

## Jesus Was Downtown Staying at the Motel 8

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Jesus is not cheap, he just needs a decent mattress and curtains on the windows to make him happy. Room-darkening, not necessary.

He was traveling alone.

This last Shabbat (Sabbath, to some) I drove home after two Saturday morning (shacharit) synagogue services. I attended part of the Orthodox Jewish group (the rabbi phoned me on Friday afternoon fearing they wouldn't have a Minyan, which is ten men, for shacharit—but, that's another blog). Then I went to the Messianic synagogue on the way home to catch the end of their service. I went to a church service the next day, because a friend of my wife had cancerous tumors, and the pastor told her that God had healed her. Days later, an MRI scan proved his word true! But that too, is another blog.

On my way home I realized, not for the first or last time, how I get bored no matter where I attend. Yes, it takes awhile to set in before I wish I was somewhere else—but come it does. Then a new and crazy thought surfaced: Jesus comes, under-the-radar, to visit Spokane...where would he go?

The obvious assumption is: church.

But, I think no.

Christians, especially the average non-Jewish churchgoer, presume to own Jesus—he is theirs. Sure. Yet I counter: yes and no. What hit me was that his DNA was of the Hebrew tribe of Judah (through Mary) and also the influence of his Judah-blooded, step-father Joseph. He lived his years attending synagogue—not because he had to—in order to fulfill his mission, but because he liked synagogue. It was God's choice to directly deal with mankind through the Hebrews. The two halves of the Bible are about Jews and Him.

Jesus traveling through my city, or any other on Shabbat meant he'd enjoy the Friday night and Saturday morning traditional services. That's his home, his people. 2,000 years ago, he wasn't playing out a scripted life in which Jews would "do." Yes, yes, he retired from the carpentry business, but today he'd feel at home "talking shop" with fellow tradesmen of today. I can hear him say, "Power tools? I gotta try those!"

During his ancient life, while traveling in ministry, he naturally visited synagogues. As men regularly did, they discussed and debated points of religion. Jesus liked that. Many liked his input, many didn't. He had an unusually heavy dose of chutzpah.

Today, he'd do the same. The liturgy, Torah ceremony, teaching and readings, songs, dancing (yes), festivals, food, and those Jewish jokes would equal a taste of life past, a taste of home. Who knows, he might even humbly point to himself in scripture.

What about church? Well, he's got Sunday open—so, off he'd go. I don't believe—*no, I know*—there'd be activities in synagogue or church where he'd be displeased. He'd challenge, bite his lip, or get up and walk out. Asked to leave? You bet. That was his experience before, why not now. In a fit of disappointment perhaps he'd see the need to make an impromptu whip out of anything handy—or was that *only* back then for his fellow Jews, hmm? No.

If he saw the bumper sticker, “Lord, protect me from your followers!” would he snicker? I wonder just what exactly happened to the guy who thought that up and prints those. Did he attend a church of which Jesus would’ve walked out not saying a word?

I assume most Christians think synagogue is the last place Jesus would want to go. They consider that done and over. Score: Jews 0, Christians 1,000,000,000 and counting. Jesus’ heart, was, is, and will always be the same—I say, Judaism included.

When he checked out of the Motel 8, he left with mixed feelings—how could he not.

### *These Things Make Me Grumpy*

Another story from REAL LIFE (that I made up!) This parody news story is for amusement. Any similarity to real people, places or fruit is fictitious and not to be taken as fact.