesus dies were “almost” all converted at the foot of the cross.
- The bodies of the resurrected did not appear to touch the ground.
- The resurrected proclaimed the innocence of Jesus to their relatives, and reproved those who had taken part in His death most severely.

Chapter XLVII, Joseph of Arimathea

- The extraordinary thing in this short chapter is the association between Nicodemus and Joseph. Very specific details about their meeting and their assistance in Jesus’ burial.

Chapter XLVIII, Jesus’ side pierced and the two thieves die.

- *Cassius is the one who pierced Jesus’ side. Water and blood “flowed over his face and body,” producing the needed grace to save him instantaneously from his sins.
- Mary, looking on, could scarcely stand up, feeling the lance had gone through her instead of Jesus.
- *Mary, John and others gathered up Jesus’ blood in flasks, and wiped up the remainder with linens.

Chapter XLIX, More descriptions of Jerusalem

- Nicodemus owned the houses on several streets.
- Nicodemus had recently built a beautiful gate as an entrance to these streets called “The Gate of Moriah.”

Chapter L, Descent from the cross.

- Abenader the centurion drew out the nails and handed them to Cassius, who laid them at the feet of Mary.
- *The body of Jesus was wrapped in linen from the knees to the waist, and then given to Mary.

Chapter LI and LII, Embalming and burial

- *Mary His mother and Mary Magdalen washed Jesus’ body, the former at His head, the latter at His feet, as she had done when He was living. (In keeping with that incident, she again bathed His feet with tears and wiped them with her hair.)
- As they were about to take their farewell of His body, a miracle occurred: “The sacred body of Jesus, with all its wounds, appeared imprinted upon the cloth which covered it.” We know this Catholic “miracle” as the “Shroud of Turin.”

- This miracle linen was at first among disciples, then among the Jews. “I have seen it in a city of Asia, in the possession of some Christians who were not Catholics. I have forgotten the name of the town...”
- Four men and 12 women, all named, follow some soldiers to Joseph’s tomb.
- Mary enters the tomb and says her goodbyes at the head of Jesus. Magdalen then comes in and kisses the feet.

Chapter LIII, Joseph arrested

- At his arrest, all Joseph’s companions fled.
- The intention was to let Joseph die of hunger and keep his disappearance a secret. [*Reminds one of the Old Testament Joseph.*]

Chapters LIV-LVII, Supplementary details

- At the end of chapter LIII, Anne declares she is finished with her description of the passion. The rest, she says, will be supplementary detail.
- She tries to explain for us the background of the name “Calvary (*place of the skull*).” She claims that below Jesus’ cross she saw the tomb of Adam and Eve. The head and one rib were missing on one skeleton. Of course not all the bones were here, since some had been on Noah’s ark... But the skull gave its name to the hill.
- *She gives details of the damage done by the earthquake.
- She states that Cassius was appointed guard over the tomb.

Chapter LVIII, Saturday

- About twenty disciples assemble in the Upper Room on Sabbath eve.
- Since the sacrifices were stopped, the Temple area was desolate. Mary comes to say good-bye to this special place of her youth.
- Once more Mary does “the way of the cross.”
- Mary is longing for that “third day” when Jesus will arise.

Chapter LIX, The descent into Hell

- Jesus, accompanied by Gabriel et al. in spirit pierced the earth at the foot of the cross.
- The place He entered is divided into three parts.
- In one beautiful space many were placed before admittance into Heaven, but after their time in Purgatory.
- There was a compartment for those patriarchs who lived before Abraham, and one for those who lived between Abraham and John the Baptist.
- He finds Adam and Eve, who bow with joy before Him, and are then added to the pre-Abraham room.
- In Limbo proper he meets the soul of the good thief, which angels even now carried to Abraham’s bosom.

- In one area are “good” pagans. *[But all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.]* Jesus enters here to the adoration of all.
- Hell itself is in the center of the great abyss, a large granite-like building. The doors are opened to expose the wretchedness of all within.
- Jesus speaks to the soul of Judas in Hell.
- Demons are compelled to bow before Jesus, and Lucifer himself is cast into a deep abyss strongly secured with chains. *[Here the theologian behind all these visions slips into an error of chronology, as this final casting of Satan is following the return of Christ to earth.]*
- Satan will be loosed for a little time, “if I remember rightly... fifty or sixty years before the year of Christ 2000.” Other dates are pointed out which are conveniently again “forgotten.”
- On every anniversary of this great day, Jesus frees some of those who sinned against Him before His crucifixion. *[No standard of forgiveness is mentioned. Like Allah, our God here becomes a whimsical capricious Deity who frees at will this one and that one. But the blood of Jesus frees all who call upon Him, whether they trusted the coming of the Saviour, or look back to the cross from our vantage point.]*
- The Catholic theology continues: By descending into Hell, Jesus planted in the spiritual garden of the Church a tree the fruits of which, namely His merits, are destined for the constant relief of the poor souls in Purgatory.

Chapter LX, LXI Resurrection eve, Joseph

- Mary first saw the “soul” of the Lord after His death, descending to her, and introducing her to His heavenly companions.
- When Mary knelt down to kiss the ground, yet another hand impression was left.
- Joseph of Arimathea is miraculously, yea stupendously, set free from prison.

Chapter LXII, Resurrection night

- The “soul” of the Lord enters the tomb, accompanied by patriarchs liberated from the underworld.
- Mary arises at 11 p.m. to walk the way of the cross.
- When Mary gets to Calvary, Jesus is before her in body and soul. This was not His “glorified body” but the manifestation He used in Limbo. Nevertheless it is inconceivable to the Catholic mind that Jesus would appear to anyone but Mary first, despite all the accounts of Scripture!

Chapters LXIII-LXV, The resurrection

- *She sees a monster arise from beneath the tomb. Jesus places His foot on the head of this dragon and it disappears.
- Jesus’ body passes through the hard rock of the tomb. *[But the stone was rolled away, and so this other miracle was not needed.]*
- Rays of light proceeded from the wounds in His hand.
- The reason He said to Magdalen “Don’t touch me,” was explained to me, “but I have only

an indistinct remembrance... I think..." and a long explanation follows. *[But of course because of the disclaimer, the reader is not required to believe what she says, nor for that matter anything in the book. Again I ask, then, why publish it?]*

Chapter LXVI, End of the Meditations

- "On the following Sunday, if I remember rightly, I saw the Jews washing and purifying the Temple." Many other details of the Jewish restoration of order follow.
- On "Easter Thursday" Pilate was instituting a search for his wife in every part of the city, all in vain. She was hiding at Lazarus' house.
- Stephen, who carried food to "Mrs. Pilate" was actually a first cousin to Paul the apostle!
- On the day after Sabbath, Simon of Cyrene went to the apostles and begged to be instructed and receive baptism.

"The visions of Sister Emmerich, which had continued from the 18th of February to the 6th of April 1823, here came to a conclusion."

Her book has served as inspiration to Catholics all over the planet, including the director of what may become the greatest "religious" film of all time. Her ideas will become implanted in the hearts of countless souls who will have to be "debriefed" carefully by those who know God's Word.

Movie Review

I had not intended to see the film made from the above text. I certainly don't need a Catholic movie star, or Hollywood, or a German nun telling me what it was "really like." But under a certain amount of external coercion, I did go to view the movie. It was as I had heard. There were good scenes and bad scenes. There was too much violence of the unnecessary sort. The film was not based squarely on Scripture. There was fantasy, legend, human interpretation, guesswork. Nevertheless, if through this Christ can be preached, may it be so!

I present the following list of items that stand out as unusual for a film stating it comes from the Bible. I have indicated above which of *Anne Catherine's* inventions found their way into Gibson's thinking. Whether any of the following are hers or the other Catholic visionary consulted, I am not positive. Some of this list seems to be pure Hollywood.

- In the Garden of Gethsemane we are given a portrayal of Satan, as a man and even as a snake. The snake is crushed by Jesus, Satan disappears, and the prayer goes on. This is not bad theology, but of course it appears nowhere in the Biblical text.
- The Virgin and Magdalene dress like "traditional" Catholic nuns!
- After Judas' sin he is tormented by demons in the form of children, who chase him to a hillside over which he hangs himself.
- Jesus is given a double scourging (more like a triple in the book). This scene is just too much, and a good portion of it probably never happened.
- Peter in his sorrow is seen confessing to Mary! Both he and John call her "Mother."

- The woman caught in adultery is given the name Mary Magdalene, as the longstanding legend runs. In fact that Biblical woman has no name known to us. Magdalene is the one from whom was cast seven devils.
- The Mother and Magdalene are *everywhere*, in the book and the movie.
- The “bad” thief on another cross is attacked by a crow who pecks his eyes out!
- Not only is the veil of the Temple torn in two at the earthquake, but it looks like the entire Temple is split!

There is an eerie feel about the whole movie, helped along by the music, the photography, slow motion, and a series of Hollywood methods that make Roman cruelty seem tame by comparison. I find it insulting to the text for man to have to “improve” on the Word of God. Why, some will consider the Bible boring in comparison to this action-packed gore-fest. I asked myself at times, Could any man –and Jesus laid aside His Divine privileges– could any man endure the violence dished out by Anne, Mel, and the rest? This film reminds one of the “hero” movies or even cartoon offerings, where the main character simply cannot die.

Of course in this film, the main character does finally die, but is the truth served well when so much affliction is added to the Son of God? Aren’t the facts given in Scripture sufficiently ignominious? The truths espoused by Jesus and His church have served us well these two thousand years. Faith will continue to come from hearing this Word, not seeing some spectacle.

A Warning

These are deceitful days. Those not living close to the Word of God are going to be caught up in a tangle of deception over and over. Many of these incidents may not prove to be fatal, but it seems to me that a pattern of taking whatever comes without question is not a safe one for the born-again. God calls His people to perfection, to approve things that are excellent. Let’s continue to do His will His way for the best results. Strange fire offered up to God brings death to His desires in us.