

INTRODUCTION TO MARK

John Mark was a cousin of Barnabas (*Col. 4:10*), and went with Paul on the first tour of missions (*Acts 13:5*). He deserted Paul during this first tour (*Acts 15:37-38*), but went with Barnabas on the second tour (*Acts 15:39*). His work on this second tour demonstrated his faith, and Paul placed his seal of approval on him (*Col. 4:10*).

His mother's name was Mary (*Acts 12:12*), and she was a close relative of Barnabas [Mark being first-cousin to Barnabas, she would be an aunt]. His early home was Jerusalem, and he was converted by Peter (*1 Pet. 5:13*) which some think means he was one of the "3,000" on Pentecost (*Acts 2:41*). He was with Paul during Paul's first imprisonment (*Col. 4:10*) 61-63 A.D. After this, he must have joined Peter in Babylon on the Euphrates, where there were many Jewish Christians (*1 Pet. 5:13*). During Paul's second imprisonment in 68 A.D., he wrote to Timothy asking him to bring Mark with him to Rome (*2 Tim. 4:11*).

Mark wrote especially for the Gentile Christians, and he describes Jesus as "God's Superman," who demonstrates his Deity by his Miracles. He tells the things Jesus did, rather than the things Jesus said. He explains some things which Jews would have known.

Mark's gospel is thought to have been written from Rome, sometime between 60 and 70 A.D., perhaps while Paul was there during the first imprisonment.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

The Preaching of John the Baptist

(Also Matt. 3, 1-12; Luke 3, 1-18; John 1, 19-28)

1 This is the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²It began as the prophet Isaiah had written:

“‘Here is my messenger,’ says God; ‘I will send him ahead of you to open the way for you.’

³Someone is shouting in the desert, ‘Get the Lord’s road ready for him; make a straight path for him to travel!’”

⁴So John appeared in the desert, baptizing people and preaching his message. “Turn away from your sins and be baptized,” he told the people, “and God will forgive your sins.” ⁵Everybody from the region of Judea and the city of Jerusalem went out to hear John. They confessed their sins and he baptized them in the Jordan River.

⁶John wore clothes made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He announced to the people,

John The Baptist Prepares the Way

1 The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

It is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—

“a voice of one calling in the desert,

‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

And this was his message: “After me will

1. This is the good news about Jesus Christ. The whole history of Jesus is a disclosure of God’s Good News for the human family! JESUS is his personal name (given by the angel, *Matt. 1:21*). CHRIST [Messiah] is his title. It means: “the Lord’s Anointed One.” The kings and priests of Israel were anointed with oil; Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit.

2-3. It began as the prophet Isaiah had written. *Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1*. See notes on *Matt. 3:3* and *11:10*.

4. So John appeared in the desert. Of Judea. See note on *Matt. 3:1*. Turn away from your sins and be baptized. He both preached and baptized. Note that his baptism was water only, for those who were already God’s people (see notes on *Acts 19:1-7*). And God will forgive your sins. This is similar, but not the same as *Acts 2:38*. John called God’s people Israel to renewal; Peter called people to be born of water and the Spirit. (See note on *Acts 2:38*).

5. Everybody . . . went out to hear John. See notes on *Matt. 3:5-6*.

6. John wore clothes made of camel’s hair. See note on *Matt. 3:4*.

7-8. The man who will come after me. See note on *Matt. 3:11*. But he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. See note on *Matt. 3:11*.

"The man who will come after me is much greater than I am; I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals. ⁹I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 3.13-4.11; Luke 3.21-22; 4.1-13*)

⁹Not long afterward Jesus came from Nazareth, in the region of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan. ¹⁰As soon as Jesus came up out of the water he saw heaven opening and the Spirit coming down on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice from heaven, "You are my own dear Son. I am well pleased with you."

¹²At once the Spirit made him go into the desert. ¹³He was there forty days, being tempted by Satan. Wild animals were there also, but angels came and helped him.

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

(Also *Matt. 4.12-22; Luke 4.14-15; 5.1-11*)

¹⁴After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. ¹⁵"The right time has come," he said "And the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!"

¹⁶As Jesus walked by Lake Galilee, he saw two fishermen, Simon and his brother Andrew, catching fish in the lake with a net. ¹⁷Jesus said to them, "Come with me and I will teach you to

come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." 8

The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

At that time Jesus came 9 from Nazareth in Galilee was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming 10 up out of the water, he saw heaven torn open and the Spirit descend on him like a dove. And a voice came 11 from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well-pleased."

At once the Spirit sent 12 him out into the desert, and 13 he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

The Calling of the First Disciples

After John was put in pris- 14 on, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has 15 come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

As Jesus walked beside 16 the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," 17 Jesus said, "and I will make

9. Not long afterward. John had been preaching and baptizing about six months. See *Matt. 3:13-17* (and notes there) on the baptism of Jesus.

10. As soon as Jesus came up out of the water. "Out of" means "out from inside." Scholars agree that Jesus himself was immersed.

12-13. Being tempted by Satan. See *Matt. 4:1-11* and notes.

14. After John had been put in prison. Mark goes directly to Jesus' work in Galilee. [John records the events between Jesus' baptism and the ministry in Galilee (*John chapters 2-4*).] See *Matt. 4:12-25* and notes.

16. He saw two fisherman. See *Matt. 4:18-22* for the call of the four apostles.

catch men." ¹⁸At once they left their nets and went with him.

¹⁹He went a little farther on and saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat getting their nets ready. ²⁰As soon as Jesus saw them he called them; they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and went with Jesus.

A Man with an Evil Spirit

(Also Luke 4.31-37)

²¹They came to the town of Capernaum, and on the next Sabbath day Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught. He wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority.

²³Just then a man with an evil spirit in him came into the synagogue and screamed, ²⁴"What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you here to destroy us? I know who you are: you are God's holy messenger!"

²⁵Jesus commanded the spirit, "Be quiet, and come out of the man!"

²⁶The evil spirit shook the man hard, gave a loud scream, and came out of him. ²⁷The people were all so amazed that they started saying to each other, "What is this? Some kind of new teaching? This man has authority to give orders to the evil spirits, and they obey him!"

you fishers of men." At once ¹⁸ they left their nets and followed him.

When he had gone a little ¹⁹ farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he ²⁰ called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit

They went to Capernaum, ²¹ and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were ²² amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just ²³ then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, ²⁴ Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" said Jesus ²⁵ sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit shook the ²⁶ man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

The people were all so ²⁷ amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and

21. They came to the town of Capernaum. Capernaum: see *Matt. 4:13*. Went into the synagogue. Synagogue: see note on *Matt. 4:23*.

22. Were amazed at the way he taught. See note on *Matt. 7:28*, Teachers of the Law. See note on *Matt. 3:7*.

23. A man with an evil spirit. See note on *Matt. 4:24*. Demon possession is clearly taught in the Scriptures [However, some think this ended at the time Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A. D.]

24. What do you want with us? They knew Jesus had come to destroy the Devil's works (*1 John 3:8*). You are God's holy messenger! The demon made a better statement of belief than the Jewish leaders.

26. And came out of him. At Christ's command. This was not "make believe," but showed Jesus' authority.

27. The people were all so amazed. This happened in the synagogue.

²⁸And so the news about Jesus spread quickly everywhere in the region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many People

(Also *Matt. 8.14-17; Luke 4.38-41*)

²⁹They left the synagogue and went straight to the home of Simon and Andrew; and James and John went with them. ³⁰Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever, and as soon as Jesus got there he was told about her. ³¹He went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

³²When evening came, after the sun had set, people brought to Jesus all the sick and those who had demons. ³³All the people of the town gathered in front of the house. ³⁴Jesus healed many who were sick with all kinds of diseases and drove out many demons. He would not let the demons say anything, because they knew who he was.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

(Also *Luke 4.42-44*)

³⁵Very early the next morning, long before daylight, Jesus got up and left the house. He went out of town to a lonely place, where he prayed. ³⁶But Simon and his companions went out searching for him; ³⁷when they found him they said, "Everyone is looking for you."

³⁸But Jesus answered, "We must go on to the other villages around here. I have to preach in them also, because that is why I came."

they obey him." News about 28
him spread quickly over the
whole region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many

As soon as they left the 29
synagogue, they went with
James and John to the home
of Simon and Andrew. Sim-
on's mother-in-law was in 30
bed with a fever, and they
told Jesus about her. So he
went to her, took her hand 31
and helped her up. The
fever left her and she began
to wait on them.

That evening after sunset 32
the people brought to Jesus
all the sick and demon-
possessed. The whole town 33
gathered at the door, and 34
Jesus healed many who had
various diseases. He also
drove out many demons, but
he would not let the demons
speak because they knew
who he was.

Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

Very early in the morn- 35
ing, while it was still dark,
Jesus got up, left the house
and went off to a solitary
place, where he prayed. Sim-
on and his companions 36
went to look for him, and 37
when they found him, they
exclaimed: "Everyone is
looking for you!"

Jesus replied, "Let's go 38
somewhere else—to the
nearby villages—so I can
preach there also. That is

28-34. **And so the news about Jesus spread quickly.** For the fame of Jesus, see note on *Matt. 4:25*. For the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, see note on *Matt. 8:14-15*. Verse 34. See note on *Matt. 8:17*.

35. **Very early the next morning.** Jesus made it a habit to take time from his busy schedule to pray.

36. **But Simon.** Simon Peter, also called Cephas.

38. **We must go on.** Jesus was making a tour, and could not stay too long in any one place.

³⁹So he traveled all over Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and driving out demons.

Jesus Makes a Leper Clean

(Also *Matt. 8.1-4; Luke 5.12-16*)

⁴⁰A leper came to Jesus, knelt down, and begged him for help. "If you want to," he said, "you can make me clean."

⁴¹Jesus was filled with pity, and reached out and touched him. "I do want to," he answered. "Be clean!" ⁴²At once the leprosy left the man and he was clean. ⁴³Then Jesus spoke harshly with him and sent him away at once. ⁴⁴"Listen," he said, "don't tell this to anyone. But go straight to the priest and let him examine you; then offer the sacrifice that Moses ordered, to prove to everyone that you are now clean."

⁴⁵But the man went away and began to spread the news everywhere. Indeed, he talked so much that Jesus could not go into a town publicly. Instead, he stayed out in lonely places, and people came to him from everywhere.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

(Also *Matt. 9.1-8; Luke 5.17-26*)

2 A few days later Jesus came back to Capernaum, and the news spread that he was at home. ²So many people came together that there wasn't any room left, not even out in

39. **So he traveled all over Galilee.** Josephus, the Jewish Historian, says that at that time Galilee had 240 towns and villages, and was densely populated.

40. **A leper came to Jesus.** See notes on *Matt. 8:2-4*. This miracle took place after the Sermon on the Mount. Leprosy still exists in our own United States.

44. **But go straight to the priest.** At Jerusalem, the religious center. **Then offer the sacrifice that Moses ordered.** See note on *Matt. 8:4*.

45. **And people came to him from everywhere.** Both to hear his teaching, and to be healed.

1. **Came back to Capernaum.** After his first teaching tour through Galilee.

2-12. **So many people came together.** For the healing of this paralyzed man, see notes on *Matt. 9:2-8*. Luke tells us that there were Pharisees and teachers of the Law sitting there, who had come from every town in Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem. They came to investigate this Jesus. The whole incident teaches us: (1) Christ had God's authorization. He could declare he forgave sins *without speaking against God*. (2) The difference between Christ and his apostles—none of whom claimed to forgive

why I have come." So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

A Man With Leprosy

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

2 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door,

front of the door. Jesus was preaching the message to them, ³when a paralyzed man, carried by four men, was brought to him. ⁴Because of the crowd, however, they could not get the man to Jesus. So they made a hole in the roof right above the place where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they let the man down, lying on his mat. ⁵Jesus saw how much faith they had, and said to the paralyzed man, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶Some teachers of the Law who were sitting there thought to themselves, "How does he dare talk against God like this? No man can forgive sins; only God can!"

⁸At once Jesus knew their secret thoughts, so he said to them, "Why do you think such things? ⁹Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, pick up your mat, and walk'? ¹⁰I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, ¹¹"I tell you, get up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

¹²While they all watched, the man got up, picked up his mat, and hurried away. They were all completely amazed and praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Jesus Calls Levi

(Also Matt. 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32)

¹³Jesus went back again to the shore of Lake Galilee. A crowd came to him and he started teaching them.

¹⁴As he walked along he saw a tax collector, Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Levi got up and followed him.

and he preached to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and having dug through, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" He said to the paralytic, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

The Calling of Matthew

Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

sins (compare *Acts 8:22-24*). (3) Those who claim to forgive sin, would have the ability to instantly heal the body of the effects of sin.

14. A tax collector, Levi. Soon to be an apostle. For the call of Matthew and Matthew's feast, see notes on *Matt. 9:9-17*. Compare *Luke 5:27-39*.

¹⁵Later on Jesus was having a meal in Levi's house. A large number of tax collectors and outcasts was following Jesus, and many of them joined him and his disciples at the table. ¹⁶Some teachers of the Law, who were Pharisees, saw that Jesus was eating with these outcasts and tax collectors; so they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with such people?"

¹⁷Jesus heard them and answered, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. I have not come to call the respectable people, but the outcasts."

The Question about Fasting

(Also *Matt. 9.14-17; Luke 5.33-39*)

¹⁸On one occasion the followers of John the Baptist and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came to Jesus and asked him, "Why is it that the disciples of John the Baptist and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but yours do not?"

¹⁹Jesus answered, "Do you expect the guests at a wedding party to go without food? Of course not! As long as the bridegroom is with them they will not do that. ²⁰But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; when that day comes then they will go without food.

²¹"No one uses a piece of new cloth to patch up an old coat. If he does, the new patch will tear off some of the old cloth, making an even bigger hole. ²²Nor does anyone pour new wine into used wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins will be ruined. No! Fresh skins for new wine!"

While Jesus was having ¹⁵dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the "sinners" and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

On hearing this, Jesus said ¹⁷to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

Now John's disciples and ¹⁸the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

Jesus answered, "How ¹⁹can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken ²⁰from them, and on that day they will fast.

"No one sews a patch of ²¹unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine ²²into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins."

15. Was having a meal. Matthew has gathered a large number of his friends and associates for this feast. **Outcasts.** People who had been expelled from the synagogue.

18. Fast . . . But yours do not. See notes on *Matt. 9:14-15*.

21. No one uses a piece of new cloth. Jesus was not attempting to "patch up" Judaism. See notes on *Matt. 9:16-17*.

The Question about the Sabbath

(Also *Matt. 12.1—8; Luke 6.1—5*)

²³Jesus was walking through some wheat fields on a Sabbath day. As his disciples walked along with him, they began to pick the heads of wheat.

²⁴So the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Look, it is against our Law for your disciples to do this on the Sabbath!"

²⁵Jesus answered, "Have you never read what David did that time when he needed something to eat? He and his men were hungry, ²⁶so he went into the house of God and ate the bread offered to God. This happened when Abiathar was the High Priest. According to our Law only the priests may eat this bread—but David ate it, and even gave it to his men."

²⁷And Jesus concluded, "The Sabbath was made for the good of man; man was not made for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The Man with a Crippled Hand

(Also *Matt. 12.9-14; Luke 6.6-11*)

3 Then Jesus went back to the synagogue, where there was a man who had a crippled

Lord of the Sabbath

One Sabbath Jesus was ²³ going through the grain-fields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, ²⁴ "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

He answered, "Have you ²⁵ never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need?"

In the time of Abiathar ²⁶ the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is only lawful for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."

Then he said to them, ²⁷ "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is ²⁸ Lord even of the Sabbath."

3 Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled

23. **Jesus was walking through some wheat fields.** See notes on *Matt. 12:1-8*. Compare *Luke 6:1-11*.

26. **When Abiathar was the High Priest.** *1 Sam. 21:1-9*. [This passage speaks of Ahimelech as high priest. Abiathar was the son. But the "Church Fathers" said that *both* father and son had *both* names [Abiathar Ahimelech] (compare *1 Sam. 22:20; 2 Sam. 8:17; 1 Chron. 18:16*).

27. **For the good of man.** It was not just an arbitrary law, as the Pharisees had made it. It was designed for the good of the people. It was symbolic to the Jewish people (*Deut. 5:15*). There is no mention of "Sabbath breaking" in the catalog of sins in the New Testament.

28. **Is Lord even of the Sabbath.** This declares the Divine nature of Jesus. Only God is Lord of his own Law. [Jesus is the Eternal Logos (*John 1:1*).] Since Jesus is the Lord, he has the right to do with the Sabbath as he pleases. The "Christian Sabbath" comes in the Eternal World (*Heb. 4:1*). Sunday was named the "Lord's Day" by the early Christians, because Jesus rose from death on Sunday.

1. **Then Jesus went back to the synagogue.** Of Capernaum. [More complete notes are given on *Matt. 12:9-14*.]

hand. ²Some people were there who wanted to accuse Jesus of doing wrong; so they watched him very closely, to see whether he would cure him on the Sabbath. ³Jesus said to the man with the crippled hand, "Come up here to the front." ⁴Then he asked the people, "What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help, or to harm? To save a man's life, or to destroy it?"

But they did not say a thing. ⁵Jesus was angry as he looked around at them, but at the same time he felt sorry for them, because they were so stubborn and wrong. Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out and it became well again. ⁶So the Pharisees left the synagogue and met at once with some members of Herod's party; and they made plans against Jesus to kill him.

A Crowd by the Lake

⁷Jesus and his disciples went away to Lake Galilee and a large crowd followed him. They came from Galilee, from Judea, ⁸from Jerusalem, from the territory of Idumea, from territory on the other side of the Jordan, and from the neighborhood of the cities of Tyre and Sidon. This large crowd came to Jesus because they heard

hand was there. Some of ² them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the shriveled ³ hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

Then Jesus asked them, ⁴ "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

He looked around at them ⁵ in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees ⁶ went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Crowds Follow Jesus

Jesus withdrew with his ⁷ disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. When they heard ⁸ all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon.

2. So they watched him very closely. The same critics as *Chapter 2*. They thought he should not heal on the Sabbath day.

3. Come up here to the front. Jesus knew the thoughts of his critics. He calls this man to the front where all can see what he is about to do.

4. What does our Law allow us to do? He does not ask what "Tradition" allows. His words imply that he wants to "save life," while the critics want to "destroy" it.

5. Jesus was angry. "Righteous indignation." Anger is not sin, but can lead to it (*Eph. 4:26*). Because they were so stubborn and wrong. Their attitude showed this to be true.

6. Pharisees. See note on *Matt. 3:7*. Herod's Party. A group of Jews who wanted one of Herod's descendants to be king over them, rather than having a Roman governor. They made plans. Jesus had "kicked" their Tradition. They were already the enemies of Jesus, and they look at every possible way to have him killed.

7. Jesus and his disciples went away. [More complete notes are given on *Matt. 12:15-21* about his popularity at this time.]

8. Idumea. Edom. Southeast of the Jordan and south of the Dead Sea, a very rocky mountainous area between Palestine and Egypt. Esau's descendants lived here. Herod the Great was an Idumean on his father's side. Tyre and Sidon. See note on *Matt. 11:21*.

of the things he was doing. ⁹The crowd was so large that Jesus told his disciples to get a boat ready for him, so the people would not crush him. ¹⁰He had healed many people, and all the sick kept pushing their way to him in order to touch him. ¹¹And whenever the people who had evil spirits in them saw him they would fall down before him and scream, "You are the Son of God!"

¹²Jesus gave a stern command to the evil spirits not to tell who he was.

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles

(Also *Matt. 10.1-4; Luke 6.12-16*)

¹³Then Jesus went up a hill and called to himself the men he wanted. They came to him ¹⁴and he chose twelve, whom he named apostles. "I have chosen you to be with me," he told them; "I will also send you out to preach, ¹⁵and you will have authority to drive out demons."

¹⁶These are the twelve he chose: Simon (Jesus gave him the name Peter); ¹⁷James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee (Jesus gave them the name Boanerges, which means "Men of Thunder"); ¹⁸Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Patriot, ¹⁹and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

Because of the crowd he told ⁹ his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. For he had healed ¹⁰ many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. Whenever the ¹¹ evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." But he gave them ¹² strict orders not to tell who he was.

The Appointing of the Twelve Apostles

Jesus went up into the ¹³ hills and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve— ¹⁴ designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to ¹⁵ have authority to drive out demons. These are the ¹⁶ twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, which means ¹⁷ Sons of Thunder); Andrew, ¹⁸ Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, ¹⁹ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

11. **Evil spirits in them.** See note on *Matt. 4:24*.

13. **Then Jesus went up a hill.** Be sure to read Matthew and Luke on this. This is their formal assignment. See notes on *Matt. 10:1-4*. [Matthew gives it out of sequence. This took place before the Sermon on the Mount (*Luke 6:13*).]

14. **I have chosen you to be with me.** They are to be his "inner circle." **I will also send you.** "Apostle" means "one sent out as a messenger."

16. **(Jesus gave him the name Peter).** John 1:42 tells about this.

17. **Boanerges.** We are not told why Jesus called them this. It may have been their quick temper (*Luke 9:54*), or their forceful preaching.

Jesus and Beelzebul

(Also Matt 12.22-32; Luke 11.14-23; 12.10)

²⁰Then Jesus went home. Again such a large crowd gathered that Jesus and his disciples had no time to eat. ²¹When his family heard about this they set out to get him, because people were saying, "He's gone mad!"

²²Some teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem were saying, "He has Beelzebul in him!"

Others said, "It is the chief of the demons who gives him the power to drive them out."

²³So Jesus called the people to him and told them some parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? ²⁴If a country divides itself into groups that fight each other, that country will fall apart. ²⁵If a family divides itself into groups that fight each other, that family will fall apart. ²⁶So if Satan's kingdom divides into groups, it cannot last, but will fall apart and come to an end.

²⁷"No one can break into a strong man's house and take away his belongings unless he ties up the strong man first; then he can plunder his house.

²⁸"Remember this! Men can be forgiven all their sins and all the evil things they may say. ²⁹But whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, because he has committed an eternal sin." ³⁰(Jesus said this because some had said, "He has an evil spirit in him.")

Jesus and Beelzebul

Then Jesus entered a ²⁰ house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family ²¹ heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

And the teachers of the ²² law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."

So Jesus called them and ²³ spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a ²⁴ house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes ²⁵ himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can ²⁶ enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can ²⁷ rob his house. I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever ²⁸ blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal ²⁹ sin."

He said this because they ³⁰ were saying, "He has an evil spirit."

20. Then Jesus went home. Back to the house in Capernaum where they were staying.

21. When his family heard about this. Since the brothers of Jesus did not believe in him at this time (John 7:5), they may have thought he had gone insane with an unhealthy excitement, when they hear of the crowds of people and all that was happening. (See verse 31.)

22. Some teachers of the Law . . . were saying. They were saying he used the Devil's power. For notes on this, and the sin against the Holy Spirit, see notes on Matt. 12:22-37. From Jerusalem. These teachers of the Law were part of the group of Jewish leaders who would finally send Jesus to his death.

30. Some had said, "He has an evil spirit in him." They were speaking against the Holy Spirit, saying it was an evil spirit who gave Christ power to do miracles. See notes on Matt. 12:31-32.

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

(Also Matt. 12.46-50; Luke 8.19-21)

³¹Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside the house and sent in a message, asking for him. ³²A crowd was sitting around Jesus, and they told him, "Look, your mother and brothers are outside, and they want you." ³³Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" ³⁴He looked over the people sitting around him and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does what God wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother."

The Parable of the Sower

(Also Matt. 13.1-9; Luke 8.4-8)

4 Again Jesus began to teach by Lake Galilee. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it. The boat was out in the water, while the crowd stood on the shore, at the water's edge. ²He used parables to teach them many things, and in his teaching said to them,

³"Listen! There was a man who went out to sow. ⁴As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. ⁶Then when the sun came up it burned the young plants, and because the roots had not grown deep enough the plants soon dried up. ⁷Some of the seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants,

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

"Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked.

Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

The Parable of the Sower

4 On another occasion Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain."

31. Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. These "brothers" were the sons of Mary, and "half-brothers" to Jesus. See notes on Matt. 13:55.

35. Whoever does what God wants. See notes on Matt. 12:48-49.

1. Again Jesus began to teach. This is the first time recorded that he taught in parables. See notes on this parable in Matt. 13:1-23. Matthew tells other parables that Jesus used on this day.

and they didn't bear grain. ⁸But some seeds fell in good soil, and the plants sprouted, grew, and bore grain: some had thirty grains, others sixty, and others one hundred."

⁹And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with!"

The Purpose of the Parables

(Also *Matt. 13.10-17; Luke 8.9-10*)

¹⁰When Jesus was alone, some of those who had heard him came to him with the twelve disciples and asked him to explain the parables.

¹¹"You have been given the secret of the Kingdom of God," Jesus answered. "But the others, who are on the outside, hear all things by means of parables, ¹²so that,

'They may look and look, yet not see, they may listen and listen, yet not understand;

for if they did, they would turn to God and he would forgive them.' "

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

(Also *Matt. 13.18-23; Luke 8.11-15*)

¹³Then Jesus asked them, "Don't you understand this parable? How, then will you ever understand any parable? ¹⁴The sower sows God's message. ¹⁵Sometimes the message falls along the path; these people hear it, but as soon as they hear it Satan comes and takes away the message sown in them. ¹⁶Other people are like the seeds that fall on rocky ground. As soon as they hear the message they receive it gladly. ¹⁷But it does not sink deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. ¹⁸Other people are like the seeds sown among the thorns.

Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times."

Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that,

'They may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!'

Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear

12. Yet not see. Matthew gives more detail. See notes on *Matt. 13:13-15*.

These are the ones who hear the message, ¹⁹but the worries about this life, the love for riches, and all other kinds of desires crowd in and choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. ²⁰But other people are like the seeds sown in good soil. They hear the message, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred."

A Lamp under a Bowl

(Also Luke 8:16-18)

²¹Jesus continued, "Does anyone ever bring in a lamp and put it under a bowl or under the bed? Doesn't he put it on the lampstand? ²²Whatever is hidden away will be brought out into the open, and whatever is covered up will be uncovered. ²³Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with!"

²⁴He also said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear! The same rules you use to judge others will be used by God to judge you—but with even greater severity. ²⁵The man who has something will be given more; the man who has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he has."

The Parable of the Growing Seed

²⁶Jesus went on to say, "The Kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed in his field. ²⁷He sleeps at night, is up and about during the day, and all the while the seeds are sprouting and growing. Yet he does not know how it happens.

the word; but the worries of 19 this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed 20 sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop, thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times what was sown."

A Lamp on a Stand

He said to them, "Do you 21 bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don't you put it on its stand?"

For whatever is hidden is 22 meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. If anyone has ears 23 to hear, let him hear."

"Consider carefully what 24 you hear," he continued. "With the measure you use it will be measured to you—and even more. Whoever 25 has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him."

The Parable of the Growing Seed

He also said, "This is 26 what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, 27 whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know

21. **And put it under a bowl?** Jewish lamps were a cup filled with oil, with a wick floating in it. The very purpose of a lamp would make it foolish to cover it with a bowl or hide it under the bed. The same thing is true of Truth. [Jesus probably taught these same things many times.]

24. **Pay attention to what you hear!** Luke says: "Be careful, then, how you listen." (Luke 8:18). We should listen and pay attention when the Lord speaks.

26. **The Kingdom of God is like.** Only Mark gives this parable. But the same lesson is taught by *Isa. 55:10-11*; *James 5:7-8*; *1 Pet. 1:23-25*. Results do not come *instantly* either in nature or in spiritual things. We are to "plant the seed," and "water it," but it is God who makes it grow (*1 Cor. 3:6-9*). Scatters seed. The seed is the Word of God.

27. **He sleeps at night.** He continues his regular activities, and all the while, the seeds are sprouting and growing. [He plants, but he cannot make it grow.]

²⁸The soil itself makes the plants grow and bear fruit: first the tender stalk appears, then the head, and finally the head full of grain. ²⁹When the grain is ripe the man starts working with his sickle, because harvest time has come."

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Also *Matt. 13.31-32,34; Luke 13.18-19*)

³⁰"What shall we say the Kingdom of God is like?" asked Jesus. "What parable shall we use to explain it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed, the smallest seed in the world. A man takes it and plants it in the ground; ³²after a while it grows up and becomes the biggest of all plants. It puts out such large branches that the birds come and make their nests in its shade."

³³Jesus preached his message to the people, using many other parables like these; he told them as much as they could understand. ³⁴He would not speak to them without using parables; but when he was alone with his disciples he would explain everything to them.

Jesus Calms a Storm

(Also *Matt. 8.23-27; Luke 8.22-25*)

³⁵On the evening of that same day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." ³⁶So they left the crowd; the disciples got into the boat that Jesus was already in, and took him with them. Other boats were there

how. All by itself the soil 28 produces grain— first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, 29 he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Again he said, "What 30 shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet 32 when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."

With many similar para- 33 bles Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say 34 anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Jesus Calms the Storm

That day when evening 35 came, he said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side." Leaving the 36 crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other

28. **First the tender stalk appears.** Growth is a gradual process. Things both good and bad develop over a period of time. This parable is about the spreading of Christ's Kingdom. The Truth, planted, grows in good soil, comes to maturity, and is harvested. We can see growth in the results, even though we may not know the *how*.

29. **When the grain is ripe.** Not until then does harvest begin. When *faith* is ripe [produces repentance, baptism] the believer is gathered into Christ's church (See *Titus 3:5; I Cor. 12:13*.)

31. **It is like a mustard seed.** See notes on *Matt. 13:31-32*.

34. **He would explain everything to them.** Compare notes on *Matt. 13:36-43*.

35. **On the evening of that same day.** The day when he taught these parables. **To the other side of the lake.** Across Lake Galilee.

too. ³⁷A very strong wind blew up and the waves began to spill over into the boat, so that it was about to fill with water. ³⁸Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The disciples woke him up and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?"

³⁹Jesus got up and commanded the wind. "Be quiet!" and said to the waves, "Be still!" The wind died down, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Why are you frightened? Are you still without faith?"

⁴¹But they were terribly afraid, and began to say to each other, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Jesus Heals a Man with Evil Spirits

(Also *Matt 8.28-34; Luke 8.26-39*)

5 They arrived on the other side of Lake Galilee, at the territory of the Gerasenes. ²As soon as Jesus got out of the boat he was met by a man who came out of the burial caves. ³This man had an evil spirit in him and lived among the graves. Nobody could keep him tied with chains any more; "many times his feet and hands had been tied, but every time he broke the chains, and smashed the irons on his feet. He

boats with him. A furious ³⁷ squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, ³⁸ sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

He got up, rebuked the ³⁹ wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

He said to his disciples, ⁴⁰ "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"

They were terrified and ⁴¹ asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

The Healing of a Demon-possessed Man

5 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got ² out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This ³ man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained ⁴ hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to

37. A very strong wind blew up. See notes on *Matt. 8:23-27*. Lake Galilee is 600 feet below sea level, and has a tropical climate. Just to the north are the mountains of Lebanon, and the "updraft" from the heated lake brings cold air from these mountains, creating severe storms.

41. But they were terribly afraid. These are experienced sailors, who know something of the power of the storm. Who and what is this man who can control the forces of nature and silence them with a word! They have not yet learned that Jesus is the Lord and the Creator of nature (*Col. 1:16*).

1. They arrived on the other side. After the storm. **The territory of the Gerasenes.** Also known as the territory of the Gadarenes. Gerasa was the village where Jesus landed after the storm. Gadara, an important city, was seven or eight miles to the south. The whole area took its name from these cities.

2. He was met by a man. The burial caves are still seen in the cliff near Gersa (the more recent name for Gerasa). For notes on demons, see *Matt. 4:24*.

3. Lived among the graves. The graves were caves in the rock, either natural or man-made. This man was living in them. **Nobody could keep him tied.** His strength was superhuman during a seizure.

was too strong for anyone to stop him. ⁵Day and night he wandered among the graves and through the hills, screaming and cutting himself with stones.

⁶He was some distance away when he saw Jesus; so he ran, fell on his knees before him, and screamed in a loud voice, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? For God's sake, I beg you, don't punish me!" ⁸(He said this because Jesus was saying to him, "Evil spirit, come out of this man!")

⁹So Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

The man answered, "My name is 'Mob'—there are so many of us!" ¹⁰And he kept begging Jesus not to send the evil spirits out of that territory.

¹¹A large herd of pigs was near by, feeding on the hillside. ¹²The spirits begged Jesus, "Send us to the pigs, and let us go into them." ¹³So he let them. The evil spirits went out of the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd—about two thousand pigs in all—rushed down the side of the cliff into the lake and were drowned.

¹⁴The men who had been taking care of the pigs ran away and spread the news in the town and among the farms. The people went out to see what had happened. ¹⁵They came to Jesus and saw the man who used to have the mob of demons in him. He was sitting there, clothed and in his right mind; and they were all afraid. ¹⁶Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the man with the demons, and about the pigs. ¹⁷So they began to ask Jesus to leave their territory.

subdue him. Night and day ⁵ among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He ⁷ shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" For Jesus was saying to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!"

Then Jesus asked him, ⁹ "What is your name?"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. ¹⁰

A large herd of pigs was ¹¹ feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged ¹² Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." He gave them per- ¹³ mission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

Those tending the pigs ¹⁴ ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, ¹⁵ they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told ¹⁶ the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. Then the ¹⁷

10. **And he kept begging Jesus.** The demons expected to be sent back to the abyss, and they knew Jesus could send them there.

11. **A large herd of pigs.** At Gerasa the hillside slopes down to the lake. The religious law did not allow pigs to be kept, since they were "unclean."

13. **About two thousand pigs in all.** Perhaps Jesus allowed this to happen to show the reality of the demons. This implies there were 2,000 evil spirits in this man.

17. **So they began to ask Jesus to leave.** Christ does not stay where he is not wanted. He did not visit the territory of the Gerasenes again.

¹⁸As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had had the demons begged him, "Let me go with you!"

¹⁹But Jesus would not let him. Instead he told him, "Go back home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how kind he has been to you."

²⁰So the man left and went all through the Ten Towns telling what Jesus had done for him; and all who heard it were filled with wonder.

Jairus' Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus' Cloak

(Also *Matt. 9.18-26; Luke 8.40-56*)

²¹Jesus went back across to the other side of the lake. There at the lakeside a large crowd gathered around him. ²²Jairus, an official of the local synagogue, came up, and when he saw Jesus he threw himself down at his feet ²³and begged him with all his might, "My little daughter is very sick. Please come and place your hands on her, so that she will get well and live!"

²⁴Then Jesus started off with him. So many people were going along with him that they were crowding him from every side.

²⁵There was a woman who had suffered terribly from severe bleeding for twelve years, ²⁶even though she had been treated by many doctors. She had spent all her money, but instead

people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him. While he was by the lake, one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better

20. **And went all through the Ten Towns.** The first one to preach Christ in that area, could testify to his power.

21. **Jesus went back across.** Back to Capernaum.

22. **An official of the local synagogue.** One of the "synagogue elders," who convened the congregation, preserved order, and who invited the readers and speakers. See note on *Matt. 9:18*.

23. **Very sick.** Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give this. She was twelve years old; she was dying as he started to go to Jesus; she died while he was speaking (*verse 35*).

25. **There was a woman.** See notes on *Matt. 9:20-22*. This miracle took place as they were going to the house of Jairus.

26. **By many doctors.** This woman had spent all her money trying to get well, but without success. Probably the "doctors" would depend on "magical charms" and "incantations" to try to produce a cure.

of getting better she got worse all the time. ²⁷She had heard about Jesus, so she came in the crowd behind him. ²⁸"If I touch just his clothes," she said to herself, "I shall get well."

²⁹She touched his cloak and her bleeding stopped at once; and she had the feeling inside herself that she was cured of her trouble. ³⁰At once Jesus knew that power had gone out of him. So he turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"

³¹His disciples answered, "You see how the people are crowding you; why do you ask who touched you?"

³²But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³The woman realized what had happened to her; so she came, trembling with fear, fell at his feet, and told him the whole truth.

³⁴Jesus said to her, "My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed from your trouble."

³⁵While Jesus was saying this, some messengers came from Jairus' house and told him, "Your daughter has died. Why should you bother the Teacher any longer?"

³⁶Jesus paid no attention to what they said, but told him, "Don't be afraid, only believe."

³⁷Then he did not let anyone else go on with him except Peter and James and his brother John.

³⁸They arrived at the official's house, where Jesus saw the confusion and heard all the loud crying and wailing. ³⁹He went in and said to them, "Why all this confusion? Why are you crying? The child is not dead—she is only sleeping!"

she grew worse. When she ²⁷ heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her ²⁹ bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

At once Jesus realized ³⁰ that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

"You see the people ³¹ crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

But Jesus kept looking a- ³² round to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He ³⁴ said to her "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace, and be freed from your suffering."

While Jesus was still ³⁵ speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?"

Ignoring what they said, ³⁶ Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

He did not let anyone fol- ³⁷ low him except Peter, James and John, the brother of James. When they came to ³⁸ the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and

30. **At once Jesus knew.** Christ was aware of the woman and deliberately healed her as she touched him. What he says is to bring out the lesson. His question asks for her declaration of faith. This woman's faith caused her to act, and Jesus healed her.

35. **Your daughter has died.** But Jesus had power over death!

37. **Did not let anyone else.** Only Peter, James and John go with him into the house. These are the same ones who saw Jesus transfigured. The mourners were outside. [Matthew does not mention this.].

38. **Where Jesus saw the confusion.** The professional musicians and mourners were screaming and crying (see Matt. 9:23).

⁴⁰They started making fun of him, so he put them all out, took the child's father and mother, and his three disciples, and went into the room where the child was lying. ⁴¹He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha, koum,*" which means, "Little girl! Get up, I tell you!"

⁴²She got up at once and started walking around. (She was twelve years old.) When this happened they were completely amazed! ⁴³But Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone, and said, "Give her something to eat."

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

(Also *Matt. 13.53-58; Luke 4.16-30*)

6 Jesus left that place and went back to his home town, followed by his disciples. ²On the Sabbath day he began to teach in the synagogue. Many people were there, and when they heard him they were all amazed. "Where did he get all this?" they asked. "What wisdom is this that has been given him? How does he perform miracles? ³Isn't he the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters living here?" And so they rejected him.

wailing loudly. He went in ³⁹ and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they ⁴⁰ laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the ⁴¹ hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum!*" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). She stood ⁴² right up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict ⁴³ orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

A Prophet Without Honor

6 Jesus left there and went to his home town, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he ² began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

"Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he ³ even does miracles! Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joses, Judas and

41. *Talitha, koum.* He said this in the dialect of the people. He orders her to "get up."
 42. **She got up at once.** When Jesus healed, it was complete. She is awakened from death, and her illness is gone!
 43. **Not to tell anyone.** Jesus had a work to do before the climax of the Cross. His fame must not spread too quickly. Things must be prepared. In addition to his own raising from death, Jesus rescued three from the grasp of death. Here, it is a girl who has just died. The widow's son at Nain (*Luke 7:11-15*) had been dead at least twenty-four hours. Lazarus (*John 11*) had been dead more than four days. Note also: the girl was raised privately; the widow's son, publicly; and Lazarus, in the presence of bitter enemies.
 1. **Jesus left that place.** Left Capernaum. **Went back to his home town.** Back to Nazareth.
 2. **On the Sabbath day.** See notes on *Matt. 13:53-58*. This was the second time he was rejected here (*Luke 4:19-29*).
 3. **Isn't he the carpenter?** This shows that Jesus had worked at the same "trade" as Joseph (his *legal* father). It was the custom for every Jew to be taught a "trade." [Brothers and sisters, see note on *John 2:12*.]

⁴Jesus said to them, "A prophet is respected everywhere except in his home town, and by his relatives and his family."

⁵He was not able to perform any miracles there, except that he placed his hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶He was greatly surprised, because they did not have faith.

Jesus Sends out the Twelve Disciples

(Also *Matt. 10. 5-15; Luke 9. 1-6*)

Then Jesus went to the villages around there, teaching the people. ⁷He called the twelve disciples together and sent them out two by two. He gave them authority over the evil spirits ⁸and ordered them, "Don't take anything with you on the trip except a walking stick; no bread, no beggar's bag, no money in your pockets. ⁹Wear sandals, but don't wear an extra shirt." ¹⁰He also told them, "Wherever you are welcomed, stay in the same house until you leave that town. ¹¹If you come to a place where people do not welcome you or will not listen to you, leave it and shake the dust off your feet. This will be a warning to them!"

¹²So they went out and preached that people should turn away from their sins. ¹³They drove out many demons, and rubbed oil on many sick people and healed them.

Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

Jesus said to them, "Only ⁴in his home town, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor." He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith. ⁶

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits. ⁷

These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra tunic. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them." ⁸

They went out and ¹²preached that people should repent. They drove out many ¹³demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

5. He was not able. Matthew says they did not have faith. Jesus did not lack the ability to perform miracles, but it would be useless to do so, because these people had already decided not to believe.

6. He was greatly surprised. See note on *Matt. 8:10*. To the villages around there. He spent no more time with them, but took his ministry into new areas.

7. He called the twelve disciples together. See *Matt. 10* for a full account of this (and notes there).

8. Except a walking stick. Each one would already have a walking stick. The emphasis is on speed, and the fact that the people should take care of them.

9. Wear sandals. This was symbolic (*also verse 8*). They were to dress like "poor people."

13. And rubbed oil on many sick people. Oil was symbolic of God's grace. Using it pointed to God as the Healer. [Also called "anointing."]

The Death of John the Baptist

(Also Matt. 14.1-12; Luke 9.7-9)

¹⁴Now King Herod heard about all this, because Jesus' reputation had spread everywhere. Some people were saying, "John the Baptist has come back to life! That is why these powers are at work in him."

¹⁵Others, however, said, "He is Elijah."

Others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago."

¹⁶When Herod heard it he said, "He is John the Baptist! I had his head cut off, but he has come back to life!" ¹⁷Herod himself had ordered John's arrest, and had him tied up and put in prison. Herod did this because of Herodias, whom he had married, even though she was the wife of his brother Philip. ¹⁸John the Baptist kept telling Herod, "It isn't right for you to marry your brother's wife!"

¹⁹So Herodias held a grudge against John and wanted to kill him, but she could not because of Herod. ²⁰Herod was afraid of John because he knew that John was a good and holy man, and so he kept him safe. He liked to listen to him, even though he became greatly disturbed every time he heard him.

²¹Finally Herodias got her chance. It was on Herod's birthday, when he gave a feast for all the top government officials, the military chiefs, and the leading citizens of Galilee. ²²The daughter of Herodias came in and danced, and pleased Herod and his guests. So the king said to the girl, "What would you like to have? I will give you

John the Baptist Beheaded

King Herod heard about 14 this, for Jesus' name had become well-known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

Other said, "He is 15 Elijah."

And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago."

But when Herod heard 16 this, he said, "John, the man I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!"

For Herod himself had 17 given orders to have John arrested and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. For John had been 18 saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." So Herodias 19 nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, because 20 Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

Finally the opportune 21 time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. When the 22 daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you."

14. Now King Herod heard about all this. See notes on Matt. 14:1-12 about Herod's reaction and John the Baptist's death.

17. Because of Herodias. This immoral woman was responsible for John being in prison.

19. Wanted to kill him. Because John had exposed her sin. But she did not have the authority to do it.

20. Herod was afraid of John. Both because he knew John to be a holy man, and also because of public opinion.

21. Finally Herodias got her chance. This implies she had been constantly thinking about it and planning his death.

anything you want." ²³With many vows he said to her, "I promise that I will give you anything you ask for, even as much as half my kingdom!"

²⁴So the girl went out and asked her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.

²⁵The girl hurried back at once to the king and demanded, "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a plate!"

²⁶This made the king very sad; but he could not refuse her, because of the vows he had made in front of all his guests. ²⁷So he sent off a guard at once with orders to bring John's head. The guard left, went to the prison, and cut John's head off; ²⁸then he brought it on a plate and gave it to the girl, who gave it to her mother. ²⁹When John's disciples heard about this, they came and got his body and laid it in a grave.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also *Matt. 14.13-21; Luke 9.10-17; John 6.1-14*)

³⁰The apostles returned and met with Jesus, and told him all they had done and taught.

³¹There were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his disciples didn't even have time to eat. So he said to them, "Let us go off by ourselves to some place where we will be alone and you can rest a while." ³²So they started out in the boat by themselves to a lonely place.

³³Many people, however, saw them leave and knew at once who they were; so they went from all the towns and ran ahead by land and got to the place ahead of Jesus and his disciples.

And he promised her with an ²³ oath, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

She went out and said to ²⁴ her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.

At once the girl hurried in ²⁵ to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

The king was greatly dis- ²⁶ tressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her.

So he immediately sent an ²⁷ executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. On ²⁸ hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb. ²⁹

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

The apostles gathered ³⁰ around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so ³¹ many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

So they went away by ³² themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who ³³ saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there

27. So he sent off a guard. Custom made the captain of the guard the one who did the execution.

31. Let us go off by ourselves. For notes on the feeding of the Five Thousand, see *Matt. 13:13-21*. All four Gospels give this account.

32. To a lonely place. To the small plain of Butaiha just east of where the Jordan flows into the lake of Galilee. No one lived in that area.

³⁴When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw this large crowd, and his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things. ³⁵When it was getting late, his disciples came to him and said, "It is already very late, and this is a lonely place. ³⁶Send the people away, and let them go to the nearby farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

³⁷"You yourselves give them something to eat," Jesus answered.

They asked, "Do you want us to go and buy two hundred dollars' worth of bread and feed them?"

³⁸So Jesus asked them, "How much bread do you have? Go and see."

When they found out they told him, "Five loaves, and two fish also."

³⁹Jesus then told his disciples to make all the people divide into groups and sit down on the green grass. ⁴⁰So the people sat down in rows, in groups of a hundred and groups of fifty. ⁴¹Then Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, and gave thanks to God. He broke the loaves and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴²Everyone ate and had enough. ⁴³Then the disciples took up twelve baskets full of what was left of the bread and of the fish. ⁴⁴The number of men who ate the bread was five thousand.

Jesus Walks on the Water

(Also *Matt. 14.22-33; John 6.15-21*)

⁴⁵At once Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to Bethsaida, on the

ahead of them. When Jesus 34
landed and saw a large
crowd, he had compassion
on them, because they were
like sheep without a shep-
herd. So he began teaching
them many things.

By this time it was late in 35
the day, so his disciples came
to him. "This is a remote
place," they said, "and it's
already very late. Send the 36
people away so they can go
to the surrounding country-
side and villages and buy
themselves something to
eat."

But he answered, "You 37
give them something to eat."

They said to him, "That
would take eight months of a
man's wages! Are we to go
and spend that much on
bread and give it to them to
eat?"

"How many loaves do you 38
have?" he asked. "Go and
see."

When they found out,
they said, "Five—and two
fish."

Then Jesus directed them 39
to have all the people sit
down in groups on the green
grass. So they sat down in 40
groups of hundreds and
fifties. Taking the five loaves 41
and the two fish and looking
up to heaven, he gave thanks
and broke the loaves. Then
he gave them to his disciples
to set before the people. He
also divided the two fish a-
mong them all. They all ate 42
and were satisfied, and the 43
disciples picked up twelve
basketfuls of broken pieces
of bread and fish. The num- 44
ber of the men who had
eaten was five thousand.

Jesus Walks on the Water

Immediately Jesus made 45
his disciples get into the boat
and go on ahead of him to

45. **And go ahead of him to Bethsaida.** For notes on Jesus walking on the water, see *Matt. 14:22-23*. John says they went toward Capernaum. That was their destination, but on the way, they sailed along the coast in the northwest direction. They expected to meet Jesus at Bethsaida, and continue on to Capernaum. The ruins of Bethsaida are found near the place where the Jordan flows into Lake Galilee, close to the scene of the miracle.

other side of the lake, while he sent the crowd away. ⁴⁶After saying good-bye to the disciples, he went away to a hill to pray. ⁴⁷When evening came the boat was in the middle of the lake, while Jesus was alone on land. ⁴⁸He saw that his disciples were having trouble rowing the boat, because the wind was blowing against them; so sometime between three and six o'clock in the morning he came to them, walking on the water. He was going to pass them by. ⁴⁹But they saw him walking on the water. "It's a ghost!" they thought, and screamed. ⁵⁰For when they all saw him they were terrified.

Jesus spoke to them at once, "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!" ⁵¹Then he got into the boat with them, and the wind died down. The disciples were completely amazed, ⁵²because they had not understood what the loaves of bread meant; their minds could not grasp it.

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

(Also Matt. 14.34-36)

⁵³They crossed the lake and came to land at Gennesaret, where they tied up the boat. ⁵⁴As they left the boat, people recognized Jesus at once. ⁵⁵So they ran throughout the whole region and brought the sick lying on their mats to him, wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And everywhere Jesus went, to villages, towns, or farms, people would take their sick to the market places and beg him to let the sick at least touch the edge of his cloak; and all who touched it were made well.

Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After leaving them, he went into the hills to pray. ⁴⁶

When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. He saw the disciples ⁴⁸straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, but when they saw ⁴⁹him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, because they ⁵⁰all saw him and were terrified.

Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Then he climbed into the ⁵¹boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, for they ⁵²had not understood about the loaves; their minds were closed.

When they had crossed ⁵³over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As ⁵⁴soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. They ran throughout ⁵⁵that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And everywhere he went, ⁵⁶into villages, towns or countryside, they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

53. And came to land at Gennesaret. Just south of Capernaum on the shore of Lake Galilee. See notes on Matt. 14:34-36.

The Teaching of the Ancestors

(Also *Matt. 15.1-9*)

7 The Pharisees and some teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus. ²They noticed that some of his disciples were eating their food with unclean hands—that is, they had not washed them in the way the Pharisees said people should.

³For the Pharisees, as well as the rest of the Jews, follow the teaching they received from their ancestors: they do not eat unless they wash their hands in the proper way, nor do they eat anything that comes from the market unless they wash it first. And they follow many other rules which they have received, such as the proper way to wash cups, pots, copper bowls, and beds.

⁵So the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law asked Jesus, “Why is it that your disciples do not follow the teaching handed down by our ancestors, but instead eat with unclean hands?”

⁶Jesus answered them, “How right Isaiah was when he prophesied about you! You are hypocrites, just as he wrote:

Clean and Unclean

7 The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with “unclean” — that is, ceremonially unwashed—hands. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with ‘unclean’ hands?”

He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

1. **The Pharisees and some teachers of the Law.** This was the sharpest confrontation between Jesus and the Jewish leaders to date in his ministry. See notes on *Matt. 15:1-9*. Mark explains the Jewish customs for his readers. **Had come from Jerusalem.** Probably an “official delegation” sent to investigate Jesus.

2. **With unclean hands.** Not dirty, but “unclean.” Tradition required them to wash their hands in a certain way to make them “ritually clean.” Also, they might have touched something, and become “ritually unclean,” so tradition required them to always wash ritually before eating.

3. **They do not eat unless they wash.** The Law did not require this special form of washing, but the Tradition of the ancestors did require it. The Jewish leaders were so strict about this, that Rabbi Akiba, in prison with barely enough water to stay alive, used it for ritual washing.

4. **Unless they wash it first.** “Wash” in this verse comes from the same word as “baptize” [**BAPTISONTAI** in the best manuscripts]. Food from the market, cups, pots, copper bowls and even beds were *immersed* in water to make them ritually pure. Abbott says: “Apparently, in the ritual of the Pharisees, washing by pouring on water sufficed for those who remained at home, but *immersion* of the hands in water was required of those who had gone abroad [outside the house].” The Law did require some washings (such as *Lev. 14:8*), but Tradition had distorted the spirit of the Law. It had become a strict rule that before every meal, not only the hands, but also the dishes, beds (couches), and tables must be ritually washed. [The Jews ate their meals lying on beds (couches).]

5. **Asked Jesus.** He was “kicking” their Tradition by ignoring it. See notes on *Matt. 15:1-20*.

⁶“These people, says God, honor me with their words, but their heart is really far away from me.

⁷It is no use for them to worship me, because they teach man-made commandments as though they were God’s rules!’

⁸“You put aside the commandment of God and obey the teachings of men.”

⁹And Jesus continued, “You have a clever way of rejecting God’s law in order to uphold your own teaching. ¹⁰For Moses commanded, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who says bad things about his father or mother must be put to death.’ ¹¹But you teach that if a person has something he could use to help his father or mother, but says, ‘This is Corban’ (which means, it belongs to God), ¹²he is excused from helping his father or mother. ¹³In this way you disregard the word of God with the teaching you pass on to others. And there are many other things like this that you do.”

The Things That Make a Person Unclean (Also Matt. 15:10-20)

¹⁴Then Jesus called the crowd to him once more and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵There is nothing that goes into a person from the outside which can make him unclean. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that makes him unclean. [¹⁶Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with!]

¹⁷When he left the crowd and went into the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. ¹⁸“You are no more intelligent than the others,” Jesus said to them. “Don’t you understand? Nothing that goes into a person from the

“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules made by men.’

You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”

And he said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban’ (that is, a gift devoted to God), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a man can make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean.’”

After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can

15. Which can make him unclean. Jesus emphasizes that no one becomes religiously unclean from things that are outside of him. See notes on Matt. 15:10-20.

outside can really make him unclean, ¹⁹because it does not go into his heart but into his stomach and then goes on out of the body." (In saying this Jesus declared that all foods are fit to be eaten.)

²⁰And he went on to say, "It is what comes out of a person that makes him unclean. ²¹For from the inside, from a man's heart, come the evil ideas which lead him to do immoral things, to rob, kill, ²²commit adultery, be greedy, and do all sorts of evil things; deceit, indecency, jealousy, slander, pride, and folly—²³all these evil things come from inside a man and make him unclean."

A Woman's Faith

(Also *Matt. 15.21-28*)

²⁴Then Jesus left and went away to the territory near the city of Tyre. He went into a house, and did not want anyone to know he was there; but he could not stay hidden. ²⁵A certain woman, whose daughter had an evil spirit in her, heard about Jesus and came to him at once and fell at his feet. ²⁶The woman was a foreigner, born in Phoenicia of Syria. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷But Jesus answered, "Let us feed the children first; it isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

²⁸"Sir," she answered, "even the dogs under the table eat the children's leftovers!"

²⁹So Jesus said to her, "For such an answer you may go home; the demon has gone out of your daughter!"

³⁰She went back home and found her child lying on the bed; the demon had indeed gone out of her.

make him 'unclean'? For ¹⁹it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")

He went on: "What comes ²⁰out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from ²¹within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All ²³these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'"

The Faith of a Syrian Phoenician Woman

Jesus left that place and ²⁴went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. In fact, as ²⁵soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an evil spirit came and fell at his feet. The woman was a ²⁶Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

"First let the children eat ²⁷all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs."

"Yes, Lord," she replied, ²⁸"but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

Then he told her, "For ²⁹such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter."

She went home and found ³⁰her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

24. To the territory near the city of Tyre. This woman's faith is discussed in the notes on *Matt. 15:21-28*.

Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man

³¹Jesus then left the neighborhood of Tyre and went on through Sidon to Lake Galilee, going by way of the territory of the Ten Towns. ³²Some people brought him a man who was deaf and could hardly speak, and begged Jesus to place his hand on him. ³³So Jesus took him off alone, away from the crowd, put his fingers in the man's ears, spat, and touched the man's tongue. ³⁴Then Jesus looked up to heaven, gave a deep groan, and said to the man, "Ephphatha," which means, "Open up!"

³⁵At once the man's ears were opened, his tongue was set loose, and he began to talk without any trouble. ³⁶Then Jesus ordered them all not to speak of it to anyone; but the more he ordered them, the more they told it. ³⁷And all who heard were completely amazed. "How well he does everything!" they exclaimed. "He even makes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak!"

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

(Also Matt. 15.32-39)

8 Not long afterward, another large crowd came together. When they had nothing left

The Healing of a Deaf and Dumb Man

Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. There some people brought a man to him who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man. 31 32

After he took him aside, Jesus away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!" (which means, "Be opened!"). At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. 33 34 35

Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak." 36 37

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

8 During those days another large crowd gath-

31. **The territory of the Ten Towns.** Named for the ten towns in the area. Only Mark tells about this miracle.

32. **Who was deaf and who could hardly speak.** He probably had not been born deaf, as he was not mute. Nothing is said of a demon, so this man's problem came from disease.

33-34. **Put his fingers in the man's ears.** Is this case unique, or did Jesus work this way at other times? No one can say for sure. Johnson believes Jesus did these things to produce faith in the man. Jesus put his fingers in the deaf ears, and touched the tongue. **Ephphatha.** Jesus uses the dialect of Judea to command the deaf ears to hear!

35. **At once the man's ears were opened.** All traces of the disease vanished immediately!

36. **Not to speak of it.** See note on Matt. 8:4. Jesus did not do his miracles to honor himself.

37. **How well he does everything!** This can be understood in the sense of Gen. 1:31; Col. 1:15-17. They were completely amazed, because no one had ever done what Jesus was doing. **He even makes.** Always since then, Jesus has been at work [through the messianic community] making the spiritually deaf hear, and the spiritually dumb [mute] talk.

1. **Not long afterward.** While Christ was in the territory of the Ten Towns. This is different from the feeding of the Five Thousand (Mark 6:32-44). For notes on the feeding of the Four Thousand, see Matt. 14:13-21. [In Mark 8:19-20 Jesus mentions both incidents.]

to eat, Jesus called the disciples to him and said, ²“I feel sorry for these people, because they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat. ³If I send them home without feeding them they will faint as they go, because some of them have come a long way.”

⁴His disciples asked him, “Where in this desert can anyone find enough food to feed all these people?”

⁵“How much bread do you have?” Jesus asked. “Seven loaves,” they answered.

⁶He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks to God, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the crowd; and the disciples did so. ⁷They also had a few small fish. Jesus gave thanks for these and told the disciples to distribute them too. ⁸Everybody ate and had enough—there were about four thousand people. ⁹Then the disciples took up seven baskets full of pieces left over. Jesus sent the people away, ¹⁰and at once got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

The Pharisees Ask for a Miracle
(Also *Matt. 16.1-4*)

¹¹Some Pharisees came to Jesus and started to argue with him. They wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle to show God’s approval. ¹²Jesus gave a deep groan and said, “Why do the people of this day ask for a miracle? No, I tell you! No such proof will be given this people!”

¹³He left them, got back into the boat, and started across to the other side of the lake.

ered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.”

His disciples answered, “But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?”

“How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked.

“Seven,” they replied.

He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people, and they did so. They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them. The people ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. About four thousand men were present. And having sent them away, he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the region of Dalmanutha.

The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to it.” Then he left them, got back into the boat and crossed to the other side.

10. Went to the district of Dalmanutha. Matthew says “Magadan” [or Magdala]. Neither place now exists, but they are thought to have been near each other on the western shore of Lake Galilee. Some think they are different names for the same place, which was common at that time.

11-13. Some Pharisees came to Jesus. See notes on *Matt. 16:1-4*.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod

(Also Matt. 16. 5-12)

¹⁴The disciples had forgotten to bring any extra bread, and had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵"Look out," Jesus warned them, "and be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod."

¹⁶They started discussing among themselves, "He says this because we don't have any bread."

¹⁷Jesus knew what they were saying, so he asked them, "Why are you discussing about not having any bread? Don't you know or understand yet? Are your minds so dull? ¹⁸You have eyes—can't you see? You have ears—can't you hear? Don't you remember ¹⁹when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand people? How many baskets full of leftover pieces did you take up?"

"Twelve," they answered.

²⁰"And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand people," asked Jesus, "how many baskets full of leftover pieces did you take up?"

"Seven," they answered.

²¹"And you still don't understand?" he asked them.

Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

²²They came to Bethsaida, where some people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged him to

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod

The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. "Be careful," Jesus warned them, "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod."

They discussed this with one another and said, "It is because we have no bread."

Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?"

"Twelve," they replied.

"And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?"

They answered, "Seven."

He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

The Healing of a Blind Man at Bethsaida

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus

14-21. The disciples had forgotten to bring any extra bread. On the lesson which Jesus teaches here, see notes on Matt. 16:5-12. Matthew says "Sadducees" instead of "Herod," Herod was himself a Sadducee, and Sadducees made up the political "Party of Herod."

22. They came to Bethsaida. On the eastern bank of the Jordan, near where it flows into Lake Galilee. Only Mark tells of this miracle. Some people brought a blind man to Jesus. This man had not been born blind, since he had seen both people and trees (verse 24). They brought him either because he could not find the way; or because he did not have the faith to want to come. The friends did have faith.

touch him. ²³Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. After spitting on the man's eyes, Jesus placed his hands on him and asked him, "Can you see anything?"

²⁴The man looked up and said, "Yes, I can see people, but they look like trees walking around."

²⁵Jesus again placed his hands on the man's eyes. This time the man looked hard, his eyesight came back, and he saw everything clearly.

²⁶Jesus then sent him home with the order, "Don't go back into the village."

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

(Also *Matt. 16.13-20; Luke 9.18-21*)

²⁷Then Jesus and his disciples went away to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Tell me, who do people say I am?"

²⁸"Some say that you are John the Baptist," they answered; "others say that you are Elijah, while others say that you are one of the prophets."

²⁹"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

³⁰Then Jesus ordered them, "Do not tell anyone about me."

to touch him. He took the ²³ blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?"

He looked up and said, "I ²⁴ see people; they look like trees walking around."

Once more Jesus put his ²⁵ hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. Jesus sent him home, saying, ²⁶ "Don't go into the village."

Peter's Confession of Christ

Jesus and his disciples ²⁷ went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "who do people say I am?"

They replied, "Some say ²⁸ John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he ²⁹ asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Christ."

Jesus warned them not to ³⁰ tell anyone about him.

23. **And led him out of the village.** Jesus had done this with the deaf man (that is, taken him out of the crowd) *Mark 7:33*. After spitting on the man's eyes. Johnson believes this action was done to develop faith in the man, since Jesus usually demanded faith in the one whom he healed.

24. **The man looked up and said.** He was sure these were men, yet they seemed to him as large as trees. 25. **Jesus again placed his hands.** Johnson considers this to be the only example of *progressive healing*. If so, it is also an example of progressive faith, and the Lord healed him progressively to save as well as heal. It can also be explained by viewing two healings: the first for the eyes; and the second for the "perception" since the man had been blind some time.

26. **Jesus then sent him home.** He must not have lived in Bethsaida, since he was told not to go back into the village. Jesus did not try to gain honor for himself (see *Mark 7:36*).

27-30. **To the villages of Caesarea Philippi.** For notes on Peter's Declaration about Jesus, see *Matt. 16:13-20*. Caesarea Philippi was near Mount Hermon in north-east Palestine. Herod Phillip rebuilt this town and called it "Caesarea Philippi" to honor himself. Many Gentiles lived there, and it was a center of "emperor worship."

Jesus Speaks about His Suffering and Death

(Also Matt 16.21-28; Luke 9.22-27)

³¹Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: "The Son of Man must suffer much, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. He will be put to death, and after three days he will rise to life." ³²He made this very clear to them. So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke them. ³³But Jesus turned around, looked at his disciples, and rebuked Peter. "Get away from me, Satan," he said. "Your thoughts are men's thoughts, not God's!"

³⁴Then Jesus called the crowd and his disciples to him. "If anyone wants to come with me," he told them, "he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me. ³⁵For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶Does a man gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life? Of course not! ³⁷There is nothing a man can give to regain his life. ³⁸If, then, a man is ashamed of me and of my teaching in this godless and wicked day, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

9 And he went on to say, "Remember this! There are some here who will not die until they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power."

Jesus Predicts His Death

He then began to teach ³¹ them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly ³² about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

But when Jesus turned ³³ and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Out of my sight, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Then he called the crowd ³⁴ to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save ³⁵ his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to ³⁶ gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can ³⁷ a man give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ³⁸ ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

9 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

31-38. Then Jesus began to teach his disciples. Jesus would accomplish God's purpose by his suffering and death (Luke 9:31; Heb. 2:14-17). See notes on Matt. 16:21-28. If, then, a man is ashamed of me. Jesus probably said this many times. See note on Matt. 10:32-33. Each person is held responsible for his own choice and action.

1. Remember this! This must speak of the Kingdom coming with power on the day called Pentecost (Acts 2). Matthew says: "until they have seen the Son of Man come as King" (Matt. 16:28). Luke says: "until they have seen the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:27). Jesus says this will take place during the lifetime of some who stood there with him. See also notes on Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:13.

The Transfiguration

(Also *Matt 17.1-13; Luke 9.28-36*)

²Six days later Jesus took Peter, James and John with him, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. As they looked on, a change came over him, ³and his clothes became shining white, whiter than anyone in the world could wash them. ⁴Then the three disciples saw Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is a good thing that we are here. We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶He and the others were so frightened that he did not know what to say.

⁷A cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow, and a voice came from the cloud, "This is my own dear Son—listen to him!" ⁸They took a quick look around but did not see anyone else; only Jesus was with them.

⁹As they came down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has risen from death."

¹⁰They obeyed his order, but among themselves they started discussing the matter, "What does this 'rising from death' mean?" ¹¹And they asked Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah has to come first?"

¹²His answer was, "Elijah does indeed come first to get everything ready. Yet why do the Scriptures say that the Son of Man will suffer much and be rejected? ¹³I tell you, however, that Elijah has already come, and that people did to him what they wanted to, just as the Scriptures say about him."

The Transfiguration

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"

Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what "rising from the dead" meant.

And they asked him, "Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him."

2. Six days later. For notes on the Transfiguration, see *Matt. 17:1-13*. Be sure to see also *Luke 9:28-36*.

12. Elijah does indeed come first. John the Baptist came in the "spirit" of Elijah. See notes on *Matt. 17:10-13*.

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Evil Spirit

(Also Matt. 17.14-21; Luke 9.37-43a)

¹⁴When they joined the rest of the disciples, they saw a large crowd there. Some teachers of the Law were arguing with the disciples. ¹⁵As soon as the people saw Jesus, they were greatly surprised and ran to him and greeted him. ¹⁶Jesus asked his disciples, "What are you arguing with them about?"

¹⁷A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, because he has an evil spirit in him and cannot talk. ¹⁸Whenever the spirit attacks him, it throws him to the ground, and he foams at the mouth, grits his teeth, and becomes stiff all over. I asked your disciples to drive the spirit out, but they could not."

¹⁹Jesus said to them, "How unbelieving you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you? Bring the boy to me!" ²⁰They brought him to Jesus.

As soon as the spirit saw Jesus, it threw the boy into a fit, so that he fell on the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. ²¹"How long has he been like this?" Jesus asked the father.

"Ever since he was a child," he replied. ²²"Many times it has tried to kill him by throwing him in the fire and in the water. Have pity on us and help us, if you possibly can!"

²³"Yes," said Jesus, "if you can! Everything is possible for the person who has faith."

The Healing of a Boy With an Evil Spirit

When they came to the 14 other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. As soon 15 as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

"What are you arguing 16 with them about?" he asked.

A man in the crowd an- 17 swered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it 18 seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not."

"O unbelieving genera- 19 tion," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."

So they brought him. 20 When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

Jesus asked the boy's 21 father, "How long has he been like this?"

"From childhood," he answered. "It has often thrown 22 him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

"What do you mean, 'If 23 you can?'" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."

14. When they joined the rest of the disciples. This is just after the Transfiguration. For notes on healing the boy, see Matt. 17:14-21. Mark gives the most details. The symptoms were those of epilepsy, but in this case it was an evil spirit causing the problem.

23. If you can! There is no question that Jesus can do it. He turns it around to the father: "if you can!" Jesus requires faith (Heb. 11:6).

²⁴The father at once cried out, "I do have faith, but not enough. Help me have more!"

²⁵Jesus noticed that the crowd was closing in on them, so he gave a command to the evil spirit. "Deaf and dumb spirit," he said, "I order you to come out of the boy and never go into him again!"

²⁶The spirit screamed, threw the boy into a bad fit, and came out, "He is dead!" ²⁷But Jesus took the boy by the hand and helped him rise, and he stood up.

²⁸After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive the spirit out?"

²⁹"Only prayer can drive this kind out," answered Jesus; "nothing else can."

Jesus Speaks Again about His Death

(Also *Matt. 17.22-23; Luke 9.43b-45*)

³⁰They left that place and went on through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where he was, ³¹because he was teaching his disciples, "The Son of Man will be handed over to men who will kill him; three days later, however, he will rise to life."

³²They did not understand what this teaching meant, but they were afraid to ask him.

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and dumb spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."

The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so like a corpse that many said, "He's dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.

After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."

They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

24. **The father at once cried out.** Both eagerness and fear are mixed in the outcry of the father: eagerness to have his son healed; fear that his faith is not strong enough. Help me have more! The father was not certain that Jesus could heal his son (*verse 22*). He asks for more faith, since Jesus has made him aware of the need (*verse 23*). If your faith is weak, ask Jesus to help!

26. **Threw the boy into a bad fit.** The evil spirit doesn't want to leave, and it tries to destroy the son. **The boy looked like a corpse.** The fit leaves him exhausted and in a coma. Jesus takes the boy by the hand, and the cure is complete!

28-29. **Why couldn't we drive the spirit out?** Jesus said: "It was because you did not have enough faith" (*Matt. 17:20*). No demon could defy them if they had faith [on *faith*, see note on *James 2:19-20*]. *Only prayer can drive this kind out.* Faith reaches out through prayer to seize the power of Christ [for one who is already a Christian, *John 9:31*]. [Some versions add: "and fasting" from Matthew's Gospel. Do not think of prayer and fasting as a *ritual of exorcism*. These are general principles of spiritual growth.] When *faith* focuses on God's act in Christ, we forget self and can do many things through Christ. When *faith* turns inward to "self," we cannot drive out the "evil spirits" of worldliness, selfishness, greed, immorality, etc. See Peter's example in *Matt. 14:29-30*.

30-32. **The Son of Man will be handed over.** Judas would hand him over to the Jewish leaders. See notes on *Matt. 17:22-23* ["Son of Man," see *John 9:35*.]

Who Is the Greatest?

(Also Matt. 18.1-5; Luke 9.46-48)

³³They came to Capernaum, and after going indoors Jesus asked his disciples, "What were you arguing about on the road?"

³⁴But they would not answer him, because on the road they had been arguing among themselves about who was the greatest. ³⁵Jesus sat down, called the twelve disciples, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must place himself last of all and be the servant of all." ³⁶He took a child and made him stand in front of them. Then he put his arms around him and said to them. ³⁷"Whoever in my name welcomes one of these children, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not only me but also the one who sent me."

Who Is not against Us Is for Us

(Also Luke 9.49-50)

³⁸John said to him, "Teacher, we saw a man who was driving out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he doesn't belong to our group."

³⁹"Do not try to stop him," Jesus told them, "because no one who performs a miracle in my name will be able soon after to say bad things

Who Is the Greatest?

They came to Capernaum. ³³When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" But they kept quiet ³⁴because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

Sitting down, Jesus called ³⁵the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

He took a little child and ³⁶had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."

Whoever Is Not Against Us Is for Us

"Teacher," said John, ³⁸"we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us."

"Do not stop him," Jesus ³⁹said. "No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say any-

33. What were you arguing about? See notes on Matt. 18:1-9.

35. And be the servant of all. Not just the servant of friends, or family, or class, or even of church members. Jesus made himself the servant of ALL! Humility and service are the measure of true greatness.

38. Teacher, we saw a man. They had just returned from a teaching mission, on which they were driving out demons (Matt. 10:8). They probably met this man while on their mission. He must have been a disciple of Christ, yet not one who had been given a commission as they had. Driving out demons in your name. Acutally doing it! Such workers as this were believers, or they could not have used his name (compare the sons of Sceva. Act 19:13-17).

39. Do not try to stop him. They had tried to stop him, but had not succeeded. Jesus neither praises nor condemns the man for going his own way and not working with the twelve. Johnson says: "He simply declares that he must not be forbidden, and that those who work the same kind of work that we do should be regarded, not as enemies, but allies." See notes on Phil. 1:15-18. Note that anyone who does not help Christ gather is really scattering (Matt. 12:30).

about me. ⁴⁰For whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹Remember this! Anyone who gives you a drink of water because you belong to Christ will certainly receive his reward."

Temptations to Sin

(Also *Matt. 18.6-9; Luke 17.1-2*)

⁴²"If anyone should cause one of these little ones to turn away from his faith in me, it would be better for that man to have a large millstone tied around his neck and be thrown into the sea.

⁴³So if your hand makes you turn away, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life without a hand than to keep both hands and go off to hell, to the fire that never goes out. [⁴⁴There 'their worms never die, and the fire is never put out.'] ⁴⁵And if your foot makes you turn away, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life without a foot than to keep both feet and be thrown into hell. [⁴⁶There 'their worms never die, and the fire is never put out.'] ⁴⁷And if your eye makes you turn away, take it out! It is better for you to enter the Kingdom of God with only one eye, than to keep both eyes and be thrown into hell. ⁴⁸There 'their worms never die, and the fire is never put out.'

⁴⁹"For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰Salt

thing bad about me, for ⁴⁰ whoever is not against us is for us. I tell you the truth, ⁴¹ anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward.

Causing to Sin

"And if anyone causes one ⁴² of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck. If your hand causes you to ⁴³ sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot ⁴⁵ causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled, than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes ⁴⁷ you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where ⁴⁸

'their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out.'

Everyone will be salted with ⁴⁹ fire.

42. **Cause one of these little ones to turn away.** The parallel passage in *Matt. 18:6-9* shows he is speaking of little children (see notes there.) Yet, as this comes just after his statement in *verse 40*, Jesus may have intended them to apply this also to the man they tried to stop (*verse 38*).

43. **To the fire that never goes out.** See note on *Matt. 5:22* Gehenna was symbolic of the "lake of fire" (*Rev. 20:14*). Both the "heaven" where God lives, and the "hell" to which Satan is consigned, are spiritual places. Human language cannot accurately describe either of them. Both places will be very real to those who spend eternity there!

48. **Their worms never die.** This is the language of *Isa. 66:24*. Probably the Jews in Jesus' time used these words to describe eternal punishment.

49. **For everyone will be salted with fire.** In *verses 45-48* Jesus emphasizes that it would be the best of the bargain to sacrifice a hand, or foot, or eye [if that would help] to escape from God's wrath. *Fire* symbolizes pain, suffering, punishment, persecution, etc. *Salt* symbolizes permanence, to keep from spoiling, etc. Every one, good or bad, must and does suffer. Fire will test and show the quality of each man's works (*1 Cor. 3:13*). The apostles, especially, would be salted with fire (*1 Cor. 4:9-13*).

is good; but if it loses its saltness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

(Also *Matt. 19.1-12; Luke 16.18*)

10 Then Jesus left that place, went to the region of Judea, and crossed the Jordan River. Crowds came flocking to him again and he taught them, as he always did.

²Some Pharisees came to him and tried to trap him. "Tell us," they asked, "does our Law allow a man to divorce his wife?"

³Jesus answered with a question, "What commandment did Moses give you?"

⁴Their answer was, "Moses gave permission for a man to write a divorce notice and send his wife away."

⁵Jesus said to them, "Moses wrote this commandment for you because you are so hard to teach. ⁶But in the beginning, at the time of creation, it was said, 'God made them male and female. ⁷And for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, ⁸and the two will become one.' So they are no longer two, but one. ⁹Man must not separate, then, what God has joined together."

¹⁰When they went back into the house, the disciples asked Jesus about this matter. ¹¹He said to them, "The man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery

"Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other."

Divorce

10 Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them.

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

"What did Moses command you?" he replied.

They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away."

"It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. "But at the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits

50. **Salt is good.** See note on *Matt. 5:13*. **Have salt in yourselves.** The spirit of self-sacrifice and humility [which "salting with fire" helps produce]. This would allow them to be at peace with one another, which was not true of them just then (*verses 33-37*).

1. **Then Jesus left that place.** His ministry in Galilee is now finished, and he leaves Capernaum, about to go to Jerusalem for the last time. See notes on *Matt. 19:1-2*.

2. **Some Pharisees came to him.** Somewhere on the east side of the Jordan. For notes about his teaching on marriage and divorce, see *Matt 19:3-13*.

against his wife; ¹²in the same way, the woman who divorces her husband and marries another man commits adultery."

adultery against her. And if ¹² she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

The Little Children and Jesus

People were bringing little ¹³ children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When ¹⁴ Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took ¹⁶ the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

The Rich Young Man

As Jesus started on his ¹⁷ way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me ¹⁸ good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the ¹⁹ commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

"Teacher," he declared, ²⁰ "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

(Also Matt. 19.13-15; Luke 18.15-17)

¹³Some people brought children to Jesus for him to touch them, but the disciples scolded those people. ¹⁴When Jesus noticed it, he was angry and said to his disciples, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵Remember this! Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." ¹⁶Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them.

The Rich Man

(Also Matt. 19.16-30; Luke 18.18-30)

¹⁷As Jesus was starting again on his way, a man ran up, knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?"

¹⁸"Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹You know the commandments: 'Do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not lie; do not cheat; honor your father and mother.'"

²⁰"Teacher," the man said, "ever since I was young I have obeyed all these commandments."

12. **The woman who divorces her husband.** Both Greek and Roman law allowed a woman to divorce her husband (*1 Cor. 7:13*), but Jewish law did not. Jesus did not teach a double standard, but placed men and women on exactly the same level.

13-16. **Some people brought children to Jesus.** Women and children were treated as "second class citizens" in the world of the first century. The disciples scolded the people for wasting Jesus' time with children. Note this made Jesus angry. He said: "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them." See notes on *Matt. 19:13-15*, also *Matt. 18:3-4*.

17-22. **A man ran up.** Only Mark tells that "Jesus looked straight at him with love" (verse 21). See notes on *Matt. 19:16-22*.

²¹Jesus looked straight at him with love and said, "You need only one thing. Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me." ²²When the man heard this, gloom spread over his face and he went away sad, because he was very rich.

²³Jesus looked around at his disciples and said to them, "How hard it will be for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God!"

²⁴The disciples were shocked at these words, but Jesus went on to say, "My children, how hard it is to enter the Kingdom of God! ²⁵It is much harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

²⁶At this the disciples were completely amazed, and asked one another, "Who, then, can be saved?"

²⁷Jesus looked straight at them and answered, "This is impossible for men, but not for God; everything is possible for God."

²⁸Then Peter spoke up, "Look, we have left everything and followed you."

²⁹"Yes," Jesus said to them, "and I tell you this: anyone who leaves home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me, and for the gospel, ³⁰will receive much more in this present age. He will receive a hundred times more houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields—and persecutions as well; and in the age to come he will receive eternal life. ³¹But many who now are first will be last, and many who now are last will be first."

Jesus looked at him and ²¹loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

At this the man's face fell, ²²He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Jesus looked around and ²³said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

The disciples were a- ²⁴mazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier ²⁵for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

The disciples were even ²⁶more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and ²⁷said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

Peter said to him, "We ²⁸have left everything to follow you!"

"I tell you the truth," ²⁹Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive ³⁰a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are ³¹first will be last, and the last first."

23-31. **How hard it will be for rich people.** See notes on *Matt. 19:23-30*. [A few late manuscripts add: "that trust in wealth." Compare *1 Tim. 6:10*.] Probably the "rich people" Jesus speaks of, are the ones mentioned by *James 5:16*. It would be very hard, but not impossible, to persuade such a person to "turn from sin."

Jesus Speaks a Third Time about His Death

(Also Matt. 20.17-19; Luke 18.31-34)

³²They were now on the road going up to Jerusalem. Jesus was going ahead of the disciples, who were filled with alarm; the people who followed behind were afraid. Once again Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and spoke of the things that were going to happen to him. ³³"Listen," he told them, "we are going up to Jerusalem where the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. They will condemn him to death and then hand him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴These will make fun of him, spit on him, whip him, and kill him. And after three days he will rise to life."

The Request of James and John

(Also Matt. 20.20-28)

³⁵Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus. "Teacher, they said, "there is something we want you to do for us."

³⁶"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked them.

³⁷They answered, "When you sit on your throne in the glorious Kingdom, we want you to let us sit with you, one at your right and one at your left."

³⁸Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup that I must drink? Can you be baptized in the way I must be baptized?"

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

They were on their way up ³² to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. "We are going up to ³³ Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who ³⁴ will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise."

The Request of James and John

Then James and John, the ³⁵ sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

"What do you want me to ³⁶ do for you?" he asked.

They replied, "Let one of ³⁷ us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

"You don't know what ³⁸ you are asking," Jesus said.

"Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

32-34. **Who were filled with alarm.** The Jewish leaders intend to kill Jesus! The disciples are filled with alarm by the fact that Jesus is placing himself in such danger. They are afraid of what they expect to happen. **He told them.** He had told this to them at least twice before. See notes on *Matt. 20:17-19*. They could not understand, because they expected him to be a political Messiah with an earthly kingdom.

35-45. **Then James and John.** Matthew says Salome their mother came to Jesus and spoke for them. See notes on *Matt. 20:20-28*. **You don't know what you are asking for.** Their request was made through ignorance. They would see two criminals on crosses to the right and left of him. We often pray in ignorance, but as a Christian, we have the promise of *Rom. 8:26*.

³⁹"We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup I must drink and be baptized in the way I must be baptized. ⁴⁰But I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. It is God who will give these places to those for whom he has prepared them."

⁴¹When the other ten disciples heard about this they became angry with James and John. ⁴²So Jesus called them all together to him and said, "You know that the men who are considered rulers have power over the people, and their leaders rule over them. ⁴³This, however, is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; ⁴⁴and if one of you wants to be first, he must be the slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people."

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

(Also Matt. 20.29-34; Luke 18.35-43)

⁴⁶They came to Jericho. As Jesus was leaving with his disciples and a large crowd, a blind man named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road, begging.

⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me!"

⁴⁸Many scolded him and told him to be quiet. But he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁹Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called the blind man. "Cheer up!" they said. "Get up, he is calling you."

"We can," they answered. 39

Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." 40

When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be the first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." 41
42
43
44
45

Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 46
47

Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." 49

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you."

46-51. They came to Jericho. They were now across the Jordan and in Judea. For the healing of this blind man, see notes on Matt. 20:29-34.

⁵⁰He threw off his cloak, jumped up, and came to Jesus.

⁵¹"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

"Teacher," the blind man answered, "I want to see again."

⁵²"Go," Jesus told him, "your faith has made you well."

At once he was able to see, and followed Jesus on the road.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also *Matt. 21.1-11; Luke 19.28-40;*

John 12.12-19)

11 As they came near Jerusalem, at the towns of Bethphage and Bethany they came to the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead ²with these instructions, "Go to the village there ahead of you. As soon as you get there you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³And if someone asks you, 'Why are you doing that?' tell him, 'The Master needs it and will send it back here at once.'"

"So they went and found a colt out in the street, tied to the door of a house. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders asked them, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"

⁶They answered just as Jesus had told them, so the men let them go. ⁷They brought the colt to Jesus, threw cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches in the fields and

Throwing his cloak aside, he ⁵⁰ jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

"Go," said Jesus, "your ⁵² faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

The Triumphant Entry

11 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go ² to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ³ 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

They went and found a ⁴ colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered as ⁶ Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. When ⁷ they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people ⁸ spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the

52. Your faith has made you well. Bartimaeus showed his faith by: (1) going to Jesus; (2) believing that Jesus was the Messiah; (3) by persisting, even though scolded by many; (4) by throwing off everything that held him back; (5) by obeying Jesus when called to come; (6) by following Jesus and praising him, after he was healed.

1. As they came near Jerusalem. On the Sunday before the Lord's death. He had been at Bethany during the Sabbath [Saturday]. All four Gospels tell this. See notes. on *Matt. 21:1-11*.

spread them on the road. ⁹The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, "Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰God bless the coming kingdom of our father David! Praise be to God!"

¹¹Jesus entered Jerusalem, went into the temple, and looked around at everything. But since it was already late in the day, he went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

(Also *Matt. 21.18-19*)

¹²The next day, as they were coming back from Bethany, Jesus was hungry. ¹³He saw in the distance a fig tree covered with leaves, so he went to it to see if he could find any figs on it; but when he came to it he found only leaves, because it was not the right time for figs. ¹⁴Jesus said to the fig tree, "No one shall ever eat figs from you again!"

And his disciples heard him.

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also *Matt. 21.12-17; Luke 19.45-48; John 2.13-22*)

¹⁵When they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple and began to drive out all those who bought and sold in the temple. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the stools of those who sold pigeons, ¹⁶and would not let anyone carry anything through the temple

fields. Those who went a- 9
head and those who followed
shouted,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming 10

kingdom of our father

David!

Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem 11
and went to the temple. He
looked around at every-
thing, but since it was al-
ready late, he went out to
Bethany with the Twelve.

Jesus Clears the Temple

The next day as they were 12

leaving Bethany, Jesus was 13

hungry. Seeing in the dis-
tance a fig tree in leaf, he

went to find out if it had any

fruit. When he reached it,

however, he found nothing

but leaves, because it was

not the season for figs. Then 14

he said to the tree, "May no

one ever eat fruit from you

again." And his disciples

heard him say it.

On reaching Jerusalem, 15

Jesus entered the temple

area and began driving out

those who were buying and

selling there. He overturned

the tables of the money-

changers and the benches of

those selling doves, and 16

would not allow anyone to

carry merchandise through

11. He went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples. After the Triumphant Entry, Jesus goes on into the city and visits the temple. He then leaves and spends the night in Bethany. As far as we know he spent each night in Bethany during this last week, except for Thursday night. He may have done this to stay away from the Jewish leaders. Also, he had loving friends at Bethany, and being there would allow him to spend this time in rest and conversation with the twelve.

12-14. Jesus was hungry. Even though it was not the right time for figs, the leaves should not have been there, unless there were figs on the tree. See notes on *Matt. 21:12-22*.

15-19. Jesus went to the temple. He made the temple "ritually pure" at both the beginning (*John 2:13-22*) and the end of his public teaching ministry. See notes on *Matt. 21:12-17*.

courts. ¹⁷He then taught the people, "It is written in the Scriptures that God said, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples.' But you have turned it into a hideout for thieves!"

¹⁸The chief priests and the teachers of the Law heard of this, so they began looking for some way to kill Jesus. They were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

¹⁹When evening came, Jesus and his disciples left the city.

The Lesson from the Fig Tree

(Also Matt. 21:20-22)

²⁰Early next morning, as they walked along the road, they saw the fig tree. It was dead all the way down to its roots. ²¹Peter remembered what had happened and said to Jesus, "Look Teacher, the fig tree you cursed has died!"

²²Jesus answered them, "Remember this! If you have faith in God, ²³you can say to this hill, 'Get up and throw yourself in the sea.' If you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will happen, it will be done for you. ²⁴For this reason I tell you: When you pray and ask for something, believe that you have received it, and you will be given whatever you ask for. ²⁵And when you stand praying, forgive anything you may have against anyone, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins. [²⁶If you do not forgive others, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your sins.]"

the temple courts. And as he ¹⁷ taught them, he said, "Is it not written:

'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?'

But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

The chief priests and the ¹⁸ teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

When evening came, they ¹⁹ went out of the city.

The Withered Fig Tree

In the morning, as they ²⁰ went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said ²¹ to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!"

"Have faith in God," ²² Jesus answered. "I tell you ²³ the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I ²⁴ tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you will receive it, and it will be yours. And when you ²⁵ stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

20-24. **It was dead all the way down to its roots.** Mark tells that this took place early next morning, the day following the cursing of the fig tree. This was symbolic of what would happen to the part of the Jewish nation who rejected Christ. See notes on *Matt 21:19-22*. **Believe that you have received it.** Confidence is evidence of faith. Read *James 1:6-8*. See notes on *Matt. 21:20-22*.

25. **And when you stand praying, forgive.** Forgiveness is a condition of prayer. See notes on *Matt. 5:23-24*. Also see the parable in *Matt. 18:21-35*.

The Question about Jesus' Authority

(Also Matt. 21.23-27; Luke 20.1-8)

²⁷They came back to Jerusalem. As Jesus was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders came to him ²⁸and asked him, "What right do you have to do these things? Who gave you the right to do them?"

²⁹Jesus answered them, "I will ask you just one question, and if you give me an answer I will tell you what right I have to do these things. ³⁰Tell me, where did John's right to baptize come from: from God or from men?"

³¹They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we answer, 'From God,' he will say, 'Why, then, did you not believe John' ³²But if we say, 'From men . . .'" (They were afraid of the people, because everyone was convinced that John had been a prophet.) ³³So their answer to Jesus was, "We don't know."

Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you, then, by what right I do these things."

The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard

(Also Matt. 21.33-46; Luke 20.9-19)

12 Then Jesus spoke to them in parables, "There was a man who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to tenants and left home on a trip. ²When the time came for gathering the grapes, he sent a slave to the tenants to receive from

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

They arrived again in ²⁷ Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. "By ²⁸ what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you authority to do this?"

Jesus replied, "I will ask ²⁹ you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism ³⁰ —was it from heaven, or from men? Tell me!"

They discussed it among ³¹ themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, ³² 'From men' . . ." (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.)

So they answered Jesus, ³³ "We don't know."

Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

The Parable of the Tenants

12 He then began to speak to them in parables:

"A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. At harvest time he ² sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of

27-33. **They came back to Jerusalem.** This would be on Tuesday. Jesus made his official entrance on Sunday (the Triumphant Entry). He purified the temple, and cursed the fig tree, both on Monday. On Tuesday, the disciples pointed out the dead fig tree, and Jesus again went into the city of Jerusalem. There he met a group of Jewish leaders, who challenged his actions of making the temple ritually pure. See notes on Matt. 21:23-27.

1-12. **Then Jesus spoke to them in parables.** Matthew gives more detail about this series of parables which outline the sins and doom of the unbelieving Jews. [The Jews who believed (Acts 21:20) were not included in this doom.] **There was a man who planted a vineyard.** See notes on Matt. 21:33-46.

them his share of the harvest. ³The tenants grabbed the slave, beat him, and sent him back without a thing. ⁴Then the owner sent another slave; the tenants beat him over the head and treated him shamefully. ⁵The owner sent another slave, and they killed him; and they treated many others the same way, beating some and killing others. ⁶The only one left to send was the man's own dear son. Last of all, then, he sent his son to the tenants. 'I am sure they will respect my son,' he said. ⁷But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the owner's son. Come on, let us kill him, and his property will be ours!' ⁸So they took the son and killed him, and threw his body out of the vineyard.

⁹"What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do?" asked Jesus. "He will come and kill those men and turn over the vineyard to other tenants. ¹⁰Surely you have read this scripture?

'The very stone which the builders rejected turned out to be the most important stone.

¹¹'This was done by the Lord; how wonderful it is!'

¹²The Jewish leaders tried to arrest Jesus, because they knew that he had told this parable against them. They were afraid of the crowd, however, so they left him and went away.

The Question about Paying Taxes

(Also *Matt. 22.15-22; Luke 20.20-26*)

¹³Some Pharisees and some members of Herod's party were sent to Jesus to trap him with

the fruit of the vineyard. But ³ they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent ⁴ another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, ⁵ and that one they killed. he sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed.

⁶ "He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. he sent him last of all, saying, "They will respect my son."

⁷ "But the tenants said to one another, "This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours". So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. ⁸

⁹ "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. Haven't you ¹⁰ read this scripture:

'The stone the builders rejected has become the cap-stone;

the Lord has done this, ¹¹ and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

Then they looked for a ¹² way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

Later they sent some of ¹³ the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his

13-17. Some Pharisees and some members of Herod's party. For notes on this attempt to incriminate Jesus, see notes on *Matt. 22:15-22*.

questions. ¹⁴They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know that you tell the truth, without worrying about what people think. You pay no attention to a man's status, but teach the truth about God's will for man. Tell us, is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor? Should we pay them, or not?"

¹⁵But Jesus saw through their trick and answered, "Why are you trying to trap me? Bring a silver coin, and let me see it."

¹⁶They brought him one and he asked, "Whose face and name are these?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

¹⁷So Jesus said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to him, and pay to God what belongs to God."

And they were filled with wonder at him.

The Question about Rising from Death

(Also *Matt. 22.23-33; Luke 20.27-40*)

¹⁸Some Sadducees came to Jesus. (They are the ones who say that people will not rise from death.) ¹⁹"Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote this law for us: 'If a man dies and leaves a wife, but no children, that man's brother must marry the widow so they can have children for the dead man.' ²⁰Once there were seven brothers: the oldest got married, and died without having children. ²¹Then the second one married the woman, and he died without having children. The same thing happened to the third brother, ²²and then to the rest: all seven brothers married the woman and died without having children. Last of all, the woman died. ²³Now, when all the dead rise to life on the day of resurrection, whose wife will she be? All seven of them had married her."

words. They came to him ¹⁴ and said, "Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we ¹⁵ pay or shouldn't we?"

But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap me?" he asked. "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." They ¹⁶ brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?"

"Caesar's," they replied. Then Jesus said to them, ¹⁷ "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's."

And they were amazed at him.

Marriage at the Resurrection

Then the Sadducees, who ¹⁸ say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. "Teacher," they said, ¹⁹ "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. Now there ²⁰ were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. The second one ²¹ married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. In fact, none of the seven ²² left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. At the ²³ resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"

18-27. Some Sadducees came to Jesus. For notes on this question about rising from death, see *Matt. 22:23-33*.

²⁴Jesus answered them, "How wrong you are! And do you know why? It is because you don't know the Scriptures or God's power. ²⁵For when the dead rise to life they will be like the angels in heaven, and men and women will not marry. ²⁶Now, as to the dead being raised: haven't you ever read in the book of Moses the passage about the burning bush? There it is written that God said to Moses, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the The God of Jacob.' ²⁷That means that he is the God of the living, not of the dead. You are completely wrong!"

The Great Commandment

(Also *Matt. 22.34-40; Luke 10.25-28*)

²⁸A teacher of the Law was there who heard the discussion. He saw that Jesus had given the Sadducees a good answer, so he came to him with a question, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

²⁹"This is the most important one," said Jesus. " 'Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. ³⁰You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' ³¹The second most important commandment is this: 'You must love your fellow-man as yourself.' There is no other commandment more important than these two."

³²The teacher of the Law said to Jesus, "Well done, Teacher! It is true, as you say, that only the Lord is God, and that there is no other god but he. ³³And man must love God with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his

Jesus replied, "Are you ²⁴not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!"

The Greatest Commandment

One of the teachers of the ²⁸law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important ²⁹one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is ³¹this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no greater commandment than these."

"Well said, teacher," the ³²man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is

28-34. A teacher of the Law was there. Matthew tells that this man asked Jesus the question to "trap him." See notes on *Matt. 22:34-40*. You are not far from the Kingdom of God. Jesus said this because the teacher of the Law recognized that loving God and fellow man was more important than sacrifices. The Jewish leaders offered the sacrifices, but loved neither fellow man nor God. This man was close to the Kingdom, but not in it. He knew the *spirit* of the great commandment of Law and Gospel. But unless he enters the Kingdom, one who is "not far from" the door, is no better off than one who is far away.

strength; and he must love his fellow-man as himself. It is more important to obey these two commandments than to offer animals and other sacrifices to God on the altar."

³⁴Jesus noticed how wise his answer was, and so he told him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God."

After this nobody dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

The Question about the Messiah

(Also *Matt. 22.41-46; Luke 20.41-44*)

³⁵As Jesus was teaching in the temple he asked the question, "How can the teachers of the Law say that the Messiah will be the descendant of David?" ³⁶The Holy Spirit inspired David to say:

'The Lord said to my Lord:

Sit here at my right side,

until I put your enemies under your feet.'

³⁷David himself called him 'Lord'; how, then, can the Messiah be David's descendant?"

Jesus Warns against the Teachers of the Law

(Also *Matt. 23.1-36; Luke 20.45-47*)

The large crowd heard Jesus gladly. ³⁸As he taught them he said, "Watch out for the teachers of the Law, who like to walk around in their long robes and be greeted with respect in the market place; ³⁹who choose the reserved seats in the

more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

When Jesus saw that he ³⁴ had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Whose Son Is the Christ?

While Jesus was teaching ³⁵ in the temple courts, he asked, "How is it that the teachers of the law say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, ³⁶ speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared:

'The Lord said to my Lord:

Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'

David himself calls him ³⁷ 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?"

The large crowd listened to him with delight.

As he taught, Jesus said, ³⁸ "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the market-places, and have the most ³⁹ important seats in the synagogues and the places of

35-37. **How can the teachers of the Law say.** The Jewish leaders thought Jesus was only a man, nothing more. What he asks here is to make them aware of the true meaning of David's prophecy. See notes on *Matt. 22:41-46*. **The large crowd heard Jesus gladly.** It was not the common people who rejected Jesus. They loved him! [The Jewish leaders said about the common people: "*This crowd does not know the Law of Moses, so they are under God's curse*" (*John 7:49*).]

38-40. **Watch out for the teachers of the Law.** Mark condenses *Matt. 23:1-36* into just three verses. See notes there. **Who like to walk around in their long robes.** Only Mark gives this. These long robes, sweeping the ground, imitated those of the priests of Rome. The teachers of the Law wore these to impress people with their importance. When Jesus sent out his apostles to preach, he specifically told them to dress in the clothes of the common, ordinary people (*Mark 6:9*). The Jewish leaders wanted people to know they were not just *ordinary people*, but that they were *important!* This was not to honor their status as teachers, but to get the glory for themselves!

synagogues and the best places at feasts. ⁴⁰They take advantage of widows and rob them of their homes, and then make a show of saying long prayers. Their punishment will be all the worse!"

The Widow's Offering

(Also Luke 21.1-4)

⁴¹As Jesus sat near the temple treasury he watched the people as they dropped in their money. Many rich men dropped in much money; ⁴²then a poor widow came along and dropped in two little copper coins, worth about a penny. ⁴³He called his disciples together and said to them, "I tell you that this poor widow put more in the offering box than all the others. ⁴⁴For the others put in what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, put in all she had—she gave all she had to live on."

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple

(Also Matt. 24.1-2; Luke 21.5-6)

13 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said, "Look, Teacher! What wonderful stones and buildings!"

honor at banquets. They de- 40
your widows' houses and for
a show make lengthy pray-
ers. Such men will be
punished most severely."

The Widow's Offering

Jesus sat down opposite 41
the place where the offerings
were put and watched the
crowd putting their money
into the temple treasury.
Many rich people threw in
large amounts. But a poor 42
widow came and put in two
very small copper coins,
worth only a fraction of a
penny.

Calling his disciples to 43
him, Jesus said, "I tell you
the truth, this poor widow
has put more into the treas-
ury than all the others. They 44
all gave out of their wealth;
but she, out of her poverty,
put in everything—all she
had to live on."

Signs of the End of the Age

13 As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!"

41. **As Jesus sat near the temple treasury.** Matthew does not tell this, but Luke does. This incident of the widow's offering shows up the hypocrisy of the teachers of the Law. **Treasury.** Thirteen box-like chests, called "trumpets" because of their shape, which were placed in the Women's Court of the temple. Lightfoot says: "Nine chests were for the appointed temple tribute, and for the sacrifice-tribute; that is, money gifts instead of the sacrifices; four chests for free-will offerings, for wood, incense, temple decoration, and burnt offerings." **He watched the people.** Jesus still watches us. Free will offerings were made in addition to the temple tax, before the Passover.

42. **Then a poor widow came along.** In the world in which Jesus lived, widows had almost no job opportunities, and so were extremely poor. **Two little copper coins.** The very smallest of the Jewish coins, together worth about a penny. Mark mentions their value for his Roman readers.

43. **Put more in the offering box.** She gave an extremely small gift, yet Jesus praises her for it. She gave "more" in proportion to what she had! God looks at "quality," rather than "quantity."

44. **Put in all she had.** The true value of a gift is what it cost the one who gave it. *The widow gave all she had to live on!* Out of her love, she gave everything to God, trusting his providence to take care of her.

1. **As Jesus was leaving the temple.** Matthew gives the most details of this. See notes on Matt. 24. Mark does add a few things to the account.

²Jesus answered, "You see these great buildings? Not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one of them will be thrown down."

Troubles and Persecutions

(Also *Matt. 24.3-14; Luke 21.7-19*)

³Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, across from the temple, when Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to him in private ⁴"Tell us when this will be," they said, ⁵"and tell us what will happen to show that the time has come for all these things to take place."

⁶Jesus said to them, ⁷"Watch out, and don't let anyone fool you. ⁸Many men will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and fool many people. ⁹And don't be troubled when you hear the noise of battles close by and news of battles far away. Such things must happen, but they do not mean that the end has come. ¹⁰Countries will fight each other, kingdoms will attack one another. There will be earthquakes everywhere, and there will be famines. These things are like the first pains of childbirth.

¹¹"You yourselves must watch out. You will be arrested and taken to court. You will be beaten in the synagogues; you will stand before rulers and kings for my sake, to tell them the Good News. ¹²The gospel must first be preached to

"Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. "Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."

As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple. Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?"

Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

"You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all

3. Peter, James, John, and Andrew. Matthew says only: "the disciples." "In private" must mean "away from the crowds." The temple's destruction had been announced more or less in public (*Matt. 23:38; 24:2*).

9. You yourselves must watch out. The instructions of verses 9-11 are not given in *Matt. 24*, but are found in *Matt. 10:18-20*. See notes there. Jesus probably said these things to his disciples a number of times. Watch out. Not to escape persecution, but to be prepared for it. Taken to court. The Jewish courts. Each of the larger towns had their own court. The Sanhedrin was the Jewish "Supreme Court." You will be beaten in the synagogues. Every synagogue had three men with the authority to punish. Beating (whipping) was one way they did this, with thirty-nine lashes as the usual number given (*Deut. 25:3; 2 Cor. 11:24*). You will stand before rulers and kings. Roman officials such as Felix, Festus, Gallio, Agrippa, Nero, etc. To tell them the Good News. God wants everyone to hear the Good News and believe it. Compare what Paul says in *1 Cor. 9:19-22*.

all peoples. ¹¹And when they arrest you and take you to court, do not worry ahead of time about what you are going to say; when the time comes, say whatever is given to you then. For the words you speak will not be yours; they will come from the Holy Spirit. ¹²Men will hand over their own brothers to be put to death, and fathers will do the same to their children; children will turn against their parents and have them put to death. ¹³Everyone will hate you because of me. But whoever holds out to the end will be saved."

The Awful Horror

(Also *Matt. 24.15-28; Luke 21.20-24*)

¹⁴"You will see 'The Awful Horror' standing in the place where he should not be." (Note to the reader: understand what this means!) "Then those who are in Judea must run away to the hills. ¹⁵The man who is on the roof of his house must not lose time by going down into the house to get anything to take with him. ¹⁶The man who is in the field must not go back to the house for his cloak. ¹⁷How terrible it will be in those days for women who are pregnant, and for mothers who have little babies! ¹⁸Pray to God that these things will not happen in wintertime! ¹⁹For the trouble of those days will be far worse than any the world has ever known, from the very beginning when God created the world until the present time. Nor will there ever again be anything like it. ²⁰But the Lord has reduced the number of those days; if he had not, nobody would survive. For the sake of his chosen people however, he has reduced those days.

²¹"Then, if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'Look, there he is!'—do not

nations. Whenever you are ¹¹ arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

"Brother will betray ¹² brother to death, and a father his child. Children rebel against their parents and have them put to death. All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

"When you see 'the abom- ¹⁴ ination that causes desolation' standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no ¹⁵ one on the roof of his house go down or enter the house to take anything out. Let no ¹⁶ one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful ¹⁷ it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that this will not take place in winter, because those will be days of ¹⁹ distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. If the Lord had not ²⁰ cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them. At that time if anyone ²¹ says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there

18. Will not happen in wintertime. *Matt. 24:20* adds: "or on a Sabbath!" The reasons for this are given in the notes on *Matt. 24*. History records that the sign Jesus mentions for "running away," the surrounding of the city by the Romans, and the panic that caused their sudden pullback, took place on a Tuesday, in October. So their prayer was answered.

believe him. ²²For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear. They will perform signs and wonders for the purpose of deceiving God's chosen people, if possible. ²³Be on your guard! I have told you everything ahead of time."

The Coming of the Son of Man

(Also *Matt. 24.29-31; Luke 21.25-28*)

²⁴"In the days after that time of trouble the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, ²⁵the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven from their courses. ²⁶Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷He will send out the angels to the four corners of the earth and gather God's chosen people from one end of the world to the other."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

(Also *Matt. 24.32-35; Luke 21.29-33*)

²⁸"Let the fig tree teach you a lesson. When its branches become green and tender, and it starts putting out leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the time is near, ready to begin. ³⁰Remember this! All these things will happen before the people now living have all died. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away; my words will never pass away."

No One Knows the Day or Hour

(Also *Matt. 24.36-44*)

³²"No one knows, however, when that day or hour will come—neither the angels in heaven,

he is! do not believe it. For ²²false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible. So be on your ²³guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.

But in those days, follow- ²⁴ing that distress,

'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the ²⁵sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

"At that time men will see ²⁶the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his ²⁷angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

"Now learn this lesson ²⁸from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even ²⁹so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, ³⁰this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass ³¹away, but my words will never pass away.

The Day and Hour Unknown

"No one knows about that ³²day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the

30. Before the people now living have all died. Jesus qualifies his prediction by putting it into a definite time frame. It would be in the natural lifetime of the generation then alive! See on *Matt. 24.34*.

32. No one knows, however. As Jesus stands in his human form, he says that he does not know the time of his Second Coming, when he returns to judge the earth. How foolish, then, for "Bible Scholars" to set dates.

nor the Son; only the Father knows. ³³Be on watch, be alert, for you do not know when the time will be. ³⁴It will be like a man who goes away from home on a trip and leaves his servants in charge, each one with his own work to do; and he tells the doorkeeper to keep watch. ³⁵Watch, then, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming—it might be in the evening, or at midnight, or before dawn, or at sunrise. ³⁶If he comes suddenly, he must not find you asleep. ³⁷What I say to you, then, I say to all: Watch!”

33 Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house in charge of his servants, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. So you also must keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, don't let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: "Watch!"

The Plot against Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.1-5; Luke 22.1-2; John 11.45-53*)

14 It was now two days before the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were looking for a way to arrest Jesus secretly and put him to death. ²“We must not do it during the feast,” they said, “or the people might riot.”

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

14 Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ²“But not during the feast,” they said, “or the people may riot.”

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

(Also *Matt. 26.6-13; John 12.1-8*)

³Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper, in Bethany; while he was eating, a woman came in with an ababaster jar full of a very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head. ⁴Some of the people there became angry, and said to each other, “What was the use of wasting the

³ While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

⁴ Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this

37. **Watch!** Matthew tells how Jesus stressed this by using the parables of the Ten Girls (*Matt. 25:1-13*); The Three Servants (*Matt. 25.14-30*); and his picture of the Judgment when he gathers all earth's people and separates them into two groups (*Matt. 25:31-46*).

1. It was now two days before the Feast of Passover. See notes on *Matt. 26:1-16*. This action of the Jewish leaders (Sanhedrin) took place on Wednesday. The anointing happened the Saturday before this, and is mentioned now in connection with Judas. *John 12:1-8* points out that it was Judas who complained about wasting the perfume. *Luke 22:3-6* implies that it may have been his anger at the wasting of the perfume which caused him to go to the chief priests and offer to hand Jesus over to them.

perfume? ⁵It could have been sold for more than three hundred dollars, and the money given to the poor!" And they criticized her harshly.

⁶But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! Why are you bothering her? She has done a fine and beautiful thing for me. ⁷You will always have poor people with you, and any time you want to you can help them. But I shall not be with you always. ⁸She did what she could; she poured perfume on my body to prepare it ahead of time for burial. ⁹Now, remember this! Wherever the gospel is preached, all over the world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.14-16; Luke 22.3-6*)

¹⁰Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went off to the chief priests in order to hand Jesus over to them. ¹¹They were greatly pleased to hear what he had to say, and promised to give him money. So Judas started looking for a good chance to betray Jesus.

Jesus Eats the Passover Meal with His Disciples

(Also *Matt. 26.17-25; Luke 22.7-14, 21-23; John 13.21-30*)

¹²On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the day the lambs for the Passover meal were killed, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and get your Passover meal ready?"

¹³Then Jesus sent two of them out with these instructions: Go into the city, and a man carrying

waste of perfume? It could ⁵ have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

"Leave her alone," said ⁶ Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. ⁸ She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Then Judas Iscariot, one ¹⁰ of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. They were de- ¹¹ lighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

The Lord's Supper

On the first day of the ¹² Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

So he sent two of his dis- ¹³ ciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet

10-11. Then Judas Iscariot. See notes on *Matt. 26:14-16*.

12-16. On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This lasted seven days after the Passover, and also celebrated the Rescue from Egypt. See notes on *Matt. 26:17-19*.

17-21. When it was evening. On the Lord's last Passover [the Last Supper] see notes on *Matt. 26:20-25*. Also see notes on *John 13:21-30*.

suffering. ³⁶“Father!” he prayed, “my Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But not what I want, but what you want.”

³⁷Then he returned and found the three disciples asleep, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Weren’t you able to stay awake for one hour?” ³⁸And he said to them, “Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹He went away once more and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰Then he came back to the disciples and found them asleep; they could not keep their eyes open. And they did not know what to say to him.

⁴¹When he came back the third time, he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come! Look, the Son of Man is now handed over to the power of sinful men. ⁴²Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!”

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.47-56; Luke 22.47-53; John 18.3-12*)

⁴³Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a crowd carrying swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders. ⁴⁴The traitor had given the crowd a signal: “The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him and take him away under guard.”

⁴⁵As soon as Judas arrived he went up to Jesus and said, “Teacher!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶So they

“Abba, Father,” he said, ³⁶ “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

Then he returned to his ³⁷ disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and ³⁸ pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

Once more he went away ³⁹ and prayed the same thing. When he came back, he ⁴⁰ again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

Returning the third time, ⁴¹ he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! ⁴² Here comes my betrayer!”

Jesus Arrested

Just as he was speaking, ⁴³ Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

Now the betrayer had ⁴⁴ arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. The men seized ⁴⁶ Jesus and arrested him.

43-52. **Jesus was still speaking.** See notes on *Matt. 26:47-56*. Only Mark tells the incident in *verses 51-52*. Many think the “certain young man” was Mark himself. Mark’s mother lived in Jerusalem (*Acts 12:12,25*), and some think the Passover was eaten and the Lord’s Supper instituted in the upstairs room of her house. The “linen cloth” was a nightrobe [sindon] which only the wealthy would wear. Mark was not an apostle, but was very close to them. When they left the upstairs room and went with Jesus to Gethsemane, Mark might have put on his linen robe and followed them out into the night. This whole incident shows the panic of the disciples when the attack suddenly struck them.

arrested Jesus and held him tight. ⁴⁷But one of those standing by drew his sword and struck at the High Priest's slave, cutting off his ear. ⁴⁸Then Jesus spoke up and said to them, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs to capture me, as though I were an outlaw? ⁴⁹Day after day I was with you teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must come true."

⁵⁰Then all the disciples left him and ran away.

⁵¹A certain young man, dressed only in a linen cloth, was following Jesus. They tried to arrest him, ⁵²but he ran away naked, leaving the linen cloth behind.

Jesus before the Council

(Also *Matt. 26:57-68; Luke 22.54-55, 63-71; John 18.13-14, 19-24*)

⁵³Then they took Jesus to the High Priest's house, where all the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the Law were gathering. ⁵⁴Peter followed from a distance and went into the courtyard of the High Priest's house. There he sat down with the guards, keeping himself warm by the fire. ⁵⁵The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some evidence against Jesus, in order to put him to death; but they could not find any. ⁵⁶Many witnesses told lies against Jesus, but their stories did not agree.

⁵⁷Then some men stood up and told this lie against Jesus, ⁵⁸"We heard him say, 'I will tear down this temple which men made, and after three days I will build one that is not made by men.' " ⁵⁹Not even they, however, could make their stories agree.

⁶⁰The High Priest stood up in front of them all and questioned Jesus, "Have you no answer to the accusation they bring against you?"

Then one of those standing 47 near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

"Am I leading a rebel- 48 lion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I was with you, 49 teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." Then 50 everyone deserted him and fled.

A young man, wearing 51 nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he 52 fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

Before the Sanhedrin

They took Jesus to the 53 high priest, and all the chief priests, elders and teachers of the law came together. Peter followed him at a distance, 54 right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.

The chief priests and the 55 whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified 56 falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

Then some stood up and 57 gave this false testimony against him: "We heard 58 him say, 'I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man.'" Yet even then their testimony 59 did not agree.

Then the high priest stood 60 up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are

53-65. Then they took Jesus to the High Priest's house. See notes on *Matt. 26:57-68*. Compare the parallel verses in the other Gospels.

⁶¹But Jesus kept quiet and would not say a word. Again the High Priest questioned him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed God?"

⁶²"I am," answered Jesus, "and you will all see the Son of Man seated at the right side of the Almighty, and coming with the clouds of heaven!"

⁶³The High Priest tore his robes and said, "We don't need any more witnesses! ⁶⁴You heard his wicked words. What is your decision?"

They all voted against him: he was guilty and should be put to death.

⁶⁵Some of them began to spit on Jesus, and they blindfolded him and hit him. "Guess who hit you!" they said. And the guards took him and slapped him.

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.69.75; Luke 22.56-62; John 18.15-18, 25-27*)

⁶⁶Peter was still down in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant girls came by. ⁶⁷When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Nazareth."

⁶⁸But he denied it. "I don't know . . . I don't understand what you are talking about," he answered, and went out into the passageway; just then a rooster crowed.

⁶⁹The servant girl saw him there and began to repeat to the bystanders, "He is one of them!"

⁷⁰But Peter denied it again.

A little while later the bystanders accused

bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

"I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"

They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him

Peter Disowns Jesus

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him.

"You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus," she said.

But he denied it. "I don't know or understand what you're talking about," he said, and went out into the entryway.

When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, "This fellow is one of them." Again he denied it.

After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean."

66-72. Peter was still down in the courtyard. See notes on *Matt. 26:69-75*. And he broke down and cried. The Greek uses a verb which shows *continuous actions*, to emphasize Peter's sorrow. *Geikie* writes: "It is a touching and beautiful tradition, true to the sincerity of his repentance, if not as a historical reality, that, all his life long, the remembrance of this night never left him, and that, morning by morning, he rose at the hour when the look of his Master had entered his soul, to pray once more for pardon." Compare Jesus' prophecy (*Luke 22:32*), and the event of *John 21:15-17*.

Peter again, "You can't deny that you are one of them, because you, too, are from Galilee."

⁷¹Then Peter made a vow: "May God punish me if I am not telling the truth! I do not know the man you are talking about!"

⁷²Just then a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows two times you will say three times that you do not know me." And he broke down and cried.

Jesus before Pilate

(Also *Matt. 27.1-2, 11-14; Luke 23.1-5; John 18.28-38*)

15 Early in the morning the chief priests met hurriedly with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council, and made their plans. They put Jesus in chains, took him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ²Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "So you say."

³The chief priests accused Jesus of many things, 'so Pilate questioned him again, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they accuse you of!"

⁵Again Jesus refused to say a word, and Pilate was filled with surprise.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also *Matt. 27.15-26; Luke 23.13-25; John 18.39-19.16*)

⁶At every Passover Feast Pilate would set free any prisoner the people asked for. ⁷At that time a man named Barabbas was in prison with the

He began to call down 71 curses on himself, and he swore to them, "I don't know this man you're talking about."

Immediately the rooster 72 crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows twice, you will disown me three times." And he broke down and wept.

Jesus Before Pilate

15 Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

"Are you the king of the 2 Jews?" asked Pilate.

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

The chief priests accused 3 him of many things. So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of." 4

But Jesus still made no 5 reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Now it was the custom at 6 the Feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested. A man called Barabbas 7 was in prison with the in-

1. They put Jesus in chains, took him away, and handed him over to Pilate. See notes on *Matt. 27.1-2, 11-14*. The four Gospels give slightly differing accounts, but if we could have been eyewitnesses of the events, we would see how they accurately present the things that happened.

7. A man named Barabbas. This man was the leader of a group of rebels who had caused a riot and committed murder in it. Barabbas was one of the STASIASTON = rebels, insurrectionists. The Expositor's Greek Testament says: "They were no mere band of brigands but men engaged in an insurrection, probably of a political character, rising out of the restless desire of many for independence, and in

rebels who had committed murder in the riot. ⁸When the crowd gathered and began to ask Pilate for the usual favor, ⁹he asked them, "Do you want me to set free for you the king of the Jews?" ¹⁰He knew very well that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask, instead, for Pilate to set Barabbas free for them. ¹²Pilate spoke again to the crowd, "What, then, do you want me to do with the one you call the king of the Jews?"

¹³They shouted back, "Nail him to the cross!"

¹⁴"But what crime has he committed?" Pilate asked.

They shouted all the louder, "Nail him to the cross!"

¹⁵Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be nailed to the cross.

The Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.27-31; John 19.2-3)

¹⁶The soldiers took Jesus inside the courtyard (that is, of the governor's palace) and called together the rest of the company. ¹⁷They put a purple robe on Jesus, made a crown out of thorny branches, and put it on his head. ¹⁸Then they began to salute him: "Long live the King of the

surrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did. 8

"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead. 9 10 11

"What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them. 12

"Crucify him!" they shouted. 13

"Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. 14

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" 15

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. 16 17 18

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. They put a purple robe on him, then wove a crown of thorns and set it on him. And they began to call out to him, "Hail, King of

connection with that guilty of murder." This adds up to the fact that: (1) Barabbas was in prison for leading a rebellion against the Roman authorities. (2) There were others involved in this with him. (3) Rebellion was a crime punished by crucifixion. (4) This activity identifies both Barabbas and those with him as "zealots." (5) The fact that this all happened about the same time is strong evidence that both thieves who were crucified with Jesus, were partners of Barabbas in this insurrection, which would mean they were *zealots* as well. Josephus, the Jewish Historian, tells of an insurrection at about this time, caused by Pilate taking money from the temple treasury to construct an aqueduct. This might be the incident here, since many were killed in the rebellion Josephus speaks of. "Zealots" were "vigilante-outlaws," who used the *cloak* of "freedom fighter" to cover their *hoodlum* activities. (See also notes on Luke 23:40-42.)

15. So he set Barabbas free for them. It was ironic to set the guilty man free, and to hand Jesus over to be nailed to the cross. See 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28.

Jews!" ¹⁹They beat him over the head with a stick, spat on him, fell on their knees, and bowed down to him. ²⁰When they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to nail him to the cross.

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also *Matt. 27.32-44; Luke 23.26-43; John 19.17-27*)

²¹On the way they met a man named Simon, who was coming into the city from the country, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (This was Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.) ²²They brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of the Skull." ²³There they tried to give him wine mixed with a drug called myrrh, but Jesus would not drink it. ²⁴So they nailed him to the cross and divided his clothes among themselves, throwing dice to see who would get which piece of clothing. ²⁵It was nine o'clock in the morning when they nailed him to the cross. ²⁶The notice of the accusation against him was written, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷They also nailed two bandits to crosses with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left. [²⁸In this way the scripture came true which says, "He was included with criminals."] ²⁹People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus: "Aha! You were going to tear down the temple and build it up in three days! ³⁰Now come down from the cross and save yourself!"

³¹In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law made fun of Jesus, saying to each other, "He saved others, but he cannot

the Jews!" Again and again ¹⁹ they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they worshiped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. ²⁰

The Crucifixion

A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means, The Place of the Skull). Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. ²¹

It was the third hour when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!" ²² ²³ ²⁴ ²⁵ ²⁶ ²⁷ ²⁸ ²⁹ ³⁰

In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he

21-41. And they forced him to carry Jesus' cross. See notes on *Matt. 27:32-56*. Only Mark tells us that Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Compare *Rom. 16:13; Acts 19:33*. Evidently both were well known to Mark's first readers. Even though Cyrene was in North Africa, it had a large Jewish population. Simon was probably a Jew, come to Jerusalem for the Passover, but some think he may have been a "black" man.

save himself! ³²Let us see the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him!"

And the two who were crucified with Jesus insulted him also.

The Death of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.45-56; Luke 23.44-49

John 19.28-30)

³³At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. ³⁴At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

³⁵Some of the people who were there heard him and said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah!" ³⁶One of them ran up with a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, and put it on the end of a stick. Then he held it up to Jesus' lips and said, "Wait! Let us see if Elijah is coming to bring him down from the cross!"

³⁷With a loud cry Jesus died.

³⁸The curtain hanging in the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹The army officer, who was standing there in front of the cross, saw how Jesus had cried out and died. "This man was really the Son of God!" he said.

⁴⁰Some women were there, looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹They had followed Jesus while he was in Galilee and helped him. Many other women were there also, who had come to Jerusalem with him.

The Burial of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.57-61; Luke 23.50-56;

John 19.38-42)

⁴²⁻⁴³ It was getting on toward evening when Joseph of Arimathea arrived. He was a respected

can't save himself! Let this ³² Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

The Death of Jesus

At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus ³⁴ cried out in a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*"— which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

When some of those ³⁵ standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

One man ran, filled a ³⁶ sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Leave him alone now. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

With a loud cry, Jesus ³⁷ breathed his last.

The curtain of the temple ³⁸ was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

The Burial of Jesus

It was Preparation Day ⁴² (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening

42-47. It was getting on toward evening. See notes on Matt. 27:57-61. John tells us that Nicodemus was with Joseph of Arimathea when he asked for the body of Jesus and placed it in the new grave. Both of

member of the Council, who looked for the coming of the Kingdom of God. It was Preparation day (that is, the day before the Sabbath); so Joseph went in bravely to the presence of Pilate and asked him for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead. He called the army officer and asked him if Jesus had been dead a long time. ⁴⁵After hearing the officer's report, Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. ⁴⁶Joseph bought a linen sheet, took the body down, wrapped it in the sheet, and placed it in a grave which had been dug out of the rock. Then he rolled a large stone across the entrance to the grave. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were watching, and saw where Jesus was placed.

approached, Joseph of Ari- 43
 mathea, a prominent member
 of the Council, who was
 himself waiting for the king-
 dom of God, went boldly to
 Pilate and asked for Jesus' 44
 body. Pilate was surprised to
 hear that he was already
 dead. Summoning the centurion,
 he asked him if Jesus
 had already died. When he 45
 learned from the centurion
 that it was so, he gave the
 body to Joseph. So Joseph 46
 bought some linen cloth,
 took down the body,
 wrapped it in the linen, and
 placed it in a tomb cut out of
 rock. Then he rolled a stone
 against the entrance of the
 tomb. Mary Magdalene and 47
 Mary the mother of Joses
 saw where he was laid.

The Resurrection

(Also Matt. 28.1-8; Luke 24.1-12; John 20.1-10)

16 After the Sabbath day was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to go and anoint the body of Jesus. ²Very early on Sunday morning, at sunrise, they went to the grave. ³“On the way they said to one another, “Who will roll away for us the stone from the entrance to the grave?” (It was a very large stone.) Then they looked up and saw that the stone had already been rolled

The Resurrection

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?”
 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had

these men were members of the Sanhedrin. Nicodemus was a follower of Jesus (John 3:1-5), and attempted to get Jesus a fair hearing before the Sanhedrin (John 7:50-51).

1. **After the Sabbath day was over.** See notes on Matt. 28:1-17. Mark adds a few details. By the Jewish way of counting time, the Sabbath ended at 6 P.M. (sunset) on the day we call Saturday [the first day of the new week began at this point]. The women began their preparations then, planning to go to the grave at dawn. **Bought spices to go and anoint the body of Jesus.** This shows that they did not think in terms of a resurrection. Nicodemus had brought spices (John 19:39-40). Perhaps there had not been time to prepare the body properly, and the women expected to complete the job. Or, this might have been just an expression of their love.

3. **Who will roll away?** They did not know about the guard and the seal on the stone (Matt. 27:62-66). The grave was a cave cut out of the rock, closed by a huge stone rolled against the entrance. Their worry is about how they will get in to the grave.

4. **Then they looked up.** They may have been looking down before, talking about all that had happened, as they walked toward the grave. The grave was probably above them, cut back into the face of the rock.

back. ⁵So they entered the grave, where they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe—and they were filled with alarm.

⁶“Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was nailed to the cross. He is not here—he has been raised! Look, here is the place where they placed him. ⁷Now go and give this message to his disciples, including Peter: ‘He is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him, just as he told you.’”

⁸So they went out and ran from the grave, because fear and terror were upon them. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

AN OLD ENDING TO THE GOSPEL

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

(Also Matt. 28.9-10; John 20.11-18)

[⁹After Jesus rose from death, early on Sunday, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from

been rolled away. As they ⁵ entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶“Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, ⁷ tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.’”

⁸Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

The Appearances and Ascension of Jesus

⁹When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She

5. **So they entered the grave.** Mary Magdalene sees the stone rolled back, thinks the Jewish leaders have taken the body, and runs to find Peter and John (*John 20:1-2*). The other women enter the grave. **Saw a young man.** Matthew identifies him as an angel of the Lord. Luke says there were two of them, and there may have been more. They may have both sat and stood as they spoke with the women; and have been both inside and outside the grave at different points of time. [*Angels: see Heb. 1:14.*]

6. **He has been raised!** See *Rom. 6:4,9*. Sin and death came into the world through a woman (*Gen. 3:6; 1 Tim 2:14*). It is only right, then, that the Savior would come into the world through a woman (*Luke 1:26-38*), and that the Good News of the Resurrection should be first announced to women.

7. **Now go and give this message.** The angel tells them this. Note Peter is included specifically. [Peter might have thought his “denial of Jesus” had disqualified him as an apostle.] The first one to see the Risen Lord was Mary Magdalene (*John 20:11-18*) [he had driven seven evil spirits out of her]; and his special message is to Peter [who had denied him, with a vow]. Read *John 3:17*.

8. **They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.** They were terrified and dumfounded by all that had taken place. This day was unique in all of time and eternity! They run! - away from the grave, to tell the disciples that **JESUS HAS RISEN FROM DEATH! AN OLD ENDING TO THE GOSPEL.** Facts are stubborn things. Of the four oldest and most reliable Greek manuscripts, the Sanaiticus and Vaticanus close Mark at *verse 8*. But the Alexandrinus and Ephraemi Rescriptus give the longer ending, and it must have been in existence at the end of the First Century. The Regius and Athos manuscripts (along with others) give both endings. Both fragments are considered authentic.

9. **After Jesus rose from death.** The Jews counted their Sunday from 6 P.M. Saturday (*our time - see note on Acts 20:7*); but they counted night first, then day [“A day has twelve hours, has it not?” (*John 11:9*)]. What Mark says identifies Jesus rising from death just at sunrise (as darkness becomes light), as the women are coming to the grave. **He appeared first to Mary Magdalene.** This shows that she had left the other women. See notes on *John 20:11-18*.

whom he had driven out seven demons. ¹⁰She went and told it to his companions. They were mourning and crying; ¹¹and when they heard her say that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe her.

Jesus Appears to Two Disciples

(Also Luke 24.13-35)

¹²After this, Jesus appeared in a different manner to two of them while they were on their way to the country. ¹³They returned and told it to the others, but they would not believe it.

Jesus Appears to the Eleven

(Also Matt. 28.16-20; Luke 24.36-49;
John 20.19-23; Acts 1.6-8)

¹⁴Last of all, Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating. He scolded them, because they did not have faith and because they were too stubborn to believe those who had seen him alive. ¹⁵He said to them, "Go to the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind.

went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.

Afterward Jesus appeared ¹²in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. ¹³

Later Jesus appeared to ¹⁴the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

He said to them, "Go into ¹⁵all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

10. **She went and told it.** While she was on her way to tell the others, Jesus appeared to the other women, who also had started on their way to tell the others Jesus had raised from death. See notes on Matt. 28:9-10.

11. **They did not believe her.** The fact of their disbelief is proof they did not *invent* the account of the Resurrection.

12. **Jesus appeared in a different manner.** [He appeared to Peter alone before this. See note on Matt 28:9 for a list of recorded appearances.] This took place on Sunday afternoon (Luke 24:13-35). Luke says they "*somehow did not recognize him.*" If their eyes were clouded, Jesus would seem to them to be in a different form.

13. **They returned.** To the upstairs room. They found the eleven disciples there, with the others (Luke 24:33). **And told it.** They explained about all that had happened to them on the road to Emmaus.

14. **Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples.** This was the last time, just before he was taken up to heaven. There are four accounts of this. It is amazing that they are still too stubborn to really believe he is alive, even at the end of forty days time after the Resurrection. See note on Acts 1:6-8.

15. **He said to them.** Jesus was seen many times during the forty days, and he may have spoken these words many times also. Matthew's Gospel gives the Great Commission as Jesus gave it to the "more than five hundred" (1 Cor. 15:6) at the meeting in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20). What Mark records, may have been spoken there also. **Go to the whole world.** Jesus is the Savior of the world! This Good News must be taken to everyone in the world! [Before his death, they were sent to the Jews only (Matt. 10:6). Now all national distinctions disappear, and people become one in Christ (Gal. 3:28).] **Preach the gospel.** God has acted in History! The Gospel is the Good News of this ACT: the death, burial, and raising to life of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1-4). We reach out through faith to make ourselves part of this ACT.

¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷Believers will be given these signs of power: they will drive out demons in my name; they will speak in strange tongues; ¹⁸if they pick up snakes or drink any poison, they will not be harmed; they will place their hands on the sick, who will get well."

Jesus Is Taken up to Heaven

(Also Luke 24.50-53; Acts 1.9-11)

¹⁹After the Lord Jesus had talked with them, he was taken up to heaven and sat at the right side of God. ²⁰The disciples went and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and proved that their preaching was true by giving them the signs of power.]

Whoever believes and is 16
baptized will be saved, but
whoever does not believe will
be condemned. And these 17
signs will accompany those
who believe: In my name
they will drive out demons;
they will speak in new
tongues; they will pick up 18
snakes with their hands; and
when they drink deadly
poison, it will not hurt them
at all; they will place their
hands on sick people, and
they will get well."

After the Lord Jesus had 19
spoken to them, he was
taken up into heaven and he
sat at the right hand of God.
Then the disciples went out 20
and preached everywhere,
and the Lord worked with
them and confirmed his
word by the signs that ac-
companied it.

16. **Whoever believes.** Who believes the Good News, and trusts Christ. [On "faith," see note on James 2:19.] **And is baptized.** Faith is *obediential*. One who does not have enough faith in Christ to obey him does not have enough faith to be saved. Compare Acts 22:16. **Whoever does not believe.** Some will reject the Good News and remain in *unbelief*: Such have no promise See John 3:18. Jesus offers the way to escape!

17-18. **Believers will be given.** It is generally thought that this is a promise limited to the apostolic age [some think these signs of power ended when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.]. The primary force of this promise is clearly to the eleven in *verse 14*, who were specifically given the command to "Go." Yet others were given special powers, probably through the "laying on" of the apostle's hands (Acts 19:6). See Acts 2:4; 5:16; 8:7; 16:18; 28:3-6.

19. **After the Lord Jesus had talked with them.** After he has placed upon both them and the messianic community [church], the *obligation* of preaching the Good News to the whole world. **He was taken up into heaven.** Acts tells that a cloud hid him from their sight. Jesus now sits at the "right side of God," where he pleads with God [*intercession*] for his people [*the church*] (Heb 9:25).

20. **The disciples went and preached everywhere.** The book of Acts shows the disciples *transformed* as they receive power and understand all that Jesus had taught them (John 16:12-15). The purposes of the messianic community is to make disciples for Christ [not just to save souls]. The requirement for salvation is a faith which reaches out through obedience. The result of rejecting Christ's salvation, is to **REMAIN UNDER** the sentence of eternal condemnation ("And you will die in your sins if you do not believe that 'I Am Who I Am' " John 8:24).

ANOTHER OLD ENDING

[⁹The women went to Peter and his friends and gave them a brief account of all they had been told. ¹⁰After this, Jesus himself sent out through his disciples, from the east to the west, the sacred and ever-living message of eternal salvation.]

ANOTHER OLD ENDING. See comment at the end of *verse 8* on the two endings.

9. **The women went to Peter.** See notes on *Luke 24:8-12*.

10. **Jesus himself sent out through his disciples.** Jesus works through his church. "*He has no hands but our hands, his work of love to do.*" [Note: on the meaning of "church," see note on *Matt. 16:18*.]