

**THE
BIBLE STUDY
NEW TESTAMENT**

The Bible Study Textbook Series

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THE BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK SERIES

**THE
BIBLE STUDY
NEW TESTAMENT**

**THE GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN
and
THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION**

**with
Explanatory Notes
by
Rhoderick D. Ice**

**Volume One
The Four Gospels and Acts**

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PREFACE

A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The motto of World Radio, West Monroe, Louisiana, is: "Preaching Jesus Christ to every man in his own language." My purpose is to do just that in the type of American English in use today. As one of the Pioneers said: "It would be just as reasonable to require men to worship God wearing long beards, with Jewish or Roman clothes, as it is to hand them the Bible in archaic language which is less intelligible and more easily misunderstood." [A.C. 1826] An accurate translation will transmit the *message* of the original writers in the *usage, style, and idiom* of the language of translation. In other words, one who reads a translation today should receive the same *understanding* from the language that a citizen of the First Century world did from reading the original manuscripts in Koine' Greek.

In this book will be found the thinking of the Pioneers of the Restoration. The *People's New Testament* by B. W. Johnson serves as a pattern, but this is not a revision or even a paraphrase, it is completely new. Almost a century has passed since Johnson completed his work. Manuscripts more ancient have been discovered since then (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls). More is known about some questions. A strong case can be made linking the thieves crucified with Jesus to the Zealots, who were armed terrorists. Some new study gives light to the thorny problem of 1 Cor. 14:34-35. More emphasis has been placed on the sacrifice of Christ *extrinsic* to ourself, and how we reach out through faith to seize it and make ourselves part of it. Some new thinking on the Book of Revelation penetrates the veil which the Middle Ages placed over this book. I have adopted the overall view called "synchronistic," which to me seems the most logical and reasonable explanation of this book [which was obviously written to suffering Christian in the last ten years of the First Century].

Twenty-five years of my personal ministry, over five hundred books (many by the Restoration Pioneers), plus thousands of papers, tracts, magazines, etc., of widely varying religious communities, have been distilled in this book. I have made a conscious attempt to avoid the language of any one group, and as much as possible, to avoid "technical church language." The style grows out of spending three and a half years trying to pack as much meaning as possible into a daily five-minute radio program. I have used a conversational approach, and you will sometimes find an unusual grammatical construction, either to conform to current

PREFACE

usage, or to stress some special fact. I have made an effort to conform to the vocabulary of the Today's English Version, Third Edition.

In this book are the two most important translations of our time. When *Good News for Modern Man* first came out, I recognized in it the same *empathy* as the *Authorized Version* of 1611. This makes it unique among the new versions. I believe that *Good News for Modern Man* (The Today's English Version) has already become the New Authorized Version, and *that this is God's will*. It has had its "baptism of fire," survived, and gained strength. This same phenomenon has taken place in many other languages, and we have the counterpart of "Today's English Version" in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, etc., — a *flood* of new versions making God's Truth available in spoken language of common people. I believe God is using these new versions to call men to himself — just as He used the German version by Luther, the English version by Tyndale, etc.

The New International Version is described as a worthy successor to the American Standard Version of 1901. Pat Patterson calls it: "A careful new translation." It is an "evangelical" version, made in scholarly style. This makes for both strengths and weaknesses. This version has yet to undergo its "baptism of fire," but will certainly survive to take its rightful place.

The name of this book shows its purpose: "The Bible Study New Testament." There can be no "short-cut" to spirituality! God has revealed himself to us in a book — the Bible — and we must **STUDY** to find him. Paul said (in the language of King James): "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the *present truth*."

Written from Lynchburg, Virginia, July 1974.

R. D. Ice

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

ORDER	BOOK	NO. OF CH.	ORDER	BOOK	NO. OF CH.
I. BIOGRAPHICAL					
1	Matthew	28	13	I. Thessalonians	5
2	Mark	16	14	II. Thessalonians	3
3	Luke	24	15	I. Timothy	6
4	John	21	16	II. Timothy	4
II. HISTORICAL					
5	Acts of the Apostles	28	17	Titus	3
III. DIDACTICAL					
6	Romans	16	18	Philemon	1
7	I. Corinthians	16	19	Hebrews	13
8	II. Corinthians	13	20	James	5
9	Galatians	6	21	I. Peter	5
10	Ephesians	6	22	II. Peter	3
11	Philippians	4	23	I. John	5
12	Colossians	4	24	II. John	1
IV. PROPHETICAL					
			25	III. John	1
			26	Jude	1
			27	Revelation	22

Harmony of the Gospels

B. C.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1:1-5
5	<i>Preface</i> .....	.....	.....	.....	1:1-4	
	Annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist	Jerusalem .....	.....	.....	1:5-25	
	Espousal of Virgin Mary	Nazareth	1:18	.....	1:27	
	The Annunciation of the birth of Jesus	Nazareth .....	.....	.....	1:26-38	
	The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth	Hebron, or Juttah .....	.....	.....	1:39-55	
	Her return to Nazareth .....	.....	.....	.....	1:56	
4	Joseph's vision	Nazareth	1:20-25	.....	.....
	Birth and infancy of John Baptist	Hebron .....	.....	.....	1:57-80	
	Birth of Jesus	Bethlehem .....	.....	.....	2:1-7	
	Adoration by shepherds	Bethlehem .....	.....	.....	2:8-16	
	Circumcision	Bethlehem	1:25	.....	2:21	
	Presentation and purification	Jerusalem .....	.....	.....	2:22-29	
	<i>Genealogies</i> .....	.....	1:17	.....	3:23	
3	Adoration by the wise men	Bethlehem	2:1-12	.....	.....
A. D.	Flight into Egypt	Egypt	2:13-15	.....	.....
	Massacre of the Innocents	Bethlehem	2:16-18	.....	.....
1	Return to Nazareth	Nazareth	2:19-23	.....	2:39	
	Childhood of Jesus	Nazareth .....	.....	.....	2:40	
7	With the doctors in the temple	Jerusalem .....	.....	.....	2:46-50	
7-26	Youth of Jesus	Nazareth .....	.....	.....	2:51	
	MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST					
26	Ministry of John the Baptist	Bethabara	3:1-4	1:1-8	3:1-6	1:6-15
	Baptisms by John the Baptist	Bethabara	3:5	1:5	3:7	
	Witness to Christ by John	Bethabara	3:11, 12	1:7, 8	3:15-18	
	Baptism of Jesus by John	Bethabara	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21, 22	
	Temptation of Jesus	Wilderness of Judaea	4:1-11	1:12, 13	4:1-13	
	John Baptist's second testimony	Bethabara .....	.....	.....	.....	1:19-35
	Call of first disciples (five)	Bethabara .....	.....	.....	.....	1:37-51
	CHRIST'S FIRST APPEARANCE					
27	First miracle, at Cana	Cana .....	.....	.....	.....	2:1-11
	Visit to Capernaum	Capernaum .....	.....	.....	.....	2:12
	First PASSOVER; first cleansing of temple	Jerusalem .....	.....	.....	.....	2:13-23
	Discourse with Nicodemus	Jerusalem .....	.....	.....	.....	3:1-21
	The Baptist's last testimony	Aenon .....	.....	.....	.....	3:25-36
	Christ's visit to Samaria	Sychar .....	.....	.....	.....	4:1-42
	Christ's return to Cana	Cana .....	.....	.....	.....	4:43-46
	Christ's healing of nobleman's son	Cana .....	.....	.....	.....	4:46-54
	FIRST PUBLIC PREACHING					
27	Imprisonment of John the Baptist	Machaerus	4:12	1:14	.....
	Christ's preaching in Galilee:—	.....	.....	.....	.....
	Christ's preaching at Nazareth	Nazareth .....	.....	6:1	4:15-30	
	Christ's preaching at Capernaum	Capernaum	4:13	.....	4:31	
	Call of Andrew, Peter, James, and John	Capernaum	4:18-22	1:16	.....
	Miracles:—Casting out a devil	Capernaum .....	.....	1:23	4:33	
	Miracles:—Healing Peter's mother-in-law	Capernaum .....	.....	1:29	4:38	
	Miracles:—Healing many sick and diseased	Capernaum .....	.....	1:32	4:40	
	FIRST GENERAL CIRCUIT					
27	<i>Preparatory Prayer</i> .....	.....	.....	1:35	4:42	
	Circuit through Galilee .....	.....	4:23-25	1:39	4:44	
	SERMON ON THE MOUNT					
	Sermon in the boat; miraculous draught of fish	Hill above Gennesaret	5:7-27	.....	.....
	Healing of a leper	Gennesaret	8:2-4	.....	5:1	
				1:40	5:12	

A.D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	<i>Retirement for prayer</i>	Capernaum ..	9:2	1:45 2:1	5:16 5:17	
	Healing of palsied man	Capernaum ..	9:9	2:13-18	5:27-33	
	Call of Matthew (<i>Levi</i>), supper, and discourse	Capernaum ..				
	SECOND YEAR'S MINISTRY					
28	Second Passover	Jerusalem ...				5:1
	Miracle at Bethesda, and discourse on it	Jerusalem ...				5:2-47
	The Sabbath; plucking corn	Galilee	12:1	2:23	6:1	
	The miracle of the withered hand	Capernaum ..	12:10	3:1	6:6	
	Opposition of Herodians	Capernaum ..	12:14	3:6	6:11	
	<i>Retirement for prayer</i>	Capernaum ..		3:13	6:12	
	Ordination of Twelve apostles	Capernaum ..	10:2-4	8:14	6:13	
	SERMON IN THE PLAIN (of Gennesaret)	near "			6:17-49	
	Healing centurion's servant	near "	8:5-13		7:1	
	Healing son of widow of Nain	Nain			7:11	
	Message from John Baptist; Christ's testimony	Capernaum ..	11:2-7		7:17-24	
	Warning to Chorazin, &c	Capernaum ..	11:20-28			
	Mary Magdalene	Capernaum (?)			7:36	
	SECOND GENERAL CIRCUIT					
	Through Galilee	Galilee		3:19	8:1-3	
	Healing of demoniac	Capernaum ..	12:22			
	Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost	Capernaum ..	12:24	3:22		
	The unclean spirit	Capernaum ..	12:43			
	The interruption of His relatives	Capernaum ..	12:46	3:31		
28	Parables:—The Sower	Plain of Gen- nesaret	13:1-9, 18-23	4:1, 14-20	8:4, 11-15	
	The Tares	"	13:24			
	The Mustard Seed	"	13:31	4:30		
	The Leaven	"	13:33			
	The Candle	"		4:21	8:16	
	The Treasure	"	13:44			
	The Pearl	"	13:45			
	The Net	"	13:47			
	Christ calms the storm	Sea of Genne- saret	8:24	4:37	8:23	
	Christ suffers devils to enter the swine	Gadara	8:28	5:1	8:27	
	Parables:—Bridegroom	Capernaum ..	9:15			
	New cloth, new wine	Capernaum ..	9:16, 17			
	Miracles:—Issue of blood	Gennesaret ..	9:18	5:22	8:41	
	Jairus' daughter	Capernaum ..	9:18	5:22	8:41	
	Two blind men	Capernaum ..	9:27			
	Dumb spirit	Capernaum ..	9:32			
	THIRD GENERAL CIRCUIT					
	Mission of the Twelve Apostles		10:1	6:6-11	9:1-3	
	Death of John the Baptist	Machaerus ..	14:1	6:14	9:7	
	Feeding five thousand	Bethsaida ..	14:13	6:30	9:12	
	Walking on the water	Lake	14:25	6:48		6:1
	Discourse on the plain and in the synagogue	Capernaum ..	14:34			6:19 6:22-70
	THIRD YEAR'S MINISTRY					
	Discourse on pollution	Capernaum ..	15:1-20	7:1-23		
	Syrophoenician woman	Phoenicia ..	15:21	7:24		
28	Miracles:—Healing of the deaf and dumb man	Decapolis ..		7:32		
	Healing of many sick	Decapolis ..	15:29			
	Feeding four thousand	Gennesaret ..	15:32	8:1		
	Parable of leaven	Gennesaret ..	16:5	8:14		
	Healing blind man	Bethsaida ..		8:22		
	Peter's confession of Christ's Divinity		16:13	8:27	9:18	

A.D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	TRANSFIGURATION	Mount Tabor, or Hermon	17:1	9:2	9:28	
	Healing demoniac child	"	17:14	9:14	9:37	
	Predictions of His Passion	Galilee	17:22	9:30	9:43	
	The stater in the fish's mouth	Capernaum	17:27			
	Lesson on docility . . . . .	. . . . .	18:1	9:33	9:46	
	Lesson on forgiveness . . . . .	. . . . .	18:15	9:43		
	Lesson on self-denial . . . . .	. . . . .	18:18			
	Parable of the unmerciful servant . . . . .	. . . . .	18:23			
	THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES	Jerusalem				7:2, 10
	Discourses	Jerusalem				7:10-46
	Officers sent to arrest Him	Jerusalem				7:30, 46
	The adulteress	Jerusalem				8:3
	Discourses	Jerusalem				8:12
	Threatened with stoning	Jerusalem				8:59
	Healing of blind man, and and discourses	Jerusalem				9:1
	Christ the DOOR	Jerusalem				10:1
28	Christ the GOOD SHEPHERD	Jerusalem				10:11
	FEAST OF DEDICATION	Jerusalem				10:22
	Christ's oneness with the Father	Jerusalem				10:30
	Christ's retreat across the Jordan	Peraea				10:40
	Christ's raising of Lazarus	Bethany				11:1
	Christ's retreat to Ephraim	Ephraim				11:54
	* Christ's repulse by the Samaritans	Samaria			9:53	
	* Mission of the Seventy	Galilee			10:1-17	
	* Parable of the Good Samaritan	Jerusalem			10:30	
	* Visit to Martha and Mary	Bethany			10:38	
	* The Lord's Prayer	Mount of Olives	6:9-13		11:2-4	
	Parable of the importunity of a friend	"			11:5	
	The dumb spirit	Jerusalem			11:14	
	The rich fool	Jerusalem			12:16	
	God's providence to birds and flowers	Jerusalem			12:22-30	
	The barren fig tree	Jerusalem			13:6	
	The woman with an infirmity	Jerusalem			13:11	
	* The mustard seed	Jerusalem			13:18	
	* Healing the man with dropsy	Jerusalem			14:1-4	
	* Lesson on humility	Jerusalem			14:7	
	Parables:—The Great supper	Jerusalem			14:12	
	The Lost Sheep and piece of silver	Jerusalem			15:1	
	The Prodigal son	Jerusalem			15:11	
	The Unjust steward	Jerusalem			16:1	
	The Dives and Lazarus	Jerusalem			16:19	
	* The ten lepers	Samaria			17:11	
	Parables:—Importunate widow	Jerusalem			18:1	
	Pharisee and publican	Jerusalem			18:9	
	Rich young man	Jerusalem	19:16	10:17	18:18	
	Labourers in the vineyard	Jerusalem	20:1			
	Ten pounds	Jerusalem			19:12	
	* Healing blind Bartimaeus	Jericho	20:29	10:46		
	THE LAST PASSOVER					
29	The supper in Simon's house	Bethany	26:6-13	14:3-9		12:1
	Mary anoints Jesus	Bethany	26:7	14:3		12:3
	Triumphal entry into the temple	Jerusalem	21:1-17	11:1-11	19:29-41	12:12-20
	Retirement to Bethany	Bethany	21:17	11:11		
	Cursing the fig tree	Mount of Olives	21:18	11:12		

* As an interval of nearly three months occurred between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication, some place the events marked * in that interval, and vary their order, putting the "healing of the ten lepers" immediately after the "repulse by the Samaritans."

A.D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	Cleansing the temple	Jerusalem	21:12	11:15	19:45	
	Retirement to Bethany	Bethany	.....	11:19		
	The withered fig tree and its lesson	Mount of Olives	.....	11:20		
	Discourses in the temple:—					
	The father and two sons	Jerusalem	21:28			
	The wicked husbandmen	Jerusalem	21:33	12:1	20:9	
	The wedding garment	Jerusalem	22:1			
	Tribute money	Jerusalem	22:15	12:13	20:20	
	The Sadducees and resurrection	Jerusalem	22:23	12:18	20:27	
	The great commandment	Jerusalem	22:34	12:28		
	The widow's mite	Jerusalem	.....	12:41	21:1	
	The eight woes	Jerusalem	23			
	Destruction of Jerusalem and of the world	Jerusalem	24:1	13:1	21:5	
	Parables:—Ten virgins	Mount of Olives	.....		
	Talents	"	25:1			
	Sheep and goats	"	25:14			
	Warning of the betrayal	Bethany	26:1			
	The counsel of the Sanhedrin	Jerusalem	26:2	14:1	22:1	
	Judas' betrayal	Jerusalem	26:14	14:10	22:3	
	Preparation of the Passover	Jerusalem	26:17	14:12	22:7	
	Washing the apostle's feet	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	13:1-17
	The breaking of bread	Jerusalem	26:26	14:22	22:19	
	"One of you shall betray me."	Jerusalem	.....	.....	22:21	13:18
	"Is it I?"	Jerusalem	26:22-25	14:19		
	The giving of the sop, "That thou doest, do quickly."	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	13:26, 27
	Departure of Judas	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	13:30
	Peter warned	Jerusalem	26:34	14:30	22:34	13:36
	The blessing the cup	Jerusalem	26:28	14:24		
29	The discourses after supper	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	14-16
	Christ's prayer for His apostles	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	17
	The hymn	Jerusalem	26:30	14:26		
	The agony	Gethsemane	26:37	14:33	22:39	18:1
	His prayer (repeated thrice)	Gethsemane	26:39-44	14:36-39	22:42	
	His sweat, and the angel's comfort	Gethsemane	.....	.....	22:43, 44	
	The sleep of the apostles	Gethsemane	26:40-45	14:37-41		
	Betrayal by Judas	Gethsemane	26:47-50	14:43, 44	22:47	18:2-4
	Peter smites Malchus	Gethsemane	26:51	14:47	22:50	18:10
	Christ heals the ear of Malchus	Gethsemane	.....	.....	22:51	
	Christ forsaken by His disciples	Gethsemane	26:56	14:50		
	Christ led to Annas	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	18:12
	Christ tried by Caiaphas	Jerusalem	26:57	14:53	22:54	18:15
	Peter follows Christ	Jerusalem	26:58	14:54	22:55	18:15
	The high priest's adjuration	Jerusalem	26:63	14:61		
	Christ condemned, buffeted, mocked	Jerusalem	26:66, 67	14:64, 65	22:63-65	12:17-27
	Peter's denial of Christ	Jerusalem	26:69	14:66	22:55-59	18:28
	Christ before Pilate	Jerusalem	27:1	15:1	23:1	
	Repentance of Judas	Jerusalem	27:3			
	Pilate comes out to the people	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	18:28
	Pilate speaks to Jesus privately	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	18:33
	Pilate orders Him to be scourged	Jerusalem	27:26	15:15		19:1
	Jesus crowned with thorns	Jerusalem	27:29	15:17		19:2
	Jesus exhibited by Pilate: "Ecce Homo!"	.....	.....	.....	.....	19:5
	Jesus accused formally	Jerusalem	27:11	15:2	23:2	
	Jesus sent by Pilate to Herod, mocked, arrayed in purple	Jerusalem	.....	.....	23:6-11	
	"Behold your King!"	Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	19:14
	Pilate desires to release Him	Jerusalem	27:15	15:6	23:17	
	Pilate receives a message from his wife	Jerusalem	27:19			
	Pilate washes his hands	Jerusalem	27:24			
	Pilate releases Barabbas	Jerusalem	27:26			

A.D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	Pilate delivers Jesus to be crucified	Jerusalem	15:15	23:25	19:16	
	Simon of Cyrene carries the cross . . .	Jerusalem	27:32	15:21	23:26	
	They give Him vinegar and gall . . .	Golgotha	27:34	15:23	23:36	
	Nail him to the cross	Golgotha	27:35	23:33	19:18	
	The superscription	Golgotha	27:37	15:26	23:38	19:19
	THE SEVEN WORDS					
	1. <i>Father, forgive them</i>	Golgotha		23:34		
	His garments parted, and vesture allotted	Golgotha	27:35	15:24	23:23-34	19:23
	Passers by rail, the two thieves revile	Golgotha	27:39-44	15:29-32	23:35	
	The penitent thief	Golgotha		23:40		
	2. <i>To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise</i>	Golgotha		23:43		
	3. <i>Woman, behold thy Son, &c</i> . . .	Golgotha				19:26, 27
	The darkness	Golgotha	27:45	15:33	23:44	
	4. <i>My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?</i>	Golgotha	27:46	15:34		
	5. <i>I thirst</i>	Golgotha				19:28
	The vinegar	Golgotha	27:48	15:36		19:29
	6. <i>It is finished</i>	Golgotha				19:30
	7. <i>Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit</i>	Golgotha			23:46	
	Rending of the veil	Jerusalem	27:51	15:38	23:45	
	Opening of graves, and resurrection of saints	Jerusalem	27:52			
	Testimony of centurion	Golgotha	27:54	15:39	23:47	
	Watching of the women	Golgotha	27:55	15:40	23:49	
	Piercing His side	Golgotha				19:31
	Taking down from the cross, and burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus	Golgotha	27:57-60	15:46	23:53	19:38
	A guard placed at the door, which was sealed	The Garden	27:65, 66			19:39-42
	THE GREAT FORTY DAYS					
	Women carry spices to the tomb . .	The Garden	28:1	16:2		
	An angel had rolled away the stone	The Garden	28:2			
	Women announce the resurrection	Jerusalem	28:8			20:1, 2
	Peter and John run to the tomb . . .	The Garden			24:12	20:3
	The women return to the tomb . . .	The Garden			24:1	
	The guards report it to the chief priests	Jerusalem	28:11-15			
29	APPEARANCES OF CHRIST AFTER HIS RESURRECTION					
	1. To Mary Magdalene	The Garden		16:9, 10		20:14
	"All hail! Fear not." <i>Touch me not.</i>	The Garden	28:9			20:17
	2. To the women returning home . .	The Garden	28:9			
	"Go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee; there shall they see me."	The Garden				
	3. To two disciples going to Emmaus	Emmaus		16:12	24:13	
	(<i>Exposition of prophecies on the Passion.</i>)					
	4. To Peter (1 Cor. 15:5)	Jerusalem			24:34	
	5. To ten apostles in the upper room	Jerusalem			24:36	20:19
	"Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." " <i>Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit,</i> " &c					
	6. To the eleven apostles in the upper room	Jerusalem		16:14		20:26

A.D.	EVENTS	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
	"Peace be unto you," To Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, &c." "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."					
7.	To seven apostles at the Sea of Tiberias To Peter. "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs."	Tiberias . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	21:1-34
8.	To eleven apostles on a moun- tain in Galilee . . (1 Cor. 15:5) "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.	Galilee	28:16			
9.	To five hundred brethren at at once (1 Cor. 15:6)	Galilee, or Bethany . . .				
10.	To James (1 Cor. 15:7)	Bethany		16:19	24:50, 51	
11.	Ascension (1 Cor. 15:7)	Damascus (?)				
12.	To Paul (1 Cor. 15:8)					

OUR LORD'S MIRACLES

MIRACLES	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
<i>I. Narrated only in one Gospel</i>					
Two blind men healed	Capernaum	9			
A dumb demoniac healed	Capernaum	9			
Stater in the mouth of the fish	Capernaum	17			
The deaf and dumb man healed	Decapolis		7		
A blind man healed	Bethsaida		8		
When Christ passed unseen through the multitude	Nazareth			4	
Draught of fish	Bethsaida			5	
Raising the widow's son	Nain			7	
Healing the woman with an infirmity	Jerusalem			13	
Healing the man with the leprosy	Jerusalem			14	
Healing the ten lepers	Samaria			17	
Healing the ear of Malchus, servant of the high priest	Gethsemane			22	
Turning water into wine	Cana				2
Healing the nobleman's son (of fever)	Cana				4
Healing the impotent man at Bethesda	Jerusalem				5
Healing the man born blind	Jerusalem				9
Raising of Lazarus	Bethany				11
Draught of fish	Bethsaida				21
<i>II. Narrated in two Gospels</i>					
Healing the daughter of the Syrophenician	Tyre	15	7		
Feeding the four thousand	Gennesaret (?)	15	8		
Cursing the fig tree	Mount of Olives	21	11		
Healing the centurion's servant (of palsy)	Capernaum	8		7	
The blind and dumb demoniac	Galilee	12		11	
The demoniac in a synagogue	Capernaum		1	4	
<i>III. Narrated in three Gospels</i>					
Stilling the storm	Sea of Galilee	8	4	8	
The legion of devils entering the swine	Gadara	8	5	8	
Healing Jairus' daughter	Capernaum	9	5	8	
Healing the woman with an issue of blood	Gennesaret	9	5	8	
Healing the man sick of the palsy	Capernaum	9	2	5	
Healing the leper	Gennesaret	8	1	5	

OUR LORD'S MIRACLES (Continued)

MIRACLES	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Healing Peter's mother-in-law	Bethsaida	8	1	4	
Healing the man with a withered hand	Capernaum	12	3	6	
Healing demoniac child	Mount Tabor (?)	17	9	9	
Healing blind Bartimaeus	Jericho	20	10	18	
Walking on the sea	Sea of Galilee	14	6	.....	6
<i>IV Narrated in four Gospels</i>					
Feeding the five thousand	Bethsaida	14	6	9	6
	<i>(Julias)</i>				

OUR LORD'S PARABLES

PARABLES	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	LESSONS
<i>I. Recorded in one Gospel</i>					
The tares	Genesaret ...	13	.....	.....	Good and evil in life and judgment.
The hid treasure	Genesaret ...	13	.....	.....	Value of Gospel
The goodly pearl	Genesaret ...	13	.....	.....	Christian seeking salvation
The draw net	Genesaret ...	13	.....	.....	Visible Church of Christ
The unmerciful servant	Capernaum ...	18	.....	.....	Danger of ingratitude
The labourers in the vineyard	Jerusalem ...	20	.....	.....	Call at various epochs
The two sons	Jerusalem ...	21	.....	.....	Insincerity and repentance
The marriage of the king's son	Mount of Olives	22	.....	.....	Need of righteousness
The ten virgins	Mount of Olives	25	.....	.....	Watchful and careless profession
The ten talents	Mount of Olives	25	.....	.....	Use of advantages
The sheep and goats	Mount of Olives	25	.....	.....	Final separation of good and bad
The seed growing secretly	Genesaret ...	.....	4	.....	Gradual growth of religion
The householder	Genesaret ...	.....	13	.....
The two debtors	Galilee .....	.....	.....	7	Gratitude for pardon
The good Samaritan	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	10	Compassion to suffering
The friend at midnight	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	11	Perseverance in prayer
The rich fool	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	12	Worldly-mindedness
The wedding feast	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	12	Vigilance towards Second Advent
The wise steward	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	12	Conscientiousness in trust
The barren fig tree	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	13	Unprofitable under grace
The great supper	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	14	Universality of Divine call
The piece of money	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	15	Joy over penitence
The prodigal son	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	15	Fatherly love to penitent son
The unjust steward	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	16	Preparation for eternity
The rich man and Lazarus	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	16	Remembrance of future life
The unprofitable servants	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	17	God's claim to all our services
The unjust judge	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	18	Advantage of persevering prayer
The Pharisee and publican	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	18	Self-righteousness and humility.
The pounds	Jerusalem ...	.....	.....	19	Diligence rewarded, sloth punished
<i>II. Recorded in two Gospels</i>					
House on rock and sand	Galilee	7	.....	6	Consistent and false profession
The leaven	Genesaret ...	13	.....	8	Pervading influence of religion
The lost sheep	Jerusalem ...	18	.....	15	Joy over penitent
<i>III. Recording in three Gospels</i>					
New cloth and old garment	Capernaum ...	9	2	5	New doctrine on old prejudices
New wine in old bottles	Capernaum ...	9	2	5	New spirit in unregenerate heart

OUR LORD'S PARABLES (Continued)

PARABLES	LOCALITY	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	LESSONS
The sower	Gennesaret . . .	13	4	8	Hearers divided into classes Spread of Gospel Rejection of Christ by Jews Indications of Second Advent
The mustard seed	Gennesaret . . .	13	4	13	
The wicked husbandmen	Jerusalem	21	12	20	
The fig tree and all the trees	Mount of Olivets	24	13	21	

N.B.—These miracles and parables are grouped according to their record by the Evangelists; for their chronological position reference must be made to the "Harmony."

OUR LORD'S DISCOURSES AND CONVERSATIONS

In Nearly the Order of Their Delivery

SUBJECT	PLACE	THE RECORD
1. The New Birth	Jerusalem	John 3:1-21
2. The Water of Life	Sychar	John 4:1-12
3. The Scriptures Fulfilled	Nazareth	Luke 4:16-31
4. Sermon on the Mount	Galilee	Matt. 5-8
5. Instruction to the Apostles	Galilee	Matt. 10:5-12
6. Woes and Warnings	Capernaum	Matt. 11:20-24
7. The Father and the Son	Jerusalem	John 5:17-47
8. The Sabbath and its Observance	Galilee	Matt. 13:1-8
9. The Unpardonable Sin	Capernaum	Matt. 12:23-37
10. The Bread of Life	Capernaum	John 6:29-71
11. Internal Purity	Capernaum	Matt. 15:1-20
12. Offences and Injuries	Capernaum	Matt. 18:1-20
13. His Divine Mission	Jerusalem	John 7:14-31
14. Living Waters	Jerusalem	John 7:32-53
15. The Light of the World	Jerusalem	John 8:12-30
16. Freedom by the Truth	Jerusalem	John 8:31-58
17. The Shepherd and the Sheep	Jerusalem	John 10:1-38
18. Rebukes and Warnings	Jerusalem	Luke 11:29-36
19. Humility and Prudence	Jerusalem	Luke 14:7-14
20. The Way of Life	Jerusalem	Matt. 19:16-30
21. Sufferings and Death	Jericho	Matt. 20:17-19
22. True Greatness	Jericho	Matt. 20:20-28
23. Paying Tribute	Jerusalem	Matt. 22:15-22
24. The Resurrection	Jerusalem	Matt. 22:23-33
25. The Great Commandment	Jerusalem	Matt. 22:34-45
26. The Destruction of Jerusalem	Jerusalem	Matt. 24:1-51
27. Comfort and Instruction	Jerusalem	John 14-17
28. The Last Commission	Galilee	Luke 24: 44-49

THE DISCOURSES IN ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

1. Peter's Discourse on Pentecost	Acts 2:14-39
2. Peter's Sermon in Solomon's Porch	Acts 3:12-26
3. Peter's Address Before the Sanhedrin	Acts 4:8-12
4. Stephen's Defence	Acts 7:1-53
5. The First Sermon to the Gentiles	Acts 10:35-43
6. Peter's Defence Before the Church	Acts 11:5-18
7. Paul's Address at Antioch	Acts 13:17-41
8. Paul's Address in Athens	Acts 17:22-31
9. Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders	Acts 20:18-35
10. Paul's Defence in the Temple	Acts 22:3-21
11. Paul's Address Before Felix	Acts 24:10-21
12. Paul's Address Before Agrippa	Acts 26:2-29
13. Paul's Address to the Jews at Rome	Acts 28:23-28

TABLES OF TIME, MEASURES, WEIGHTS, ETC.

SACRED YEAR	CIVIL YEAR
<i>Names and Order of the Hebrew Months</i>	<i>Names and Order of the Hebrew Months</i>
1. Nisan, answering to part of (March (April 2. Zif or Jiar (April (May 3. Sivan (May (June 4. Thamuz (June (July 5. Ab (July (August 6. Elul (August (September 7. Ethanim or Tizri (September (October 8. Marchesvan or Bul (October (November 9. Chisleu (November (December 10. Tebeth (December (January 11. Shebat (January (February 12. Adar (February (March 13. Ve-Adar or Second Adar.	7.— 1. Tizri, answering to part of (September (October 8.— 2. Marchesvan (October (November 9.— 3. Chisleu (November (December 10.— 4. Tebeth (December (January 11.— 5. Shebat (January (February 12.— 6. Adar (February (March 1.— 7. Nisan (March (April 2.— 8. Zif or Jiar (April (May 3.— 9. Sivan (May (June 4.—10. Thamuz (June (July 5.—11. Ab (July (August 6.—12. Elul (August (September

The Jews reckoned their months according to the moon; and every third year they added a month, which they called *Ve-Adar*, in the same way as we add a day in every fourth or leap year.

They began their civil year in the month of Tizri, or September, according to which they computed and settled all temporal affairs. But after coming out of Egypt they began their ecclesiastical year in the month of Nisan, or March, from which they computed all their great festivals.

Their day was twofold: The *natural*, consisting of twenty-four hours, which commenced at sunset; and the *artificial*, beginning at sunrise and ending at sunset, which was divided into twelve equal parts or hours. See *John 11:9*.

Their night was divided into four parts or watches, each consisting of three hours. The first began at sunset; the second at nine o'clock; the third at midnight; the fourth at three in the morning, and continued until sunrise. These were sometimes otherwise expressed; viz., *even, midnight, cock-crowing, and the dawn*. See *Mark 13:35*.

Their artificial day was divided into four equal parts. The first began at sunrise, and continued until nine o'clock; the second began at nine, and continued till noon; the third began at noon, and ended at three in the afternoon (which is sometimes termed the ninth hour); the fourth began at three, and continued till sunset.

A TABLE OF MEASURES

- A Cubit, somewhat more than one foot nine inches English.
- A Span, half a cubit, or nearly eleven inches.
- A Hand-breadth, sixth part of a cubit, or a little more than three inches and a half.
- A Fathom, four cubits, about seven feet three inches and a half.
- A Measuring Reed, six cubits and a hand-breadth, or nearly eleven feet. This was used in measuring buildings.
- A Measuring Line, fourscore cubits, about one hundred and forty-five feet eleven inches. This was used to measure grounds; hence *the lines (Psalm 16:6)* are taken figuratively for the inheritance itself.

TABLES OF TIME, MEASURES, WEIGHTS, ETC.

A Stadium, or Furlong, nearly 146 paces.

A Sabbath Day's Journey, about 729 paces.

An Eastern Mile, one mile and 403 paces, English measure.

A Day's Journey, upwards of thirty-three miles and a half.

NOTE.—A pace is equal to five feet.

There were different kinds of cubits. The common cubit, called the cubit of a man (*Deut. 3:11*), was about eighteen inches. The king's cubit was three inches longer than the common one. The holy cubit was a yard, or two common ones.

A TABLE OF WEIGHTS

A Shekel, near half an ounce, Troy weight.

A Maneh was sixty shekels, about two pounds and a quarter.

A Talent, three thousand shekels, or 113 pound, and upwards of ten ounces.

A TABLE OF MONEY

A Shekel of Gold, worth about	\$ 8.75
A Golden Daric, about	5.24
A Talent of Gold, about	26,280.00
A Shekel of Silver, about .....	.55
A Bekah, half a shekel, about .....	.28
A Gerah, twentieth part of a shekel .....	.2½
A Maneh, or Mina, fifty shekels	27.32
A Talent of Silver, 3,000 shekels, about	1,639.30
A Silver Drachma, about .....	.16
Tribute Money, two drachms .....	.31
A Piece of Silver (<i>Stater</i>) .....	.62
A Pound (<i>Morna</i>), 100 drachms	15.50
A Roman Penny (<i>Denarius</i>) .....	.16
A Farthing (<i>Assarium</i>), about .....	.3
Another Farthing (<i>Quadrans</i>), half the former.	
A Mite, the half of the latter.	

MEASURES OF LIQUIDS

The Cor, or Chomer, seventy-five gallons and somewhat above five pints.

The Bath, the tenth of the chomer, or seven gallons four pints and a half.

The Hin, sixtieth or a chomer, about a gallon and a quart.

The Log, about three-fourths of a pint.

The Firkin (*Metretes*), somewhat more than seven pints.

MEASURES OF DRY THINGS

The Cab, somewhat above two pints.

The Omer, above five pints.

The Seah, one peck and about half a pint.

The Ephah, three pecks and about three pints.

The Letech, about four bushels.

The Homer, about eight bushels.

The Choenix (*Rev. 6:6*) was the daily allowance to maintain a slave. It contained about a quart, some say only a pint and a half. When this measure was sold for a denarius, or Roman penny, corn must have been above twenty shillings an English bushel, which indicates a scarcity next to a famine.

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW

Matthew, one of the Twelve Apostles, is the author of this Gospel. He is also called Levi, and was the son of Alphaeus (*Mark 2:14*). The fact that he collected taxes for the hated occupation government of the Romans, shows that he had little feeling for the "Nationalism" of the average Jew. His history of Jesus shows more sense of "Jewishness" than the other Gospels. He writes for Jewish readers, who would be familiar with Jewish customs, Law, and society in general. The fact that he quotes from the Septuagint (Greek Version of the Old Testament) implies that he wrote this Gospel originally in the Greek Language. No certain date can be given for this Gospel, but it was before 60 A.D.

Alford (Greek Testament) says: "The whole narrative proceeds more upon a Jewish view of matters, and is concerned more to establish that point, which to a Jewish convert would be most important, namely, *that Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament*. Hence the commencement of his genealogy from Abraham and David; hence the frequent notice of the necessity of this or that event happening, *because it was foretold by the prophets*; hence the constant opposition of our Lord's spiritually ethical teaching to the carnal formalistic ethics of the Scribes (teachers of the Law) and Pharisees."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

The Family Record of Jesus Christ

(Also Luke 3.23-38)

1 This is the family record of Jesus Christ, who was a descendant of David, who was a descendant of Abraham.

²Abraham was the father of Isaac; Isaac was the father of Jacob; Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers; ³Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (their mother was Tamar); Perez was the father of Hezron; Hezron was the father of Ram; ⁴Ram was the father of Amminadab; Amminadab was the father of Nahshon; Nahshon was the father of Salmon; ⁵Salmon was the father of Boaz (Rahab was his mother); Boaz was the father of Obed (Ruth was his mother); Obed was the father of Jesse; ⁶Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon (his mother had been Uriah's wife); ⁷Solomon was the father of Rehoboam; Rehoboam was the father of

The Genealogy of Jesus

1 A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham:

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife, Solomon the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah

1. **The family record.** Literally "the book of birth," or genealogy. Very accurate family records were kept by the Hebrews. **Jesus Christ.** Jesus — which means "Savior" — is the personal name; Christ—which means "Anointed"—is the title. (Christ and Messiah mean the same thing.) Jesus is the "Anointed" Prophet, Priest, and King. **A descendant of David.** The Messiah would be of David's line. **A descendant of Abraham.** Also prophesied (*Gen 12:3; 22:18*). David and Abraham were the two most important (because of prophecy) ancestors of Jesus.

2. **Abraham was the father of Isaac.** Matthew traces the line from Abraham. Jewish history begins with him. Luke begins with Adam, since he writes for Gentiles (*Luke 3:23-38*). Both accounts are compared in the notes on *verse 16*.

3. **Their mother was Tamar.** Three women are specifically named: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth. All were Gentiles, and each had a unique history. There were stains on the character of Tamar (*Gen. 38:11-30*), and Rahab (*Josh. 2:1*). Ruth's story is especially beautiful. Each had strong faith.

6. **King David.** The most famous of the family record. One title for the Messiah was "Son of David." **Uriah's wife.** Bathsheba is not named directly. Uriah was a Hittite, a Gentile. She was a partner with David in the greatest guilt of his life (*2 Sam. 11 & 12*).

Abijah; Abijah was the father of Asa; ⁸Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat; Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram; Joram was the father of Uzziah; ⁹Uzziah was the father of Jotham; Jotham was the father of Ahaz; Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah; ¹⁰Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh; Manasseh was the father of Amon; Amon was the father of Josiah; ¹¹Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time when the people of Israel were carried away to Babylon.

¹²After the people were carried away to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel; Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel; ¹³Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud; Abiud was the father of Eliakim; Eliakim was the father of Azor; ¹⁴Azor was the father of Zadok; Zadok was the father of Achim; Achim was the father of Eliud; ¹⁵Eliud was the father of Eleazar; Eleazar was the father of Matthan; Matthan was the father of Jacob; ¹⁶Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, who was the mother of Jesus, called the Messiah.

¹⁷So then, there were fourteen sets of fathers and sons from Abraham to David, and fourteen from David to the time when the people were carried away to Babylon, and fourteen from then to the birth of the Messiah.

the father of Asa, Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah, Uzziah the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

After the exile to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud, Eliud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

8. **Joram.** Three names are deliberately omitted between Joram and Uzziah. *These appear in 1 Chron. 3:11-12.* Omissions of unimportant links are common in the Old Testament (*compare 1 Chron. 8:1 with Gen. 46:21*).

11. **Carried away to Babylon.** Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and held the Jews captive in Babylon for seventy years.

12. **Zerubbabel.** A descendant of the Jewish Kings, he led the return from Babylon (*Ezra 3:2*).

16. **Jacob was the father of Joseph.** Joseph, a poor carpenter of Nazareth, was a descendant of a long line of kings. As Mary's husband, he was the LEGAL father of Jesus. Matthew gives his family record. Luke (*Luke 3:23-38*) probably gives the line of Mary. Both were descendants of David. The Jews, who were very accurate about such things, did not dispute either set of family records.

17. **Fourteen sets.** The Jews enjoyed grouping things this way. There are fourteen sets from Abraham to David. David's name is counted again to make the second set. The third set of fourteen begins with Jechoniah (*verse 11*).

The Birth of Jesus Christ

(Also Luke 2.1-7)

¹⁸This was the way that Jesus Christ was born. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a man who always did what was right; but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly, so he made plans to break the engagement secretly. ²⁰While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. ²¹She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins."

²²Now all this happened in order to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, ²³"The virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and he will be called Emmanuel" (which means, "God is with us").

The Birth of Jesus Christ

This is how the birth of 18 Jesus Christ came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they began to live together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her 19 husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had consid- 20 ered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to 21 a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to ful- 22 fill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The 23 virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

18. **Jesus Christ was born.** His appearance on the human scene (*John 1:14*). **Mary was engaged.** Custom, from the time of the Patriarchs, considered "engagement" a legally binding form of marriage (*Deut. 20:7*). (This was not the same as "engagement" today.) Usually a year went by before the marriage was "finalized." **Before they were married.** They had not yet begun to live together. **She found out.** Read the angel's prophecy (*Luke 1:26-38*). **By the Holy Spirit.** Jesus is God's ONLY SON—unique—the only example of such a birth in all time and eternity! (*But Christ is pre-existent—see Col. 1:15-20*.)

19. **Joseph.** By custom, engagement was equal to marriage (*Deut. 24:23-24*). **What was right.** An act of kindness. To disgrace her publicly would make her subject to the death penalty (*Deut. 24:24*). **Secretly.** Jewish custom required a divorce to break an engagement (*Deut. 24:1*).

20. **An angel.** Joseph was puzzled. God sent his angel with a message. (*Compare Luke 1:26*). **In a dream.** A common thing. Three times he was spoken to in this way. **Descendant of David.** Reminded of the word of prophecy. **Do not be afraid.** The baby was holy.

21. **You will name him Jesus.** Jesus means "Savior." The Hebrew form is "Joshua"—"Jehovah's Salvation." **Will save his people.** Not the Jewish Nation alone, but all who follow him. **From their sins.** Christ's special work to remove sin and make us God's friends.

22. **To make come true.** The prophets spoke about the Messiah, so he could be clearly identified as what they said "came true."

23. **The virgin.** Isaiah (*Isa. 7:14*) had in mind a certain virgin. This was a double prophecy, fulfilled in type during the reign of Ahaz (*Isa. 8:1-4*), yet pointing forward to the time of true fulfillment (*Isa. 9:6; Micah 5:2-3*). **Emmanuel.** God has come to set us free!

²⁴So when Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do and married Mary. ²⁵But he had no sexual relations with her before she gave birth to her son. And Joseph named him Jesus.

When Joseph woke up, he 24 did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union 25 with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Visitors from the East

2 Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, during the time when Herod was king. Soon afterwards some men who studied the stars came from the east to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east, and we have come to worship him."

³When King Herod heard about this he was very upset, and so was everyone else in Jerusa-

The Visit of the Magi

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ²"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard ³this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

24. So when Joseph . . . did. He immediately obeyed the Lord's instructions. A good example.

25. No sexual relations. The language here does not imply any perpetual virginity. Jesus grew up in a normal home (*Matt. 13:54-55*).

1. Jesus was born. Not Nazareth, but Bethlehem—David's town. Pride in "family records" sent Jews back to their "home city." (*See Luke 2:1-4*). Bethlehem. Six miles south of Jerusalem, this was one of the oldest places in Judea. It was at least 1,500 years old when Christ was born there. It stands on the summit of a narrow ridge, which projects eastward from the central mountain chain of Judah. It was the scene of the Book of Ruth. David was born here. When Herod was king. This places the time. Since Herod died about 3 B.C., this demonstrates our calendar to be in error, and Christ's birth to be about 4 B.C. This Herod was the son of Antipater, an Edomite, and an Arabian mother. He was both brilliant and cruel, murdering even his own wife and sons. Seven Herods are mentioned in the New Testament. (1) Herod the Great (who is named in this verse). He received his authority from Rome. He had great force of character, but was a bloody tyrant. (2) Herod Archelaus, his son (*Matt. 2:22*). (3) Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee, who killed John the Baptist (*Matt. 14:1*); he was also a son of Herod the Great. (4) Herod Philip, a third son, the lawful husband of Herodias (*Matt. 14:3*). (5) Another son who was also named Herod Philip (*Luke 3:1*). (6) Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great (*Acts 12:1-2 & 23*). (7) Herod Agrippa, son of the former. It was to him Paul made his famous defence (*Acts 25:13,23; 26:27*). Men who studied the stars. The Magi. A name for a group of priests and philosophers, beginning in Persia and Media, who spread through the area of the Euphrates. Those mentioned in the Book of Daniel who "studied the stars" belonged to this group. No mention of how many came. East. Possible from the valley of the Euphrates.

2. King of the Jews. They were expecting a baby who would become the Messiah. They must have known and read the Jewish Scriptures. But it seems they thought in terms of a temporal kingdom. His star. It is useless to speculate about what they saw. To them it identified the birth of the One they expected. God willed that Gentiles as well as Jews would honor the infant King.

3. Herod . . . was very upset. Herod did not rightfully hold the throne. A rival, *legitimate*, who would be accepted by the Jews, was bad news to him. Everyone else in Jerusalem. This was the capitol, the seat of his power. Herod's backers were there.

lem. "He called together all the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and asked them, "Where will the Mēssiah be born?"

"In the town of Bethlehem, in Judea," they answered. "This is what the prophet wrote,

"Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means the least among the rulers of Judah; for from you will come a leader who will guide my people Israel."

So Herod called the visitors from the east to a secret meeting and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions: "Go and make a careful search for the child, and when you find him let me know, so that I may go and worship him too."

With this they left, and on their way they saw the star—the same one they had seen in the east—and it went ahead of them until it came and stopped over the place where the child was.

How happy they were, what joy was theirs,

When he had called together all the chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they

4. **He called together.** Literally, "high priests." "Teachers of the Law" were the official copyists of Scripture, and the theologians of that time. These together formed the Sanhedrin or ruling body of the Jews. They would know the prophecies. **Messiah be born?** The question shows: the Jews expected a Messiah; the Scriptures prophesied it; even the place of birth was pointed out.

5. **Bethlehem, in Judea.** Micah said this seven centuries before Christ. (*Micah 5:1-2*).

6. **Bethlehem, in the land of Judah.** This quotation is from the (Greek) Septuagint translation of the Old Testament (the version in common use, and which Jesus and his disciples commonly quoted). The (Masoretic) Hebrew says literally: "And you, O Bethlehem Ephrata, who are small among the thousands (townships) of Judah, from you will come out to Me one, who must be ruler in Israel." (Zamenhof's translation) **Rulers.** That is, towns where the rulers of thousands lived.

7. **Herod called . . . secret meeting.** This cunning and ruthless man had gained one point. He knew where the Messiah was to be born. Now he hopes to learn his age. **The exact time of the star.** It had been seen first about two years before (*implied in verse 16*).

8. **Then he sent them to Bethlehem.** He wanted the Magi to find the Messiah, but not for him to worship, rather to murder.

9. **With this they left.** Probably immediately. The appearance of the star implied that it was night, and that their meeting with Herod was in the evening. **Went ahead of them.** A miraculous appearance is implied—no less probable than the pillar of fire which guided Israel. **Stopped over the place.** Either over Bethlehem, or the house where the young child was sheltered.

10. **When they saw the star.** Implying that for a time, at least, they had not seen the star—until leaving Jerusalem for Bethlehem. Its appearance shows their search is not futile.

when they saw the star! ¹¹They went into the house and saw the child with his mother Mary. They knelt down and worshiped him; then they opened their bags and offered him presents: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod; so they went back to their country by another road.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³After they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and run away to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you to leave. Herod will be looking for the child to kill him."

¹⁴Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and left during the night for Egypt, ¹⁵where he stayed until Herod died.

This was done to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, "I called my Son out of Egypt."

were overjoyed. On coming 11 to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been 12 warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

When they had gone, an 13 angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

So he got up, took the 14 child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the 15 death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "I called my son out of Egypt."

11. **They went into the house.** Not the stable, but a temporary home. Many think Joseph and Mary stayed in Bethlehem until the forty days of purification were completed; the young child then presented in the Temple (*Luke 2:22*); returned to Bethlehem; were visited by the Magi; then escaped to Egypt. If this is correct, Jesus would have been at least six or seven weeks old when the Magi came. (*Some think verse 16 implies he was almost two years old when they came.*) **With his mother Mary.** Perhaps in his mother's arms. **They knelt down and worshipped him.** (Note they did not worship his mother.) **Offered him presents.** As customary to kings. **Frankincense.** A very expensive fragrant gum, distilled from a tree which grows in India and Arabia. **Myrrh.** A fragrant gum from an Arabian thorn-bush. God's providence is seen in these gifts. They provided the money for the escape into Egypt and bought food and shelter for the *holy family* while there.

12. **God warned them.** Knowing Herod's character, his questioning of the Magi would make them suspicious, and they would seek God's guidance. God warned them in a dream.

13. **After they had left.** Probably the Magi were led by the star to Bethlehem, offered their worship, then left, Joseph was warned, and the *holy family* started for Egypt—all in the same night. **Run away to Egypt.** Egypt is closely connected to Bible history. It was the nearest of the Roman provinces not ruled by Herod; was the home of thousands of Jews; and was convenient for a return at the right time.

14. **Joseph got up, took the child.** The message came in a dream. He got up and left immediately. Divine commands should be promptly obeyed.

15. **To make come true.** (*Hosea 11:1*) The life and times of Israel were a prophesy of the Messiah. The son—*Israel*—was called out of Egypt in the Exodus. The Son—*Jesus*—was to be called out of Egypt also.

The Killing of the Children

¹⁶When Herod realized that the visitors from the east had tricked him, he was furious. He gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its neighborhood who were two years old and younger—in accordance with what he had learned from the visitors about the time when the star had appeared.

¹⁷In this way what the prophet Jeremiah had said came true:

¹⁸“A sound is heard in Ramah,
the sound of bitter crying and weeping.
Rachel weeps for her children;
she weeps and will not be comforted,
because they are all dead.”

The Return from Egypt

¹⁹After Herod had died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, in Egypt, ²⁰and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go back to the land of Israel, because those who

When Herod realized that ¹⁶ he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then ¹⁷ what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

“A voice was heard in ¹⁸ Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they were no more.”

The Return to Nazareth

After Herod died, an an- ¹⁹ gel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the ²⁰ child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

16. When Herod realized. The Magi disobeyed his order to report to him, and returned home by a different route. **Orders to kill.** Herod was brutal! He ordered the murder of those boys in Bethlehem and its neighborhood, hoping to destroy the infant King.

17. What the prophet Jeremiah had said. (*Jer. 31:15*) This was first spoken about the conquest of Israel by Nebuchadnezzar. The survivors of that were gathered at Ramah as captives. Mothers there wept bitterly for their dead children. The prophet described Rachel, mother of two great Tribes, as weeping and refusing to be comforted. The tomb of Rachel was within half a mile of the city, so the sadness is again applied to those mothers of Bethlehem who weep for their children, as though the Rachel in the tomb were the mourner. A Moslem mosque is now built on the site of this tomb. The burial of Rachel is in *Gen. 35:19*.

18. A sound is heard in Ramah. Ramah was a border fortress. The generals of Nebuchadnezzar collected the captives here after the fall of Jerusalem.

19. After Herod had died. That signaled for the return. Herod died in the spring of the year “750 after the building of Rome” just before the Passover. This makes his death almost four years before the start of our Christian era. (Our calendar dates from the sixth century, and is in error by a few years.)

20. Get up . . . Go back. Joseph is not told to return to Bethlehem or to Judea, just to the land of Israel. **Those who tried to kill the child.** “Those” implies more than one. Five days before his death, Herod murdered his son Antipater (A prince who was evil, sadistic, and treacherous) whom he had expected to rule after him. Antipater would also want the child killed. Now both men were dead.

tried to kill the child are dead.”²¹ So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went back to Israel.

²²When he heard that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as king of Judea, Joseph was afraid to settle there. He was given more instructions in a dream, and so he went to the province of Galilee²³ and made his home in a town named Nazareth. He did this to make come true what the prophets had said, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

The Preaching of John the Baptist

(Also Mark 1.1-8; Luke 3.1-18; John 1.19-28)

3 At that time John the Baptist came and started preaching in the desert of Judea.² “Turn away from your sins,” he said, “because

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

21. **Took the child . . . went back.** He immediately obeyed the Lord’s will. **To Israel.** This included Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and the country beyond the Jordan. He would first reach Judea.

22. **When he heard.** Archelaus is one of the four sons of Herod who are mentioned in the New Testament. (See note on verse 1.) **Joseph was afraid.** This implies he had intended to settle there.

23. **Nazareth.** Matthew does not mention their previous residence at Nazareth, but mentions it now as the home of Jesus. It was an obscure village, nestled on the hills about five hundred feet above the plain of Esdraelon, on the edge of Galilee. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, and was probably a small town in the time of Christ. **To make come true.** No one prophet had specifically said this. They did call him “Nezer,” from which “Nazareth” comes.

1. **At that time.** Between 25 and 30 years have passed since the end of chapter 2. **John the Baptist came.** Called the “Baptist” because he baptized. He was a reformer and preacher, who led the religious “revival” in preparation for the work of Jesus. Prophecy mentions him (*Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1*). His birth was announced by an angel (*Luke 1:13*); he was from a priestly (*Levitical*) family, son of Zechariah and Elizabeth (who was the cousin of Mary). **Desert of Judea.** A rocky area in the eastern part of Judea, west of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Few people lived there, and it was mostly used for pasture.

2. **Turn away from your sins.** To “repent” is to “turn away.” Sorrow is not repentance (see *2 Cor. 7:10*). John’s baptism was “renewal” and pointed to Christ (*Acts 19:4*). **Kingdom of heaven.** The Kingdom ruled by the Messiah, predicted by the prophets (especially *Dan. 2:44*). This announcement thrilled all Judea. **Is near.** Still future, but near! It had not begun with Abraham or David or even John the Baptist. (See *John 1:17*). It is the Kingdom of heaven, not earth, and has a King sent from heaven. This King was revealed to be the one born at Bethlehem (*John 1:33-34*). John is the herald.

the Kingdom of heaven is near!" ³John was the one that the prophet Isaiah was talking about when he said,

"Someone is shouting in the desert,
'Get the Lord's road ready for him;
make a straight path for him to
travel!'" "

⁴John's clothes were made of camel's hair; he wore a leather belt around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁵People came to him from Jerusalem, from the whole province of Judea, and from all the country around the Jordan River. ⁶They confessed their sins and he baptized them in the Jordan.

⁷When John saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to him to be baptized, he said to them, "You snakes—who told you that you could escape from God's wrath that is about to come?"

This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: 3

"A voice of one calling in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'" 4

John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 5

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the 6

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the 7

3. **Someone is shouting.** John the Baptist was a *sermon!* He didn't try to honor himself, he put his all into pointing to Christ. The prophecy is *Isaiah 40:3*. **Get the Lord's road ready.** Kings of that day built straight roads for their chariots and armies. The "desert" was the spiritual condition of the world. **Make a straight path.** Cease your evil ways, because the King comes!

4. **Camel's hair.** See *2 Kings 1:8*. Clothes made from the hair of a camel woven into a coarse cloth. The poor of the East have worn such for centuries. It was the uniform of a prophet (*Zech. 13:4*). **Leather belt.** Used to fasten the loose clothes of the East. **Ate locusts and wild honey.** Not what we call locusts, but a kind of giant grasshopper, still eaten by the poor in the East, and kosher to the Jew (*Lev. 11:22*). Bees nested in the rocks, and wild honey was plentiful. John lived off the land.

5. **People came to Him.** Not everyone, but great crowds! Possibly the "thief" was one of these (*Luke 23:39-43*), since he was certainly a "zealot." [See notes on *Mark 15:7*.]

6. **He baptized them.** In the Jordan river (*Mark 1:5*). The Jordan is the important river of Palestine. It begins in the mountains of Lebanon, runs south into the Lake of Galilee, leaving it descends southward along Galilee, Samaria and Judea, to end in the Dead Sea. (Ferry-boats were used on this river—*2 Sam. 19:18 Septuagint*.) **Confessed their sins.** Baptism itself is a burial in water, a "baptism into death," a symbol of burying the old life and of death to sin. They "verbalized" their confession, and also "acted it out" in baptism. Confession of sin, turning from sin to God, and baptism are prescribed as conditions of forgiveness.

7. **Pharisees and Sadducees.** The two main religious sects. The PHARISEES began about the time of the Maccabees after the return from captivity. They were a "renewal group," "Jewish Puritans," but they had degenerated into formalists who ignored the "inner life." They were meticulous in ritual, orthodox, but full of spiritual pride. The SADDUCEES, so named for Sadduc, their founder, were aristocratic traditionalists. Mostly political, and not religious at all, they did not believe in "angel, spirit, or the resurrection from the dead." The High Priests, Annas and Caiaphas, were Sadducees. **You snakes.** They were poisonous like snakes, polluted by their sin, hating one another and hateful to God. **Who told you?** Wrath had been predicted (*Mal. 3:2; 4:5*). John's question doubts their sincerity.

⁸Do the things that will show that you have turned from your sins. ⁹And don't think you can excuse yourselves by saying, 'Abraham is our ancestor.' I tell you that God can take these rocks and make descendants for Abraham! ¹⁰The ax is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire. ¹¹I baptize you with water to show that you have repented; but the one who will come after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He is much greater than I am; I am not good enough even to carry his sandals. ¹²He has his winnowing shovel with him, to thresh out all the grain; he will gather his wheat into his barn, but burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out."

coming wrath? Produce fruit 8
in keeping with repentance. 9
And do not think you can say
to yourselves, 'We have A-
braham as our father.' I tell
you that out of these stones
God can raise up children
for Abraham. The ax is al-
ready at the root of the trees, 10
and every tree that does not
produce good fruit will be
cut down and thrown into
the fire.

"I baptize you with water 11
for repentance. But after me
will come one who is more
powerful than I, whose san-
dals I am not fit to carry. He
will baptize you with the
Holy Spirit and with fire. His 12
winnowing fork is in his
hand, and he will clear his
threshing floor, gathering
the wheat into his barn and
burning up the chaff with
unquenchable fire."

8. **Do the things that will show.** The change in life proves the change in heart. No change means no repentance (*James 2:18-23*).

9. **And don't think you can excuse yourselves.** They believed Abraham would keep them from being lost eternally, even in their sin. John destroys this. **God can take these rocks.** Perhaps pointing to the rocks in the Jordan. In destroying the higher claims of Judaism, John points to the Gentiles who become God's children by faith in Christ (*see Gal. 3:29*).

10. **The axe is ready.** A sign the tree is to be cut down. The tree is the Jewish Nation. **Every tree that does not bear.** Jesus made a fruitless fig-tree represent the whole Jewish Nation (*Luke 13:6*), but John gives a universal law—*what does not bear good fruit is cut down and destroyed*.

11. **I baptize you with water.** His baptism was with water only. Christian baptism (the baptism that makes Christians) is with both water and spirit (*John 3:5; Acts 19:1-7*). **The one who will come.** The King is greater than John. He can do what John can only promise. **Holy Spirit.** Note how Jesus uses John's statement in *Acts 1:5*. Christian baptism is with water AND Spirit (*Acts 2:38*), with every one becoming through this act the *temple of the Spirit* (*I Cor. 6:19-20*). **Fire.** Some of those who came to John would later accept Christ, but some would not. The "fire" of *verse 10* destroys; and it is used in the same sense in *verse 12*. Therefore it must be understood in *verse 11* to mean a "baptism of suffering" which would come to those Jews who did not accept Christ as the Messiah. See Christ's words in *Matt. 23:29-39*.

12. **Winnowing shovel.** In palestine, grain was threshed on an outdoor threshing floor, either by being pounded, or being walked-on by cows. Then the winnowing shovel was used to throw it up into the air for the wind to blow away the chaff, and the threshed grain would fall back to the ground. The wheat was put into the barn. The chaff was gathered and burned. The barn symbolizes the home of the saved. The fire is symbolic of hell.

The Baptism of Jesus

(Also *Mark 1.9-11; Luke 3.21-22*)

¹³At that time Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan, and came to John to be baptized by him. ¹⁴But John tried to make him change his mind. "I ought to be baptized by you," John said, "yet you come to me!"

¹⁵But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so for now. For in this way we shall do all that God requires."

So John agreed. ¹⁶As soon as he was baptized, Jesus came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and lighting on him.

The Baptism of Jesus

Then Jesus came from 13 Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John 14 tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so 15 now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, 16 he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending on him like a dove.

13. **At that time Jesus.** Matthew does not speak about the time from Nazareth (*Matt. 2:23*) until now. Luke speaks of Jesus in the Temple at twelve years old (*Luke 2:41-50*). He had worked in Nazareth as a carpenter (*Mark 6:3*). **Galilee.** Josephus (the Jewish historian) says this northern area of Palestine contained 240 towns and villages and a huge population. Nazareth was one of the towns. **To be baptized.** This was to set an example, but especially to be identified (*John 1:33*). Jesus walked 60 or 70 miles to come here to be baptized.

14. **But John tried.** While there is not evidence that John had ever met Jesus before, he knew something about him, and tried to change his mind. [Their mothers were cousins.] **I ought to be baptized by you.** John may have believed Jesus to be the Messiah, but he *knew* it after he had baptized Jesus (*John 1:33*).

15. **Let it be so for now.** "Now" implies that the "time" required that he be baptized. True, baptism was for sinners; and Jesus was sinless (*Heb. 4:15*), yet he had humbly accepted the obligation of human duties (*Heb. 2:14*), and must set a perfect example. He obeyed the Jewish Law, and must also obey the Divine rite that John administered. **All that God requires.** His baptism set the pattern for him to be the first among many brothers (*Rom. 8:29*). Note the Holy Spirit in *verse 16*. In Christian baptism (in contrast to John's baptism)—water and Spirit are united (*John 3:5; Titus 3:5*).

16. **He was baptized.** The baptism took place in the river Jordan, and was certainly by immersion. Dr. Whitby of the Church of England said: "The observation of (conclusion reached by) the Greek Church is this, that he who ascended out of the water must first descend into it. Baptism is therefore to be performed, not by sprinkling, but by washing the body." Dr. Schaff wrote: "While the validity of baptism does not depend on the quantity or quality of water, or the mode of its application, yet immersion and emersion [emergence] is the primitive and expressive mode to symbolize the idea of entire spiritual purification and renovation." Dr. Schaff also says: "The Greek word 'baptize' as derived from a root that means 'to dip,' 'to immerse.'" All the great scholars agree with these views. **Jesus came up out of the water.** *Luke 3:21* tells us he was praying as he came up. **Then heaven was opened.** The skies parted, to reveal the very throne of God. **The Spirit of God.** The Holy Spirit comes to anoint Jesus [*Christ* means *anointed*], to identify him (*John 1:32-34*) and to give him power (*John 3:34*). The form of a dove was used to make the Spirit visible.

¹⁷And then a voice said from heaven, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased."

And a voice from heaven ¹⁷ said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased."

The Temptation of Jesus

The Temptation of Jesus

(Also Mark 1.12-13; Luke 4.1-13)

4 Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Devil. ²After spending forty days and nights without food, Jesus was hungry. ³The Devil came to him and said, "If you are God's Son, order these stones to turn into bread."

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: ² ³ ⁴

"Jesus answered, "The scripture says, 'Man cannot live on bread alone, but on every word that God speaks,'"

"Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

⁵Then the Devil took Jesus to the Holy City, set

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of ⁵

17. And then a voice. Three times God speaks from heaven in connection with Christ's ministry: at his baptism; at his transfiguration; and in the temple just before his suffering. **This is my own dear Son.** The words of *Psalm 2:7*. Note the time chosen by God to speak this. It is just after he humbles himself obediently in the act of baptism that the Holy Spirit anoints him as the Christ, and God formally identifies him as his Son. This very forcefully implies: that we must be baptized to follow Christ; that it is when we turn from sin and are baptized that we receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit (*Acts 2:38*); that when we reach out in obedient faith, God will declare us his children (*2 Tim. 2:19*).

1. Then the Spirit led Jesus. Mark says the Spirit made him go. **Into the desert.** Tradition places the temptation in the deserted area between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, especially on the mountain called Quarantania. **To be tempted.** See *Heb. 2:18; Rom. 8:3*. The One who came to destroy Satan's kingdom had to be attacked by the Adversary at the very beginning. This was to test Christ; to prepare him to aid us (*Heb. 4:15*) and to set us an example. The three temptations mentioned by Matthew are the three classes of temptation which come to all mankind. **By the Devil.** The prince of darkness is very real. Satan is: a person (*Eph. 2:2; 6:12; Heb. 2:14; Jude 6*); a fallen angel (*John 8:44; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6*). *Devil means false accuser; enemy.*

2. After spending forty days and nights. Moses and Elijah both went without food for the same length of time. It was a period of spiritual power, of meditation and prayer, and of preparation for his work. He did not need food while this was taking place. **Jesus was hungry.** As this period ended, he felt the pangs of nature. Luke indicates the Devil tempted Jesus all during the forty days (*Luke 4:2*).

3. The Devil came to him. He chose a time of physical weakness to press this temptation. It is uncertain whether Satan came in a personal form, or as the whisper of an evil spirit. **If you are God's Son.** A taunt. Satan is saying: "Show your power—if you have any." But if Jesus had used his power to escape this problem, he would have failed to suffer as we do. Also, Jesus came to serve, never to use his Divine power for his own benefit. To do as Satan said would have been to distrust God. Self-denial was the law of Christ's mission.

4. Jesus answered. Jesus uses the "sword of the Spirit" [the Bible] as his weapon. He quotes *Deut. 8:3* LXX [read the context]. **But on every word.** God sustains on bread, but uses other means when it suits his purpose. He fed Israel on manna, sent by his word. We can trust his promise.

5. To the Holy City. We are not told how he took him. **The highest point.** Probably the lofty porch overhanging the valley of Kedron. From the roof to the valley floor was 300 feet, Josephus tells us.

him on the highest point of the temple, ⁶and said to him, "If you are God's Son, throw yourself down to the ground: because the scripture says, 'God will give orders to his angels about you; they will hold you up with their hands, so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones.'"

⁷Jesus answered, "But the scripture also says, 'You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

⁸Then the Devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, in all their greatness. "All this I will give you," the Devil said, "if you kneel down and worship me."

⁹Then Jesus answered, "Go away, Satan! The scripture says, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!'"

¹⁰Then the Devil left him; and angels came and helped Jesus.

of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

6. **If you are God's Son.** Again the taunt. Note the Devil can quote scripture too. Jesus had demonstrated his trust in God's word. The Devil asks him to go from the extreme of distrusting God, to recklessly testing God. This is seen again and again as the people ask for a sign from heaven. Perhaps Satan is asking him to perform one stupenduous miracle in Jerusalem where all can see, to gain such fame that he can gain the throne while bypassing the Cross. This would have robbed the world of its Savior. "That the Messiah must suffer, and rise from death on the third day" (*Luke 24:46*). **God will give orders to his angels.** Satan quotes *Psalms 91:11-12* but omits "to protect you wherever you go." The promise is limited to those who live as God instructs.

7. **You must not put.** Jesus quotes *Deut. 6:16*. No need for argument. What Satan asks is forbidden.

8. **A very high mountain.** He spreads a panoramic view of the world. Not literally visible, but visualized by the eye of the mind.

9. **All this I will give you.** No disguise here. Satan claims to rule the world. Jesus came to be King, but the road he must follow involves a horrible price. Satan offers a short-cut. He will bring Israel to him, set up David's throne, make him the Messiah-ruler of the world—if he will only give up this idea of a spiritual Kingdom and worship the god of this world [Satan]. Israel looks for a material kingdom. So the temptation is to turn away from the Cross and the Tomb, to set up an outward, worldly regime.

10. **Go away, Satan!** Jesus rebukes him. "Go away" implies disgust. Satan is called by name and commanded to leave. **Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!** Jesus quotes *Deut. 6:13*. This forbids worship of any other object than Jehovah, whether idols, false gods, church leaders, saints or angels. The first temptation was through hunger—"What the sinful self desires"; the second through vanity and conceit—"what people see and want"; the third through avid ambition—"everything in this world that people are so proud of." (*1 John 2:15-17*.)

11. **Then the Devil left him.** Luke adds: "for a while." When the Devil is opposed, he flees. **Angels came.** When he had opposed the Temptor and won the battle, heavenly messengers came to help with food and also with spiritual comfort.

Jesus Begins His Work in Galilee*(Also Mark 1.14-15; Luke 4.14-15)*

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he went away to Galilee. ¹³He did not settle down in Nazareth, but went and lived in Capernaum, a town by Lake Galilee, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴This was done to make come true what the prophet Isaiah had said,

¹⁵"Land of Zebulun, and land of Naphtali,
in the direction of the sea, on the other
side of the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles!

¹⁶The people who live in darkness
will see a great light.
On those who live in the dark land of
death
the light will shine."

Jesus Begins to Preach

When Jesus heard that ¹²John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—to ¹⁴fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

"Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people living ¹⁶in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

12. When Jesus heard. Matthew makes no attempt to follow the order of events. He omits a year between the temptation and this verse. (1) Jesus had returned to Bethany east of the Jordan (*John 1:15-37*) where the first disciples were called; (2) The return to Galilee and the miracle at Cana (*John 2:1-11*); (3) The first Passover of the Lord's ministry at Jerusalem, and the first purifying of the temple (*John 2:13-25*); (4) The conversation with Nicodemus (*John 3:1-21*); (5) His ministry in Judea (*John 4:2*); (6) He leaves for Galilee, goes through Samaria, the woman at the well (*John 4:4-42*); (7) Heals the official's son (*John 4:46-54*); (8) A period of seclusion in Galilee, John the Baptist in prison (*Matt. 4:12*); (9) Attends a religious feast, miracle at the pool of Bethzatha (*John 5*); (10) Returns to Galilee, April, 28 A.D. We see that more than a year elapsed between the temptation and John's imprisonment. John was put in prison because he rebuked Herod (*Matt. 14:4; Mark 6:17*). He went away to Galilee. Prudently (*John 4:3*). Christ had been teaching in Judea.

13. Not . . . in Nazareth. They had rejected him (*Luke 4:16-30*), **Lived in Capernaum.** A city of 30,000 on the northwest shore of the Lake of Galilee. It was an important city, had a synagogue, a Roman army garrison, and a customs station with Matthew as the tax officer. It was abandoned long ago. It was "Christ's own city" because he made it his home. It was on the border between the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali.

14. To make come true. Matthew's way of saying this fulfilled prophecy. This prophecy is found in *Isaiah 9:1-2*.

15. Of the sea. Lake Galilee is the "sea."

16. The people. Those of the area just mentioned. **Who live in darkness.** Religious ignorance. **Will see a great light.** Light means Truth. Christ is the light of the world! Jesus taught in the area described, and the prophecy came true.

¹⁷From that time Jesus began to preach his message, "Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of heaven is near!"

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

(Also Mark 1.16-20; Luke 5.1-11)

¹⁸As Jesus walked by Lake Galilee, he saw two brothers who were fishermen, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew, catching fish in the lake with a net. ¹⁹Jesus said to them, "Come with me and I will teach you to catch men." ²⁰At once they left their nets and went with him.

²¹He went on and saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat with their father Zebedee, getting their nets ready. Jesus called them; ²²at once they left the boat and their father, and went with Jesus.

From that time on Jesus ¹⁷began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

The Calling of the First Disciples

As Jesus was walking be- ¹⁸side the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their ²⁰nets and followed him.

Going on from there, he ²¹saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and ²²immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

17. **From that time.** Probably from the time Jesus began to live in Capernaum. **Jesus began to preach.** This begins his Galilean ministry. **Turn away from your sins.** What Jesus now preaches is identical to John's message (*Matt. 3:2*). He commands them to turn from sin to God, because the Kingdom is near. This was still preparing for the "setting up" of his Kingdom, which could not happen until he was glorified in death and resurrection. (See *Luke 24:44-49*.)

18. **As Jesus walked.** The sea or lake of Galilee, named for the province of Galilee on its western side. Also called Lake Gennesaret: About thirteen miles long and six miles wide. The Jordan river runs through it and on into the Dead Sea. Jesus lived, taught, and did most of his miracles on its borders. **He saw two brothers.** Simon and Andrew were already disciples of Jesus (*John 1:35-39*). Jesus gave Simon the new name of Cephas or Peter, which means "rock," (see *John 1:42*). They lived in Bethsaida on the north shore of Lake Galilee (*John 1:44*). They were fishermen, a prosperous trade on the lake.

19. **Come with me.** They had continued to fish. Now they are formally called to devote all their time to a new work. They are to become apostles—special messengers of Christ.

20. **At once.** They did not question his word of command. They obeyed at once!

21. **Two other brothers.** Probably all Jesus called to be apostles were already his disciples (see *John 1:29-51*). This was a formal call to take up the "obligation" of Christ. James and John were also fishermen. Zebedee was their father, Salome their mother. Thought to be cousins of Jesus.

22. **At once.** They had received a higher call. They left their father and followed.

Jesus Teaches, Preaches, and Heals

(Also Luke 6.17-19)

²³Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom, and healing people from every kind of disease and sickness. ²⁴The news about him spread through the whole country of Syria, so that people brought him all those who were sick with all kinds of diseases, and afflicted with all sorts of troubles: people with demons, and epileptics, and paralytics—Jesus healed them all. ²⁵Great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Ten Towns, from Jerusalem, Judea, and the land on the other side of the Jordan.

The Sermon on the Mount

5 Jesus saw the crowds and went up a hill, where he sat down. His disciples gathered

Jesus Heals the Sick

Jesus went throughout 23 Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him 24 spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, the epileptics and the paralytics, and he healed them. Large crowds from Galilee, 25 the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

The Beatitudes

5 Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,

23. **Jesus went all over Galilee.** These next three verses condense the work and teaching of a long period, and introduce the detailed account given in the following chapters. **Teaching.** The Jews met every Sabbath [Saturday] in their synagogues for worship. This gave Jesus a ready-made audience. It was the custom to read from the Old Testament Scriptures, then a teacher or rabbi was asked to speak. This custom gave Jesus, and his disciples, a fine opportunity to proclaim the New Covenant. **Good News of the Kingdom.** The Good News of the speedy arrival of the long awaited Kingdom of the Messiah (*Matt. 16:28; Luke 9:27*). He did not at this time announce himself to be the Messiah. **Healing.** He loved mankind, and he healed the body so that he might heal the soul.

24. **The news.** What he was doing attracted attention. Syria was the Roman province north and east of Palestine, and may have included the latter at this time. Antioch and Damascus were in this province [see map]. **People with demons.** Demons are evil spirits with the ability to hurt people. They are servants of the ONE Devil. People were actually subject to the control of these demons. Consider: (1) supernatural strength (*Mark 5:4*); (2) blindness (*Matt. 12:22*); (3) predict the future (*Acts 16:16*); (4) demons knew Jesus (*Mark 1:24*); (5) Jesus spoke to them (*Matt. 8:32*); (6) *demoniacs spoke of this control* (*Mark 5:9*); (7) apostles affirmed it (*Luke 10:17*); (8) Jesus affirmed it (*Matt. 12:28*); (9) Peter affirmed it (*Acts 10:38*); [Satan's power over the Christian is limited. See *I Cor. 10:13*.]

25. **Great crowds.** Attracted by his teaching and his miracles. [see map for Galilee and the Ten Towns.] Jesus was: (1) active; (2) he went to the people; (3) he went where the busiest people were; (4) he went where worshipping people were; (5) he went where needy people were.

1. **Jesus saw the crowds.** Luke (*ch. 6*) implies Jesus had spent the night in prayer on this hill, and that in the morning he formally chose and set apart the twelve. Coming down he finds the crowds standing on a level place, and teaches them. The hill is thought to be the "Horns of Hattin," about seven miles south of Capernaum, near Lake Galilee. **His disciples.** Not only the twelve, but all who wished to learn. *Disciple* means *learner*.

around him, ²and he began to teach them:

True Happiness

(Also Luke 6.20-23)

³Happy are those who know they are
spiritually poor;
the Kingdom of heaven belongs to
them!

⁴“Happy are those who mourn;
God will comfort them!

⁵“Happy are the meek;
they will receive what God has prom-
ised!

⁶“Happy are those whose greatest desire is
to do what God requires;
God will satisfy them fully!

⁷“Happy are those who are merciful to
others;
God will be merciful to them!

⁸“Happy are the pure in heart;
they will see God!

and he began to teach them 2
saying:

“Blessed are the poor in 3
spirit, for theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who 4
mourn, for they will be
comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for 5
they will inherit the
earth.

Blessed are those who 6
hunger and thirst for
righteousness, for they
will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, 7
for they will be shown
mercy.

Blessed are the pure in 8
heart, for they will see
God.

2. **And he began to teach them.** Compare *Luke 6:20-49*. This wonderful section of three chapters is to the Christian era what the Law given on Mount Sinai was to the Mosaic of Jewish era. The Law was the moral code of Judaism. This is the moral code of Christianity. The Law was given from the “Mountain which could not be touched,” this from the “Mount of Blessing” (*Heb. 12:18-24*).

3. **Happy.** This word is used many times. It is the happiness which God gives. [Our English language does not have a word to accurately give this the full force of the original *MAKARIOS*. *Extreme happiness, blessed, worthy, fortunate, etc., all rolled up into one.*] **Spiritually poor.** Not arrogant, but humble, teachable. **Belongs to them.** Christ would set up a spiritual Kingdom with such as these. The spiritually proud and arrogant are disqualified.

4. **Happy are those who mourn.** There is a worldly sadness that causes death (*2 Cor. 7:10*). This is the sadness God uses to make men turn to him (*2 Cor. 7:11*). **God will comfort them.** Through hope (*see John 16:20; 2 Cor. 1:7*).

5. **Happy are the meek.** Jesus was meek, yet he firmly stood up to the Pharisees. To be meek is to be kind, gentle, humble, teachable. The Jewish Zealots expected a kingdom in which the harsh and the cruel would succeed (*see note on Mark 15:7*). **They will receive.** Those who avoid bitterness and revenge follow the example of Christ on the cross. In Jesus, they will receive every promise!

6. **Happy . . . to do what God requires.** This implies a deep sense of spiritual need (*compare verses 3 & 4*), a desire to stand before God cleansed of sin (*see Luke 15:17*). **God will satisfy them fully.** *See Romans 5:15-19.*

7. **Happy are those who are merciful.** Those who are merciful tend to receive mercy in this life. God will do to you what you do to others. *See Matt. 7:1-2.*

8. **Happy are the pure in heart.** Those who listened to the Pharisees looked carefully at externals, but ignored the internal. Jesus demands that the heart be kept clean. *See 1 Peter 4:1-6.* **They will see God.** By faith now, and in Eternity. The Lord lives in the pure heart (*see John 14:23; Eph. 2:22*).

⁹“Happy are those who work for peace among men;

God will call them his sons!

¹⁰“Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

¹¹“Happy are you when men insult you, and persecute you, and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. ¹²Be glad and happy, because a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how men persecuted the prophets who lived before you.”

Salt and Light

(Also Mark 9.50; Luke 14.34-35)

¹³“You are like salt for all mankind. But if salt loses its taste, there is no way to make it salty again. It has become worthless, so it is thrown away and people walk on it.

¹⁴“You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one lights a lamp to put it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Salt and Light

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the

9. **Happy . . . who work for peace.** Not soldiers of a “Warrior-Messiah” as the Jews expected, but those who work for peace in the name of Jesus. **God will call them his sons!** God blesses those who carry out his will.

10. **Happy are those who are persecuted.** Because they do what God requires. The Jews expected to rule the world. (see Acts 1:6). Christ blesses those who suffer [for him], and promises them the Kingdom. These words have cheered martyrs.

11. **Happy are you when men insult you.** A personal application of verse 10.

12. **Be glad and happy.** There is great happiness and joy in God's warfare! The hope of the great reward was very strong in the early church. **This is how.** An example from former times. See Hebrews 11:32-40.

13. **You are like salt.** Meat was salted to keep it from spoiling. The followers of Christ preserve the world. Ten men who worshipped God would have saved the cities of Sodom and Gommorah (Gen. 18:32). **But if salt loses its taste.** Rock salt was used at that time. If the saltiness had been lost, it had no value. Likewise the Christian who does not obey God has no preserving value (see Rev. 3:16).

14. **You are like light.** Light is symbolic of truth. Christians are to spread truth to destroy ignorance. **A city.** Ancient cities were built on hills for defence, and were clearly visible. So should Christians be clearly recognizable.

15. **To put it under a bowl.** The very purpose of lighting a lamp would make it foolish to conceal its light. Just so would it be absurd to conceal truth.

everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and give praise to your Father in heaven.”

Teaching about the Law

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true. ¹⁸Remember this! As long as heaven and earth last, the least point or the smallest detail of the Law will not be done away with—not until the end of all things. ¹⁹So then, whoever disobeys even the smallest of the commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be least in the Kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, whoever obeys the Law, and teaches others to do the same, will be great in the Kingdom of heaven. ²⁰I tell you, then, that you will be able to enter the Kingdom of heaven only if you are more faithful than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees in doing what God requires.”

house. In the same way, let ¹⁶ your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

The Fulfillment of the Law

“Do not think that I have ¹⁷ come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the ¹⁸ truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹ Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

16. **Your light must shine.** Christians allow their light to shine by doing good things which honor God in the eyes of people. People are more impressed by what you do, than by what you say.

17. **Do not think that I have come to do away.** The things Jesus had taught in these verses so differed from the teaching of the Jews [teachers of the Law and Pharisees] that some might think he was a destroyer of the Law. His purpose was to fulfill—to make its teachings come true. The Law completed its purpose in Christ (see *Gal. 3:21-29*).

18. **Remember this.** The spirit and substance of the Law will last forever [love to God and love to fellow man (*Matt. 22:34-40*)]. However, the Law as a system of symbolic pictures will cease to be needed (*Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14; Heb. 8:13; Rom. 8:1-4*).

19. **Whoever disobeys.** The Jews taught that some commands were more important, and that some were “small” and unimportant. They also taught that if you kept one commandment perfectly, you would be given credit for all the rest. *James 2:10* shows this to be false. Christ shows that all commands are equally important [God’s commands]. **Will be least.** He may be allowed to enter the Kingdom, but he will not receive honor.

20. **Only if you are more faithful.** The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees claimed to do what God requires, but they were not faithful. See *Matt. 3:7-12*.

Teaching about Anger

²¹“You have heard that men were told in the past, ‘Do not murder; anyone who commits murder will be brought before the judge.’ ²²But now I tell you: whoever is angry with his brother will be brought before the judge; whoever calls his brother ‘You good-for-nothing!’ will be brought before the Council; and whoever calls his brother a worthless fool will be in danger of going to the fire of hell. ²³So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar and go at once to make peace with your brother; then come back and offer your gift to God.

²⁵“If a man brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, be friendly with him while there is time, before you get to court; once you are there he will turn you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the police, and you will be put in jail. ²⁶There you will stay, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine.”

Murder

“You have heard that it ²¹ was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I ²² tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

“Therefore, if you are off- ²³ ering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift ²⁴ there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

“Settle matters quickly ²⁵ with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell ²⁶ you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

21. **You have heard.** Jesus now restates the Ten Commandments and gives them new form and meaning in his Kingdom. [He does not restate the law of the Sabbath.] **Do not murder.** One of the Ten Commandments. **Before the Judge.** A civil court. The Law provided a court of seven judges in every city, who could pass the death penalty (see *Deut. 16:18*).

22. **But now I tell you.** Christ has the authority to amend the Law spoken by Jehovah. **Whoever is angry with his brother.** Jesus deals with motive, forbidding the anger and the harsh words which produce murder. **You good-for-nothing.** A strong insult. **A worthless fool.** These seemingly mild words were the supreme insult to a Jew. It meant one eternally cut off from God and doomed forever. Three degrees of guilt are shown here: murderous anger; verbal insult; solemn curse. The Canaanites burned human sacrifices to Moloch in Gehenna [valley of Hinnom] south of Jerusalem. This was symbolic of eternal punishment.

23. **So if you are about to offer your gift.** One who stands guilty of sin against his brother cannot worship God acceptably. This is an application of *verse 22*.

24. **Leave your gift.** Go solve the problem first. Then you can be free from guilt, and worship God. **25-26 If a man brings a lawsuit.** A creditor could bring suit, and the debtor be put in jail for a just debt. It makes sense to be friendly and settle out of court, and avoid the penalty. The same is true with anger. Put a stop to it before it gets you into trouble.

Teaching about Adultery

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ ²⁸But now I tell you: anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹So if your right eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. ³⁰If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose one of your limbs than to have your whole body go off to hell.”

Teaching about Divorce

(Also *Matt. 19.9; Mark 10.11-12; Luke 16.18*)

³¹“It was also said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce.’ ³²But now I tell you: if a man divorces his wife, and she has not been unfaithful, then he is guilty of making her commit adultery if she marries again; and the man who marries her also commits adultery.”

Teaching about Vows

³³“You have also heard that men were told in the past, ‘Do not break your promise, but do

Adultery

“You have heard that it ²⁷ was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that ²⁸ anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye ²⁹ causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your ³⁰ right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

“It has been said, ‘Any- ³¹ one who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I tell you that ³² anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to commit adultery, and anyone who marries a woman so divorced commits adultery.

Oaths

“Again, you have heard ³³ that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you

27. **Do not commit adultery.** One of the Ten Commandments.

28. **Anyone who looks.** The Jews taught that there was no guilt, unless the act was performed. Some of them were “voyers” (see *2 Pet. 2:14*). **Wants to possess her.** Not a casual look, but an *obsessive desire*.

29-30. **Take it out . . . Cut it off.** Symbolic. It would not solve the problem to take out your eye or cut off your hand. The sin springs from the desire of the heart. Jesus says it would be a good trade to sacrifice part of your body if by doing so you could save the rest of it. He is emphasizing the seriousness of the problem.

31. **Anyone who divorces his wife.** The laws of divorce were very lax among the Jews. Moses had given a law on it (*Deut. 24:1-4*), but they believed no cause was really necessary.

32. **But now I tell you.** Jesus forbids divorce except for unfaithfulness. A divorce for any other cause is not valid, making those who remarry guilty of bigamy and therefore adultery. See notes on *Matt. 19:1-12*.

33. **Do not break your promise.** The Law said that solemn promises must be kept (*Lev. 19:12*). The Jews taught that some promises could be broken without penalty.

what you have sworn to the Lord to do.' ³⁴But now I tell you: do not use any vow when you make a promise; do not swear by heaven, because it is God's throne; ³⁵nor by earth, because it is the resting place for his feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶Do not even swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷Just say 'Yes' or 'No'—anything else you have to say comes from the Evil One."

Teaching about Revenge

(Also Luke 6.29-30)

³⁸"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who does you wrong. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too. ⁴⁰And if someone takes you to court to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well. ⁴¹And if one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack one mile, carry it another

have made to the Lord.' But ³⁴I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne, or by the ³⁵earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And ³⁶do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be ³⁷'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

An Eye for an Eye

"You have heard that it ³⁸was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But ³⁹I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants ⁴⁰to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone ⁴¹forces you to go one mile, go

34-35. **Do not use any vow.** Vow: a strong declaration, or promise, usually made while calling upon God to punish the speaker if the promise is not true or the promise is not kept. Jesus is saying that such things are not necessary. Our present civil law allows those who will not take a "judicial oath" to "affirm" the truthfulness of their statement. **Heaven.** The Jews held it sin to swear a vow by the name of God, but that it was all right to swear by heaven, by earth, and by Jerusalem.

36. **By your head.** A meaningless vow. We are told the people of the Eastern world still swear vows by the head, the beard, the heart, the temple, the church, etc.

37. **Just say yes or no.** Let your "yes" or "no" in word be the same in action. Our present sin of profanity grew out of the habit of swearing vows. Note Peter's sin in *Matt. 26:74*.

38. **An eye for an eye.** The old Law permitted equal revenge. (*Exod. 21:23-25; Lev. 24:18-20*). The Jews took advantage of this to excuse their evil ways.

39. **Do not take revenge.** He does not mean civil law and its penalties. He speaks of personal vengeance. **Let him slap your left cheek too.** This must be the spirit of the Christian. It will prevent the sin of anger (*verse 22*). See examples in *John 18:22-23; Acts 23:2-3*.

40. **And if someone takes you to court.** A creditor could not take your coat (*Exod. 20:26-29*), but let him take it also, and avoid the lawsuit. All this come under Jesus' statement: "*Do not take revenge.*"

41. **And if one of the occupation troops.** In an age when transportation was primitive, Roman soldiers had the right to force people to carry their equipment and baggage, but only for one mile. Jesus says to go an extra mile. This is a spiritual principle (*Rom. 12:17-20*).

mile. ⁴²When someone asks you for something, give it to him; when someone wants to borrow something, lend it to him."

Love for Enemies

(Also *Luke 6.27-28, 32-36*)

⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your friends, hate your enemies.' ⁴⁴But now I tell you: love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you will become the sons of your Father in heaven. For he makes his sun to shine on bad and good people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and those who do evil. ⁴⁶Why should God reward you if you love only the people who love you? Even the tax collectors do that! ⁴⁷And if you speak only to your friends, have you done anything out of the ordinary? Even the pagans do that! ⁴⁸You must be perfect—just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

with him two miles. Give to ⁴² the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love for Enemies

"You have heard that it ⁴³ was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those ⁴⁴ who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who ⁴⁵ love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if ⁴⁶ you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, ⁴⁷ therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. ⁴⁸

42. When someone asks you. Many who were blind, crippled, and lepers roamed Palestine. They live on what charity was given to them. Jesus does not mean that we must give to everyone, nor loan to everyone, for this would not be right. But, he does say that we must willingly do so when it is right. "*When you give to the poor it is like lending to the Lord, because the Lord will pay you back*" (*Prov. 19:17*).

43. You have heard. The Law said to love your fellow man (*Lev. 19:18*). The teachers of the Law said to hate your enemies, basing this on a misunderstanding of *Deut. 23:6*.

44-45. But now I tell you. Christ presents God's Truth. Love is the basic law of Christ's Kingdom. See the Parable of the Good Samaritan (*Luke 10:30-37*). The kind of love which Jesus commands is a deliberate act, rather than an emotion. For this reason, we are able to "love" those whom we do not "like," even enemies. This is the kind of love which God shows us (*Rom. 5:6-11*). See the "New Commandment" (*John 13:34-35*).

46. Even the tax collectors do that. Those who collected taxes for the occupation government were hated by the Jews, and shunned as traitors. Yet, Jesus reminds them, even they love those who love them.

47. Speak only to your friends. The Jews (that is, the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees and Sadducees) avoided other generally, and spoke only to those of their own group. Even the pagans had this much love. The Jews operated on this same level. Those who follow Christ must do much better.

48. You must be perfect. To fully carry out this great law of love would raise man to the Divine ideal. Followers of Christ are to reach up to this, even though human nature stands in their way. There is strong tension in the Christian life. See *Rom. 7:14-25; 1 John 1:5-10*. But in the final sense, we can only be "perfect" through God's act in Jesus Christ.

Teaching about Charity

6 "Be careful not to perform your religious duties in public so that people will see what you do. If you do these things publicly you will not have any reward from your Father in heaven.

²"So when you give something to a needy person, do not make a big show of it, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets. They do it so that people will praise them. Remember this! They have already been paid in full. ³But when you help a needy person, do it in such a way that even your closest friend will not know about it, ⁴but it will be a private matter. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

Teaching about Prayer

(Also Luke 11.2-4)

⁵"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites! They love to stand up and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that everyone will see them. Remember this! They

Giving to the Needy

6 "Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. ⁴Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

⁵"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their re-

1. **Be careful.** Jesus condemns those who "show off" and make a parade of their works of charity. He then gives three illustrations of what he is saying. The Christian is not forbidden to do his religious duties in public, but he is forbidden to do them just to be seen and honored.

2. **So when you give something.** A hypocrite is one who "shows off" and tries to make people think he is important. The Greek word meant an actor on the stage—one who acted a part. The world praises the millionaire who gives a few thousands, but ignores those who really sacrifice to give a dollar or two. **They have already been paid in full.** They did not do this to praise God, but to honor themselves. "*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble*" (James 4:6).

3. **But when you help a needy person.** If you do not plan your works of charity to honor yourself, your motive will be right.

4. **But it will be a private matter.** Not that you must hide what you do, but that you avoid "showing off" your good works. **And your Father . . . will reward you.** At the Last Day. *See Matt. 25:31-46.*

5. **When you pray.** The second example. All should pray. The wrong way is to "show off" to make others see your "piety." **So that everyone will see them.** The Pharisees like to stand up in public places and pray, to attract attention to themselves. This was the only reward they wanted, and it was all they would get.

have already been paid in full. ⁶But when you pray, go to your room and close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you.

⁷"In your prayers do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do, who think that God will hear them because of their long prayers.

⁸Do not be like them; your Father already knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹This, then, is how you should pray:

'Our Father in heaven:

May your holy name be honored;

¹⁰ may your Kingdom come;

may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need.

¹² Forgive us the wrongs that we have done, as we forgive the wrongs that others

ward in full. When you ⁶
pray, go into your room,
close the door and pray to
your Father, who is unseen.
Then your Father, who sees
what is done in secret, will
reward you. And when you ⁷
pray, do not keep on bab-
bling like pagans, for they
think they will be heard be-
cause of their many words.
Do not be like them, for ⁸
your Father knows what you
need before you ask him.

"This is how you should ⁹
pray:

'Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, ¹⁰
your will be done
on earth as it is in
heaven.

Give us today our daily ¹¹
bread.

Forgive us our debts, ¹²
as we also have forgiven

6. **But when you pray.** This does not prohibit public prayers, but it emphasizes the fact that it is the prayer itself which is important. Your own room is a good place to pray, because there you will not be trying to impress anyone. Jesus went off by himself to pray many times, and at other times, he prayed in public. "Your room" can be any quiet place. Once Peter's "room" was on the roof of a house; the Savior's on a mountain alone. **Will reward you.** See verse 4.

7. **Do not use a lot of meaningless words.** It is not a torrent of prayer, nor long prayer which is forbidden (*Jesus did both*), but the making of the number of prayers said, their length, and the amount of time spent in prayer—a *thing of merit*. *1 Kings 18:26* gives an example of meaningless long prayer. Some religious people still believe there is special merit in repeating certain prayers a set number of times.

8. **Your Father already knows.** Here is a good reason for short prayers. It isn't necessary for us to inform God of what is taking place in his world. But he does wish us to pray to him!

9. **This, then, is how you should pray.** The priests commonly did the praying. Luke says: "*One time Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.'*" What Jesus gives next is not a "set form," but an example.

Our Father in heaven. This shows the close relationship between God and the true worshiper. We pray as a child speaks to the Father. **May your holy name be honored.** This, and the two phrases which follow, praise God and honor his purpose. Only one who truly loves God can pray these three phrases.

10. **May your Kingdom come.** Messiah's Kingdom had not yet come. Jesus had said it was near. It did speedily come in the victory of the Cross and the power of Pentecost. The reason sin and evil exist is that the Lord is patiently waiting, wishing all to be saved (*2 Pet. 3:9*).

May your will be done. It would be mockery to pray this, if we have not merged our will with his. Read the example of Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane (*Matt. 26:36-46*).

11. **Give us today the food we need.** This, and the phrases which follow speak to our individual needs. It is right and proper to pray for material things. Note that we pray for "today," not for future years (see verse 34).

12. **Forgive us the wrongs.** This asks God to forgive us the wrongs that we have done—in exactly the same way which we forgive others! That is, we ask God to do to us just what we have done to others.

have done us.

¹³ Do not bring us to hard testing,
but keep us safe from the Evil One.'

¹⁴ "If you forgive others the wrongs they have done you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive the wrongs of others, then your Father in heaven will not forgive the wrongs you have done."

Teaching about Fasting

¹⁶ "And when you fast, do not put on a sad face as the hypocrites do. They go around with a hungry look so that everyone will see that they are fasting. Remember this! They have already been paid in full. ¹⁷When you go without food, wash your face and comb your hair, ¹⁸so that others cannot know that you are fasting—only your Father, who is unseen, will know. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

Riches in Heaven

(Also Luke 12.33-34)

¹⁹ "Do not save riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers

our debtors.
And lead us not into ¹³
temptation,
but deliver us from the
evil one.'

For if you forgive men ¹⁴
when they sin against you,
your heavenly Father will
also forgive you. But if you ¹⁵
do not forgive men their
sins, your Father will not
forgive your sins.

Fasting

"When you fast, do not ¹⁶
look somber as the hypo-
crites do, for they disfigure
their faces to show men they
are fasting. I tell you the
truth, they have received
their reward in full. But ¹⁷
when you fast, put oil on
your head and wash your
face, so that it will not be ¹⁸
obvious to men that you are
fasting, but only to your
Father, who is unseen; and
your Father, who sees what
is done in secret, will reward
you.

Treasures in Heaven

"Do not store up for your- ¹⁹
selves treasures on earth,
where moth and rust de-
stroy, and where thieves

13. **Do not bring us to hard testing.** The thought is that God may hold us back from temptations that might destroy us. He has promised to do this (*1 Cor. 10:13*). But no one can pray this, who does not himself try to keep out of trouble. [Liturgical usage of this prayer added: *"For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."*]

14-15 **If you forgive others.** Our Lord makes it a condition of forgiveness that we show a spirit of mercy and forgiveness to others.

16-18. **And when you fast.** This is the third example of the right and wrong way of doing religious duties. The same principle of avoiding a "show off" attitude applies here. Fasting can be useful, but not when we do it to impress people. **A hungry look.** Some commonly put ashes and dust on their head, wore sackcloth [a very coarse cloth woven of fibers, which was symbolic of sorrow], and tried to impress others with their "great suffering." This sham is condemned. **When you go without food.** Wash your face, comb your hair—*appear normal*. What we do must be for the eyes of God, not men. He will reward you, if you do it to honor him.

19. **Do not save riches.** This does not forbid having a bank account, but it does forbid the piling up of wealth for worldly purposes. It is not *money* which is the root of evil, but the *LOVE of money* (*1 Tim. 6:10*). Moths eat clothes. Rust will destroy, robbers break in. The treasures of earth will all disappear.

break in and steal. ²⁰Instead, save riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. ²¹For your heart will always be where your riches are."

The Light of the Body

(Also Luke 11.34-36)

²²"The eyes are like a lamp for the body. If your eyes are clear, your whole body will be full of light; ²³but if your eyes are bad, your body will be in darkness. So if the light in you is darkness, how terribly dark it will be!"

God and Possessions

(Also Luke 16.13; 12.22-31)

²⁴"No one can be a slave to two masters; he will hate one and love the other; he will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

²⁵"This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth

break in and steal. But store ²⁰ up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

"The eye is the lamp of ²² the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your ²³ eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

"No one can serve two ²⁴ masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Do Not Worry

"Therefore I tell you, do ²⁵ not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more impor-

20. **Save riches for yourself in heaven.** Only in this way can you preserve your wealth. Our true wealth is in using money, property, and especially ourself (Rom. 12:1-2) in the service of God. This is a positive principle of life.

21. **For your heart will always be.** This is a universal truth. The thing which you value the most will be the center of your attention. If your wealth is in heaven, your mind will always be looking up to God.

22-23. **The eyes are like a lamp.** This continues the same line of thinking. If your eyes are diseased, everything you see will be distorted. Symbolically the eyes represent the mind and conscience. If these are diseased, the light of Truth will not be able to illuminate your life.

24. **No one can be a slave to two masters.** In the world of the first century, slavery was common. All could understand this figure of speech. A slave caught between two masters could not serve either successfully. **You cannot serve both God and money.** Money is here spoken of as a person—an idol. If you do not worship God, something else will take his place and you will worship it. For many people, it will be money.

25. **Do not be worried.** Christ does not here forbid looking to the future and being ready to meet its challenge. But you should avoid being "worried sick" about material things that are continually being used up. God gave us life, and that is more important than food. God gave us our body, and that is more important than clothes. Therefore trust God to make food and clothing available.

more than clothes? ²⁶Look at the birds flying around: they do not plant seeds, gather a harvest, and put it in barns; your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you worth much more than birds? ²⁷Which one of you can live a few more years by worrying about it?

²⁸“And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. ²⁹But I tell you that not even Solomon, as rich as he was, had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. ³⁰It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today, gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? How little faith you have! ³¹So do not start worrying: ‘Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?’ ³²(These are the things the heathen are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. ³³Instead, be concerned above everything else with his Kingdom and with what he requires, and he will provide you with all these other things.

tant than clothes? Look at ²⁶ the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of ²⁷ you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

“And why do you worry ²⁸ about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I ²⁹ tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If ³⁰ that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do ³¹ not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans ³² run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom ³³ and his righteousness, and all these things will be given

26. Look at the birds. God feeds the birds without their growing any crops. They fulfill their mission, and God feeds them. We must fulfill our mission in life. God will make a way for us, too.

27. Which one of you. No one can prolong his life by worrying about it. Anxiety is no help at all!

28. Look how the wild flowers grow. No “hustle and bustle” as we humans do. Yet they do fulfill their mission.

29. Not even Solomon. To the Jew, Solomon was legendary for great opulence. The splendor of his reign was recorded in Jewish writings, in all Asian literature, and is still proverbial throughout the Eastern world. Yet these wild flowers are more beautiful and colorful than he was at his best. Likely both the birds and the flowers were clearly visible as Jesus said this.

30. Here today, gone tomorrow. Scarcity of fuel made dried grass and weeds a vital source to heat ovens. If God gives such beauty to so temporary a things as this, will he not take care of you?

31. So do not start worrying. Worry is a form of unbelief. Worry also diverts your mind from important things, and prevents you from using your full abilities.

32. These are the things. The heathen [*people who were not aware of the One True God*] were hated by the Jews. Jesus is saying that such behavior in the heathen might be overlooked, but you have a heavenly Father and you know that he knows your need of all these things. You have no excuse for failing to trust him.

33. Be concerned. God's Kingdom [church] ought to be your first concern. He requires faith, love, holy living, and such things from you. (1) You must put him first in point of time. Some expect to first make their fortune, build a fine house, and then look to God. You must put God first and allow all else to fall in line. (2) You must put him first in importance. Everything else must be secondary to his requirements. (3) You must make him first in your love. There is still plenty of room for family and friends. Just make certain that he is in **FIRST PLACE**.

³⁴So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings."

to you as well. Therefore do ³⁴ not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Judging Others

(Also Luke 6.37-38, 41-42)

Judging Others

7 "Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you—²because God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. ³Why, then, do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, and pay no attention to the log in your own eye? 'How dare you say to your brother, 'Please, let me take that speck out of your eye,' when you have a log in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite! Take the log out of your own eye first, and then you will be able to see and take the speck out of your brother's eye.

7 "Do not judge, or you ² too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

"Why do you look at the ³ speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to ⁴ your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You ⁵ hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

"Do not give dogs what is ⁶ sacred; do not throw your

"Do not give what is holy to dogs—they will only turn and attack you; do not throw your

34. So do not worry about tomorrow. Do not make the mistake of worrying yourself sick about what might happen. **There is no need to add.** Solving the problems of today will keep you busy. You really don't need the added burden of tomorrow's problems. Don't "borrow trouble." Besides, most of what you worry about won't happen anyway. Remember: worry is a form of unbelief!

1. Do not judge others. The meaning is plain. (1) He does not prohibit the civil judgments of the courts against those who commit crimes. (2) He does not prohibit the leaders of the church judging those who live in sin. Christ and the apostles command this. (3) He does not forbid our evaluating people by the things which they do (see verses 15-20). (4) What he does forbid is "jumping to a conclusion"—rashly condemning without looking at the facts [prejudice, intolerance, etc.].

2. Because God will judge you. God is aware of the harsh, critical spirit of those who find fault with everything. God will do to each of us, just what we do to our fellow man. "A man will reap exactly what he plants" (Gal. 6:7).

3. Why, then, do you look? An example to show how stupid this "judging" really is.

4-5. How dare you. One who criticizes his brother for having a speck in his eye, while having a log in his own eye, is a hypocrite. Many who want to reform the world, need first to reform and clean up their own lives.

6. Do not give what is holy to dogs. Jews did not think of dogs as "man's best friend." Dogs roamed in snarling packs and were scavengers. They were "unclean" by religious law, and they came to be the symbol of cruel, inhuman people who opposed every good thing. It is useless to teach spiritual things to such a person. **Do not throw your pearls in front of pigs.** Pigs were also religiously "unclean." Having no use for pearls, they would savagely attack those who threw them. Symbolically, there is a type of mind which would attempt to destroy the one who spreads Truth. It is our duty to help all people and save as many as possible, but there is a type of person whom we cannot reach. [But avoid "judging" who this person is.]

pearls in front of pigs—they will only trample them underfoot.”

Ask, Seek, Knock

(Also Luke 11.9-13)

⁷“Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks will receive, and he who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks. ⁹Would any of you who are fathers give your son a stone, when he asks you for bread? ¹⁰Or would you give him a snake, when he asks you for fish? ¹¹As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, your Father in heaven will give good things to those who ask him!

¹²“Do for others what you want them to do for you: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets.”

The Narrow Gate

(Also Luke 13.24)

¹³“Go in through the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to

pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

“Ask and it will be given ⁷ to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; ⁸ he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

“Which of you, if his son ⁹ asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a ¹⁰ fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are ¹¹ evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! In every- ¹² thing do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

The Narrow and Wide Gates

“Enter through the nar- ¹³ row gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

7-8. **Ask . . . Seek . . . Knock.** These refer to prayer. They form a climax. God's people are to come to him in prayer. **Ask** implies a simple prayer. **Seek** is stronger. **Knock** shows persistent action (See Luke 18:1-8). For everyone who asks [in faith, as God's child] will receive. For every one of the class of whom the Savior speaks. That class is all who, as children of the Father, can pray: “Our Father in heaven.”

9-10. **Would any of you.** God is our Father, and therefore he will answer our prayers. No father would mock his child by giving him a stone for bread, or a snake for a fish. Bread and fish were the most common items of food for the common person.

11. **As bad as you are.** Even criminals love their children, and treat them kindly. If you believe that God is your “Father,” you will believe in the power of prayer. **Good things.** Luke 11:13. the parallel account says “Holy Spirit” instead of “good things,” as though the Holy Spirit is the greatest blessing of heaven (see note on Matt. 28:19).

12. **Do for others what you want them to do for you.** This is the “golden rule.” Do to others what you would like for them to do to you—if your positions were switched. Socrates among the Greeks. Buddha and Confucius among the Orientals, and Hillel among the Jews taught a similar law, but theirs was negative: “Do not do to others what you would not have done to you.” Christ taught a POSITIVE DOING! 13-14. **Go in through the narrow gate.** The key thought of the entire lesson is the Kingdom of heaven and its requirements. “Go in” means into the Kingdom of heaven. Nearly every town in Palestine was enclosed by walls and entered through gates. The main gates were wide, with double doors, closed and

hell, and there are many who travel it. ¹⁴The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and few people find it.”

A Tree and Its Fruit

(Also Luke 6.43-44)

¹⁵“Watch out for false prophets; they come to you looking like sheep on the outside, but they are really like wild wolves on the inside. ¹⁶You will know them by the way they act. Thorn bushes do not bear grapes, and briars do not bear figs. ¹⁷A healthy tree bears good fruit, while a poor tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a poor tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire. ²⁰So, then, you will know the false prophets by the way they act.”

I Never Knew You

(Also Luke 13.25-27)

²¹“Not everyone who calls me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants

But small is the gate and 14 narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

A Tree and Its Fruit

“Watch out for false 15 prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you 16 will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, 17 but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot 18 bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear 19 good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, 20 by their fruit you will recognize them.

“Not everyone who says to 21 me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

locked and secured with an iron bar. The “narrow gate” was a small door in the main gate, only opened to those who knocked. It was symbolic of restricted entry. The reason few people find it, is that it requires a conscious effort to enter this way, and many take the “easy road.”

15. **Watch out for false prophets.** In the scriptures, a prophet is one who proclaims God’s message to men. A false prophet is one who does not teach the truth. Jesus speaks here about the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees. **Looking like sheep.** They look harmless, but inside they are very dangerous to the unsuspecting.

16. **You will know them.** Actions speak louder than words. Talk is cheap, but actions show what is really there. **Thorn bushes do not bear grapes.** Grapes and figs were two highly valued fruits. Nothing is more common than thorns and briars. Common sense tells you that you do not get good fruit from thorns and briars. You do not get “good actions” from a false teacher.

17-18 **A healthy tree bears good fruit.** This is a universal law of nature. Every tree bears its own kind of fruit. Whatever a man is—will show up in his actions.

19-20. **Any tree.** Jesus carries the figure further. Bad trees are destroyed. The useless and unfruitful will be swept away (see Matt. 25:31-46).

21. **Not everyone.** You must enter the Kingdom through the narrow gate. Jesus now shows what is necessary to enter. “Not everyone” implies that some who do say ‘Lord, Lord,’ will be able to enter! **Only those who do.** No one can please the Lord who does not obey him and love him. See James 2:14-26.

them to do. ²²When that Day comes, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord! In your name we spoke God's message, by your name we drove out many demons and performed many miracles!' ²³Then I will say to them, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

The Two House Builders

(Also Luke 6.47-49)

²⁴"So then, everyone who hears these words of mine and obeys them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, and the winds blew hard against that house. But it did not fall, because it had been built on the rock.

²⁶"But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not obey them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, the winds blew hard against that house, and it fell. What a terrible fall that was!"

The Authority of Jesus

²⁸Jesus finished saying these things, and the

Many will say to me on that ²² day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell ²³ them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me you evildoers!'

The Wise and Foolish Builders

"Therefore, everyone who ²⁴ hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But every- ²⁶ one who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

When Jesus had finished ²⁸ saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his

22. **When that Day comes.** The great Day of the Lord. Jesus pictures the most religious of the "non-doers" and shows them at Judgment.

23. **I never knew you.** Augustine says that for Christ to say: "I never knew you," is only another way of saying: "You never knew me." They did miracles and drove out demons, but Jesus is saying that they were not his disciples at all [they loved neither God nor fellow man]. **Away from me.** Their religion had been all talk and prayers. They were religious, but they did not love God. *Matt. 25:41* shows their punishment. Many fool themselves by being all talk and no action [even though they do things which they think are important].

24. **Will be like a wise man.** Another example to show how important it is to act upon the teachings of Christ. Common sense would tell you to build on the rock. Palestine had a rainy season with heavy floods. The one who "hears and does" Christ's words—is building on the rock.

25. **The rain poured down.** This verse pictures the sudden violent storms of the rainy season and the sweeping floods which could so quickly undermine and destroy a house. Built on the rock, the house stands. So will everyone who hears and does.

26-27. **Will be like a foolish man.** This is the one who hears and does nothing. In the past whole towns on the Missouri and lower Mississippi Rivers have been undermined and swept into the whirlpool because they were built on sand. So will it happen to the disobedient.

28. **The crowd was amazed.** No wonder! The whole world still stands in awe as they study this sermon.

crowd was amazed at the way he taught. ²⁹He wasn't like their teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority.

Jesus Makes a Leper Clean

(Also Mark 1.40-45; Luke 5.12-16)

8 Jesus came down from the hill, and large crowds followed him. ²Then a leper came to him, knelt down before him, and said, "Sir, if you want to, you can make me clean."

³Jesus reached out and touched him. "I do want to," he answered. "Be clean!" At once he was clean from his leprosy. ⁴Then Jesus said to him, "Listen! Don't tell 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."

Jesus Heals a Roman Officer's Servant

(Also Luke 7.1-10)

⁵When Jesus entered Capernaum, a Roman

teaching, because he taught ²⁹ as one who had authority, not as their teachers of the law.

The Man With Leprosy

8 When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." ²

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cured of his leprosy. Then Jesus said to him, "See that you don't tell anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ³ ⁴

The Faith of the Centurion

When Jesus had entered ⁵ Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for

29. **He taught with authority.** He did not speak out of human doubts and limitations. He was the Eternal Logos, and he spoke as One who knew the *Eternal Truth* of God.

1-2. **Then a leper came to him.** Leprosy begins as a skin disease, defies efforts to cure it, and is a kind of "living death." Dr. Schaff says: "Near the Jaffa gate of Jerusalem I saw, in 1877, these miserable creatures with their withered limbs imploring aid, and visited a hospital of incurable lepers." There are different forms of the disease, but white leprosy seemed most common among the Hebrew people. With it all the skin turned white. Religious law ruled a leper unclean and untouchable. Leprosy was symbolic of sin. See *Lev. 13:1-12; 2 Kings 5:27; Num. 5:2*. **Sir.** An expression of faith, along with the following words.

3. **Jesus reached out and touched him.** It was forbidden to touch a leper, and made the one who did it religiously unclean. But when Jesus did this, the leprosy vanished and the man was clean. At the touch of Jesus, impurity vanishes!

4. **Don't tell anyone.** This was forbidden until the man was officially pronounced healed. He could not mix with people until the priest had examined him and certified him clean. The man might have prejudiced his case with the priest by telling how it happened. And, Jesus didn't try to impress people. **Offer the sacrifice.** *Lev. 14:10, 22, 30, 31.*

5. **When Jesus entered Capernaum.** See note on *Matt. 4:13*. He returned to the place he made his home after the Sermon on the Mount, and the healing of the leper. *Compare Luke 7:1-10.* **A Roman officer met him.** Roman occupation forces controlled Palestine at this time. Their headquarters were in Caesarea, and soldiers were stationed in every town. This man was a centurion, comparable to our rank of captain, and he was probably the commander of the garrison at Capernaum. A Gentile, he did

officer met him and begged for help: "Sir, my servant is at home, sick in bed, unable to move and suffering terribly."

"I will go and make him well," Jesus said.

"Oh no, sir," answered the officer. "I do not deserve to have you come into my house. Just give the order and my servant will get well. I, too, am a man under the authority of superior officers, and I have soldiers under me. I order this one, 'Go!' and he goes; and I order that one, 'Come!' and he comes; and I order my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

¹⁰Jesus was surprised when he heard this, and said to the people who were following him, "I tell you, I have never seen such faith as this in anyone in Israel. ¹¹Remember this! Many will come from the east and the west and sit down at the table in the Kingdom of heaven with Abra-

6 help. "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering."

7 Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."

8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

9 When Jesus heard this, he ¹⁰was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you ¹¹that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the

not approach Jesus in person, but through some Jewish elders (*Luke 7:3*). Probably he thought Jesus would listen to them more favorably. These Jewish elders were happy to speak a good word for this man, because he had built a synagogue (*Luke 7:5*), either to gain their favor, or he may have been a religious man like Cornelius. Ruins of a synagogue were found at Tel Hum, thought to be Capernaum, and perhaps these were of the one built by this Roman officer, in which Christ preached.

6. **Sir, my servant.** Luke says his servant was dear to him, and the account here shows deep concern. **Unable to move.** He was paralyzed. Alford (Greek Testament) says: "The disease of the text may have been tetanus, or lockjaw, which the ancient physicians included under paralysis. Luke says that "he was ready to die."

7. **I will go.** Luke says that he did go, and the following conversation took place near the officer's house (*Luke 7:6*).

8. **Oh no, sir.** The officer said this through some friends (*Luke 7:6*). **I do not deserve.** The strict Jews would not even talk to a Gentile. The Roman officer may have thought that so holy a Jew as Jesus would not want to enter his house. **Just give the order.** He believed this was enough to ask. Not even Martha thought that Jesus could have saved her brother Lazarus without going to him in person (*John 11:21*). This man's faith was strong.

9. **And I have soldiers under me.** What he says is this: "In the army, authority is obeyed. I give the order and it is obeyed. You have authority over disease. Give the command, and it will leave."

10. **Jesus was surprised.** Two times Jesus is said to be surprised. Here—at the faith of a Gentile Roman Officer. In *Mark 6:6*—at the unbelief of the Jews. **I have never seen such faith.** The amount of this man's faith is demonstrated by his view of the authority and high rank of Jesus. This strong faith was not in a Jew, but a Gentile. See the Canaanite woman [also a Gentile] whom Jesus praised (*Matt. 15:28*).

11. **Remember this.** The east and the west are symbolic of the entire world. Not only those far from the Jews geographically, but spiritually as well *See Acts 2:39*. **Sit down at the table.** The Jews spoke symbolically of Messiah's Kingdom as being a "feast with the fathers." This implies companionship with the great men of old in that Eternal world. [This can also be applied figuratively to the church on earth (*Gal. 3:29*).]

ham, Isaac, and Jacob. ¹²But those who should be in the Kingdom will be thrown out in to the darkness outside, where they will cry and gnash their teeth.” ¹³And Jesus said to the officer, “Go home, and what you believe will be done for you.”

And the officer's servant was healed that very hour.

Jesus Heals Many People

(Also *Mark 1.29-34; Luke 4.38-41*)

¹⁴Jesus went to Peter's home, and there he saw Peter's mother-in-law sick in bed with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand; the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

¹⁶When evening came, people brought to Jesus many who had demons in them. Jesus drove out the evil spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷He did this to make come true what the prophet Isaiah had said, “He himself took our illnesses and carried away our diseases.”

feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.”

Then Jesus said to the 13 centurion, “Go! It will be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that very hour.

Jesus Heals Many

When Jesus came into 14 Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. He touched her 15 hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

When evening came, 16 many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill 17 what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

“He took up our diseases and carried our illnesses.”

12. **But those who should be.** The Jews, Abraham's natural children. **Thrown out.** Because they rejected the Messiah, in whom the promise was fulfilled. **Into the darkness outside.** This has been fulfilled in the history of the Jews in the last nineteen centuries. There may also be a hint here of future punishment.

13. **What you believe will be done for you.** The Roman officer believed fully that Jesus could heal his servant just by giving the order. **That very hour.** At the very moment these words were spoken, the servant was healed.

14. **Jesus went to Peter's home.** Peter had a mother-in-law, and therefore was a married man. In fulfilling his later duties as an apostle, Peter took his wife along with him (*1 Cor. 9:5*). **Sick in bed with a fever.** Luke says a high fever (*Luke 4:38*). It may have been malaria, and Mark's account (*Mark 1:29-30*) implies that the fever came on suddenly.

15. **He touched her hand.** Sometimes Jesus healed by a word, sometimes by a touch. At the touch of his hand, she was immediately well—and got up to wait on him.

16. **When evening came.** See also *Mark 1:32*. Jesus had amazed the people by healing one who was demon-possessed (*Mark 1:21-28*). Now that evening has come and the Sabbath ended (at sundown), the people come crowding in bringing those who need help. **Who had demons in them.** See note on *Matt. 4:24*. These were spiritually sick. Others were diseased in body.

17. **He did this to make come true.** See *Isaiah 53*. This emphasizes the love and sympathy which Jesus had for we humans. (See *Heb. 2:11-18*).

The Would-Be Followers of Jesus

(Also *Luke 9.57-62*)

¹⁸Jesus noticed the crowd around him and ordered his disciples to go to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹A teacher of the Law came to him. "Teacher," he said, "I am ready to go with you wherever you go."

²⁰Jesus answered him, "Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lie down and rest."

²¹Another man, who was a disciple, said, "Sir, first let me go back and bury my father."

²²"Follow me," Jesus answered, "and let the dead bury their own dead."

Jesus Calms a Storm

(Also *Mark 4.35-41; Luke 8.22-25*)

²³Jesus got into the boat, and his disciples went with him. ²⁴Suddenly a fierce storm hit the lake, so that the waves covered the boat. But Jesus was asleep. ²⁵The disciples went to him and woke him up. "Save us, Lord!" they said. "We are about to die!"

The Cost of Following Jesus

When Jesus saw the 18 crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a 19 teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied, "Foxes 20 have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Another man, one of his 21 disciples, said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

But Jesus told him, 22 "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Jesus Calms the Storm

Then he got into the boat 23 and his disciples followed him. Without warning, a 24 furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went 25 and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

18. **Jesus noticed the crowd.** People crowded in to listen to his teaching and to see the miracles which he was doing. The Lake of Galilee was only six miles wide, and the Savior often crossed it to find some peace and quiet. There were no towns along the eastern shore where he was going.

19. **A teacher of the Law.** The teachers of the Law rejected Christ, but this one was thinking about becoming a disciple. However, he had not realized it would "cost him something" to do so.

20. **Jesus answered him.** Jesus does not reject this man nor send him away. He only points out the cost of discipleship. **The Son of Man.** One title of the Messiah—emphasizing his kinship with humanity. But see *Luke 22:69-70*. The Jews understood "Son of Man" to mean "Son of God."

21. **Another man.** It is possible, but unlikely, that this man wanted to attend the funeral of his father first. What this disciple asks must be this: "Master, let me stay with my father until such time that he dies, and then I will follow you." He was putting his parent ahead of Jesus (*see Matt. 10:37*).

22. **Follow me.** Jesus seems harsh in his answer. But, not so! The most important matter is the work which Jesus is doing. Others are fully capable of caring for the parent and seeing to his burial. Put God's Kingdom first!!!

23. **Jesus got into the boat.** A small open rowboat.

24. **Suddenly a fierce storm.** Luke says a strong wind (*Luke 8:23*). A tornado is implied. Very sudden and violent storms result from the cold air sweeping down the mountains into the hot air over the lake.

25. **Save us, Lord!** Extreme fear and terror. Remember, they were experienced sailors.

²⁶“Why are you so frightened?” Jesus answered. “How little faith you have!” Then he got up and gave a command to the winds and to the waves, and there was a great calm.

²⁷Everyone was amazed. “What kind of man is this?” they said. “Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

Jesus Heals Two Men with Demons

(Also Mark 5.1-20; Luke 8.26-39)

²⁸Jesus came to the territory of the Gadarenes, on the other side of the lake, and was met by two men who came out of the burial caves. These men had demons in them and were so fierce that no one dared travel on that road. ²⁹At once they screamed, “What do you want with us, Son of God? Have you come to punish us before the right time?”

³⁰Not far away a large herd of pigs was feeding. ³¹The demons begged Jesus, “If you are going to drive us out, send us into that herd of pigs.”

³²“Go,” Jesus told them; so they left and went off into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down

He replied, “You of little ²⁶ faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

The men were amazed ²⁷ and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

The Healing of Two Demon-possessed Men

When he arrived at the ²⁸ other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. “What ²⁹ do you want with us, Son of God?” they shouted. “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?”

Some distance from them ³⁰ a large herd of pigs was feeding. The demons begged ³¹ Jesus, “If you drive us out send us into the herd of pigs.”

He said to them, “Go!” ³² So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep

26. **Why are you so frightened?** Matthew records: “how little faith;” Mark: “are you still without faith;” Luke: “where is your faith;” The meaning is the same in all three accounts. **Gave a command.** Mark gives the exact wording of this command: “Be quiet! Be still!”

27. **What kind of man is this?** They are amazed that even the storms obey his word. It is unlikely that they really understood just who Jesus was until he rose from death.

28. **Jesus came.** The territory of the Gadarenes, also known as the Gerasenes, was on the south-eastern side of Lake Galilee. Gerasa was the village where Jesus landed after the storm. The mountains came down to the lake shore here (verse 32) and there were burial caves in the cliff. **Demons in them.** See note on *Matt. 4:24*.

29. **At once they screamed.** With an unearthly cry! This account shows that demon-possession was not simply bodily or mental disease. Evil spirits literally took control of their victims and spoke through them. We learn elsewhere that sin prepared the victim to be possessed. [Some scholars believe that both demon-possession and the miraculous acts of the Holy Spirit disappeared after Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.] **Son of God.** The demons knew who he was. **Have you come?** They knew Christ could not be defeated. They seemed to expect their own final punishment.

30-32. **A large herd of pigs.** Mark says 2,000. They were being kept in violation of the Religious Law, since pigs were “unclean.” Mark records the one demoniac as saying his name is “Mob” because there are so many of them. Perhaps Jesus allowed them to go into the pigs to show the fact or reality of the demons. This implies there were 2,000 evil spirits possessing this one man.

the side of the cliff into the lake and were drowned.

³³The men who had been taking care of the pigs ran away and went to the town, where they told the whole story, and what had happened to the men with the demons. ³⁴So, everyone from the town went out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him they begged him to leave their territory.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

(Also *Mark 2.1-12; Luke 5.17-26*)

9 Jesus got into the boat, went back across the lake, and came to his own town. ²Some people brought him a paralyzed man, lying on a bed. Jesus saw how much faith they had, and said to the paralyzed man, "Courage, my son! Your sins are forgiven."

³Then some teachers of the Law said to themselves, "This man is talking against God!"

⁴Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, "Why are you thinking such evil things? ⁵Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say,

bank into the lake and died in the water. Those tending ³³ the pigs ran off, went into the town, and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. Then the whole ³⁴ town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

9 Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."²

³ At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

⁴ Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? ⁵ Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up

33. **The men.** They ran to the town and told. Perhaps they felt this was a judgment on them for keeping "unclean" animals.

34. **They begged him to leave.** Perhaps from fear of his power; or from the calamity of their economic loss. It is a lesson that they firmly rejected him. Mark tells us that the man became a preacher of Christ (*Mark 5:20*).

1. **Jesus got into the boat.** He returns across the lake to Capernaum, where he made his home.

2. **Some people brought him a paralyzed man.** This man was eager to be healed, and had his friends bring him to Jesus. **Jesus saw how much faith.** Mark's account says that they made a hole in the roof and let the man down (because of the crowd) (*Mark 2:1-12*). **Your sins are forgiven.** Note Jesus says "are forgiven." Jesus had this authority over sin.

3. **Then some teachers of the Law.** They scented heresy, and had come from Jerusalem to check into this "Prophet of Galilee" (*Luke 5:17*). The "Teachers of the Law" were the theologians, the official interpreters of Scripture, and also the judges, legislators and politicians—therefore the "opinion-makers" of Israel. **This man is talking against God.** Because Christ forgave sins, which only God could do. If Jesus were only a human, they would have been right in this. But Jesus was the Eternal Logos (*See 1 Tim. 3:16*). This was the beginning of the opposition which would end in the Cross. On this charge of "talking against God," the Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court) would condemn Jesus to death (*Matt. 26:65*).

4. **Jesus knew.** He knew their thinking, and the fact that they were wrong about him.

5-6. **Is it easier to say.** There was no way they could test his claim to forgive sins, even though this was the more difficult thing to do. But the order to "Get up and walk" would be immediately visible. He

'Get up and walk'? 'I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.' So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, pick up your bed, and go home!"

⁷The man got up and went home. ⁸When the people saw it, they were afraid, and praised God for giving such authority as this to men.

Jesus Calls Matthew

(Also *Mark 2.13-17; Luke 5.27-32*)

⁹Jesus left that place, and as he walked along he saw a tax collector, named Matthew, sitting in his office. He said to him, "Follow me."

Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰While Jesus was having dinner at his house, many tax collectors and outcasts came and joined him and his disciples at the table. ¹¹Some Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and outcasts?"

and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . ." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." And the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

The Calling of Matthew

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

While Jesus was having 10 dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "Sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw 11 this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

states that if he can order the man to walk, he can also forgive his sins. **I will prove to you.** By doing the thing that can be tested. **Son of Man.** See note on *Matt. 8:20; also Dan. 7:13. Has authority on earth.* *Matt. 28:18.* God the Father had given him this authority, and sent him to do just this (*John 3:16-17*). We can "excuse" sin, but God can forgive it — which means pronouncing the sinner "not guilty." So, to prove his claim, he tells the man to "Get up, pick up your bed, and go home!"

7. **The man got up and went home.** This is a parable of sin and salvation. The paralyzed man can symbolize the sinner, unable to help himself (*John 6:44-45; 15:5*); he showed his faith by coming to Jesus (*Psalms 25:15; 86:2, 7; James 2:22*); and God's grace is shown in the ability to obey the command, received in the very attempt to comply with it (*1 Pet. 1:22; Phil. 4:13*).

8. **When the people saw it.** "And his title will be: Wonderful Counselor" (*Isaiah 9:6*).

9. **He saw a tax collector.** Matthew introduces himself. He is also called Levi (*Luke 5:27*). It was his duty to collect taxes for the Occupation Government of the Romans. Tax collectors were hated, because they represented a foreign power, and also because they were often unfair, and dishonest. However, a few were honest (*Luke 19:8*). **Matthew got up and followed him.** Peter, Andrew, James and John were also called from their business. Matthew was probably a disciple of John, as they were, and was also a disciple of Christ as well. This is a formal call to be an apostle.

10. **While Jesus was having dinner at his house.** Matthew prepared a big feast and invited many people to be at it (*Luke 5:29*). **Tax collectors and outcasts.** Tax collectors are mentioned in the previous verse. The outcasts were those who had been expelled from the synagogue. The strict Jew would not eat with such as these. An outcast was termed a "sinner."

11. **Some Pharisees saw this.** It is not implied that the Pharisees were invited to the feast, but they were always looking for heresy. **Why does your teacher?** Tax collectors and outcasts were considered "heathen" by the strict Jew (*compare Acts 11:3; Gal. 2:12*).

¹²Jesus heard them and answered, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. ¹³Go and find out what this scripture means, 'I do not want animal sacrifices, but kindness.' I have not come to call the respectable people, but the outcasts."

The Question about Fasting

(Also Mark 2.18-22; Luke 5.33-39)

¹⁴Then the followers of John the Baptist came to Jesus, asking, "Why is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples don't fast at all?"

¹⁵Jesus answered, "Do you expect the guests at a wedding party to be sad as long as the bridegroom is with them? Of course not! But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will go without food.

¹⁶"No one patches up an old coat with a piece of new cloth, because such a patch tears off from the coat, making an even bigger hole. ¹⁷Nor does anyone pour new wine into used wineskins. If he does, the skins will burst, and then the wine

On hearing this, Jesus ¹²said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what ¹³this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

Then John's disciples ¹⁴came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

Jesus answered, "How ¹⁵can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

"No one sews a patch of ¹⁶unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse, ¹⁷Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst,

12. **Jesus heard them and answered.** What he says, means: "If these people are as sinful as you say, then they are in great need of a Savior." (The strict Jews though of themselves as being perfect, and despised everyone else *(Luke 18:19)*).

13. **Go and find out.** *Hosea 6:6*. They needed to learn what this meant. God is more pleased by kindness and helpfulness, than he is by ceremonial acts. Christ came to be the world's Savior!

14. **Why is it?** Some of the disciples of John the Baptist really sided in with the Pharisees, and would not follow Christ. The Pharisees fasted twice a week *(Luke 18:12)*, and these did so too. They believed there was religious merit to be gained by this, and they could not understand why the followers of Jesus did not fast also.

15. **Jesus answered.** Fasting is a sign of sorrow. Jesus answers that this is not a time for sorrow now, because the bridegroom is there with them. **But the time will come.** He speaks of the crushing sorrow they will feel when he is crucified and buried. Real fasting takes place only when there is a need for it *(see Acts 13:2; 14:23; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27)*.

16. **No one patches up.** Two illustrations follow, which show that Christianity was not intended to be "Judaism patched up." **New cloth.** UNSHRUNK—it would shrink and tear a bigger hole in the old cloth.

17. **Nor does anyone pour.** Wine was kept in skin "bottles." New wine would ferment and burst the old skins that had become rigid.

pours out and the skins will be ruined. Instead, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins, and both will keep in good condition."

The Official's Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus' Cloak

(Also Mark 5.21-43; Luke 8.40-56)

¹⁸While Jesus was saying this to them, a Jewish official came to him, knelt down before him, and said, "My daughter has just died; but come and place your hand on her and she will live."

¹⁹So Jesus got up and followed him, and his disciples went with him.

²⁰A certain woman, who had had severe bleeding for twelve years, came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹She said to herself, "If only I touch his cloak I will get well."

²²Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, "Courage, my daughter! Your faith has made you well." At that very moment the woman became well.

²³So Jesus went into the official's house. When he saw the musicians for the funeral, and the

the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

While he was saying this, ¹⁸a ruler of the synagogue came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter is at the point of death. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus ¹⁹got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

Just then a woman who ²⁰had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. She said ²¹to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed."

Jesus turned and saw her. ²²"Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that moment.

When Jesus entered the ruler's house and saw the ²³flute-players and the noisy

18. A Jewish official came to him. One of the synagogue elders, an official who convened the congregation, preserved order, and who invited the readers and speakers. Mark gives his name as Jairus. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give this. From them we learn that this girl was twelve years old, that she was dying as he started to go to Jesus, and that she died while he was speaking.

19. So Jesus got up. Jesus is going to the house of Jairus to make the girl live again.

20. A certain woman. On the way, another miracle takes place. W. H. Thompson, MD., feels this account gives special comfort to those women who suffer similarly. This woman had spent all her money on many doctors, but none had been able to cure her. Touched the edge of his cloak. A cloak was a square or oblong piece of cloth, worn around the shoulders.

21. She said to herself. The Jews had a superstition about the edge of a cloak. Sharing this, the woman touched it in hope of receiving a cure for her disease.

22. Your faith has made you well. Christ's power was the cause, but he recognizes her faith as an active faith, and so speaks these words.

23. So Jesus went into the official's house. He healed the woman on the way here. It was the custom among the Jews to hire musicians and mourners to play sad music and scream and cry to show the sadness of the death.

people all stirred up, ²⁴He said, "Get out, everybody! The little girl is not dead—she is only sleeping!"

They all started making fun of him. ²⁵As soon as the people had been put out, Jesus went into the girl's room and took hold of her hand, and she got up. ²⁶The news about this spread all over that part of the country.

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

²⁷Jesus left that place, and as he walked along two blind men started following him. "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" they shouted.

²⁸When Jesus had gone indoors, the two blind men came to him and he asked them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"

"Yes, sir!" they answered.

²⁹Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, "May it happen, then, just as you believe!"—³⁰and their sight was restored. Jesus spoke harshly to them, "Don't tell this to anyone!"

³¹But they left and spread the news about Jesus all over that part of the country.

crowd, he said, "Go away. ²⁴The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. After the crowd had ²⁵been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. News ²⁶of this spread through all that region.

Jesus Heals the Blind and Dumb

As Jesus went on from ²⁷there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

When he had gone in- ²⁸doors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

"Yes, Lord," they replied.

Then he touched their ²⁹eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you"; and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them ³⁰sternly, "See that no one knows about this." But they ³¹went out and spread the news about him all over that region.

24. **She is only sleeping.** Jesus does not deny the reality of death. He means to say that death will be followed by the raising from death, just as people wake up from sleep. **They all started making fun of him.** They knew the child was dead, and they did not understand what Jesus meant.

25. **And she got up.** Peter, James, John, and the parents were allowed to stay (*Luke 8:51*). He took her hand and said: "Get up, child!" (see *Mark 5:41*). Immediately she got up — fully recovered.

26. **The news.** Mark's account emphasized the amazement of the parents — which the three apostles probably shared.

27. **Two blind men.** Only Matthew gives this. Blindness is very common under the burning sun and blinding sands of the East. Blind beggars were very common, due to the lack of medical care. **Have mercy on us.** They called him "Son of David," which implies they considered him the Messiah.

28. **Do you believe that I can do this?** They follow him into the house and come up to him. What Jesus asks them, requires a confession of their faith. They give it in their answer.

29. **May it happen.** Faith is the hand that reaches out to seize what God offers.

30-31. **Don't tell this to anyone.** The fact that they could now see, would attract attention. But they do not obey Jesus' order. Note three things about Jesus: (1) He is the Life. He wakes the dead, and He grants spiritual life. (2) He is Health. Disease, sorrows, and sins — which no man can heal — disappear at his touch. (3) He is the Light. He speaks, and blind eyes see. He speaks, and a new world opens to the spiritually blind.

Jesus Heals a Dumb Man

³²As the men were leaving, some people brought to Jesus a man who could not talk because he had a demon. ³³As soon as the demon was driven out, the man started talking. Everyone was amazed. "We never saw the like in Israel!" they exclaimed.

³⁴But the Pharisees said, "It is the chief of the demons who gives him the power to drive them out."

Jesus Has Pity for the People

³⁵So Jesus went around visiting all the towns and villages. He taught in their synagogues, preached the Good News of the Kingdom, and healed people from every kind of disease and sickness. ³⁶As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷So he said to his disciples, "There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. ³⁸Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest."

While they were going ³² out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And ³³ when the demon was driven out, the man who had been dumb spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

But the Pharisees said, ³⁴ "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

The Workers Are Few

Jesus went through all the ³⁵ towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he ³⁶ had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he ³⁷ said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask ³⁸ Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

32-33. **A man who could not talk.** Compare (*Luke 11:14*) Physical and spiritual illness combined. See note on *Matt. 8:29*. **We never saw the like in Israel.** No prophet had ever done such wonders as these!

34. **But the Pharisees said.** They were always looking for trouble. **It is the chief of the demons.** They meant: "It isn't God working through him, he uses the power of the Devil."

35. **So Jesus went around.** He took his ministry into new areas.

36. **His heart was filled with pity for them.** Our Lord felt very strongly the needs of every human being. **Because they were worried and helpless.** The Pharisees were supposed to be the "shepherds of Israel," but they had no love. The people were left without guidance or help of any kind.

37. **There is a large harvest.** First the people were symbolically "wandering sheep without a shepherd." Now he speaks of them as a "ripe harvest," about to be lost unless someone gathers it into the storage barns.

38. **Pray to the owner.** The owner is Christ. To pray for "workers" is to make yourself a worker also. When we pray to the Lord for anything, we must be willing to do our part to make it come true.

The Twelve Apostles

(Also Mark 3.13-19; Luke 6.12-16)

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to drive out the evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

The Mission of the Twelve

(Also Mark 6.7-13; Luke 9.1-6)

⁵Jesus sent these twelve men out with the following instructions: "Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. ⁶Go, instead,

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

10 He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to cure every kind of disease and sickness.

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions:

"Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of

1. **Jesus called his twelve disciples.** This must be tied to the last three verses of chapter 9. The twelve disciples had already been called and had been with Jesus for some time. Now he sends them on a mission, as *apostles*. **And gave them authority.** To carry out the same mission of mercy and love which Jesus had been doing. "Benevolence" is a part of the gospel (see James 1:27; 2:14-17; etc.).

2-4. **These are the names.** Four lists of the twelve are given: Matt. 10:2; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13. The four lists are identical, with these exceptions: Luke does not include Judas Iscariot in Acts 1:13, since he was dead at that time. Both Matthew and Mark speak of the tenth disciple as Thaddaeus, while Luke calls him "Judas, the son of James." It was common to be called by more than one name. Simon the Patriot was a "zealot" (see note on Mark 15:7). Jesus named James and John—"Boanerges—Men of Thunder" (Mark 3:16). There are three pairs of brothers: Peter and Andrew; James and John; James (the son of Alphaeus [who was perhaps the Clopas of John 19:25]) and Thaddaeus (Judas the son of James). It is very difficult to "sort out" the variations in the names of Bible characters, since each person had more than one name, and, it was not unusual to give two children in the same family the same name. Mary (the mother of Jesus) seems to have had a sister named Mary, who was the mother of James the younger, James and Thaddaeus—making them cousins of Jesus. All the apostles were Galileans, except Judas Iscariot. All came from the ranks of the common people.

5-6. **Do not go to any Gentile territory.** Later Jesus would send them to "all the world," but now they limit their work to the Jews. All non-Jews are "Gentiles." **Samaritan towns.** Those who lived in Samaria were a blend of the "Ten Tribes" mixed with Gentiles (see 2 Kings 17:24; 2 Chron. 30:1-20). They used the first five books of the Old Testament, but worshiped on Mount Garizin (see Joshua 8:33; John 4:20). The Jews and the Samaritans were bitter enemies. **To the lost sheep.** God's people "Israel" are pictured as "sheep who have strayed away from the shepherd." Jesus sends the apostles specifically to the Jews. Later, Jesus sent seventy-two more to help with this (Luke 10). The "Great Commission" of Matt. 28:18-20 could not be given until Jesus had died and been raised to glory. The Jewish Law formed a "wall" between them and the rest of the world, until it was removed (Eph. 2:14-18). Jesus was born under this Law, and the apostles lived under it until it was removed. In the Cross, the distinctions between Jew and Gentile were destroyed (Gal. 3:28). The New Covenant is world-wide, with no nations restricted, and the apostles went everywhere under the Great Commission (see Col. 1:23).

to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. ⁷Go and preach, 'The Kingdom of heaven is near!' ⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, make the lepers clean, drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid. ⁹Do not carry any gold, silver, or copper money in your pockets; ¹⁰do not carry a beggar's bag for the trip, or an extra shirt, or shoes, or a walking stick. A worker should be given what he needs.

¹¹"When you come to a town or village, go in and look for someone who is willing to welcome you, and stay with him until you leave that place. ¹²When you go into a house say, 'Peace be with you.' ¹³If the people in that house welcome you, let your greeting of peace remain; but if they do not welcome you, then take back your greeting. ¹⁴And if some home or town will not welcome you or listen to you, then leave that place and shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁵Remember this! On the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah than to the people of that town!"

Israel. As you go, preach ⁷
this message: 'The kingdom
of heaven is near.' Heal the ⁸
sick, raise the dead, cleanse
those who have leprosy,
drive out demons. Freely
you have received, freely ⁹
give. Do not take along any
gold or silver or copper in
your belts; take no bag for ¹⁰
the journey, or extra tunic,
or sandals or a staff; for the
worker is worth his keep.

"Whatever city or village ¹¹
you enter, search for some
worthy person there and stay
at his house until you leave.
As you enter the home, give ¹²
it your greeting. If the home
is deserving, let your peace
rest on it; if it is not, let your
peace return to you. If any- ¹⁴
one will not welcome you or
listen to your words, shake
the dust off your feet when
you leave that home or town. ¹⁵
I tell you the truth, it will be
more bearable for Sodom
and Gomorrah on the day of
judgment than for that
town.

7. **The Kingdom of heaven is near.** Both John the Baptist and Christ preached the "NEARNESS" of the Kingdom. It could not be set up until the events of the Cross (*Luke 9:31*). The apostles were to say it was near, since the time was nearly fulfilled. Jesus became King in his being "lifted up" on the Cross (*See John 3:14; 12:32*). After Jesus was lifted up, the Kingdom is spoken of as a FACT (*Col. 1:13*).

8. **Heal the sick.** They were to duplicate the work of Jesus. Later, both the apostles and all Christians would do "greater works" in calling others into the church of Christ (*John 14:12*).

9-10. **Do not carry.** The emphasis is on speed—URGENCY! Also, the ones being "renewed" ought to supply the needs of the one "renewing."

11. **When you come.** Living in different houses would require more time. They were to choose one who would give them room and board, and remain with them until they left to the next town.

12. **Peace be with you.** A formal blessing, as well as a greeting.

13. **If the people.** "Peace be with you" was said before it was known that the people of the house would welcome them to stay. If they were not friendly, they were to immediately leave, and remove their word of blessing as well.

14. **Shake the dust off your feet.** This is a symbolic act that says all responsibility has ended. God does not force his word upon unwilling people (*see Acts 13:50-51*).

15. **Remember this!** This phrase always introduces a strong statement. **God will show more mercy.** These cities were destroyed because of thier sins (*Gen. 19:1-28*). These cities had no opportunity, therefore not the same responsibility, as those to whom Christ and his apostles preached.

Coming Persecutions

(Also Mark 13.9-13; Luke 21.12-17)

¹⁶“Listen! I am sending you just like sheep to a pack of wolves. You must be as cautious as snakes and as gentle as doves. ¹⁷Watch out, for there will be men who will arrest you and take you to court, and they will whip you in their synagogues. ¹⁸You will be brought to trial before rulers and kings for my sake, to tell the Good News to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹When they bring you to trial, do not worry about what you are going to say or how you will say it; when the time comes, you will be given what you will say. ²⁰For the words you speak will not be yours; they will come from the Spirit of your Father speaking in you.

²¹“Men 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. ²²Everyone will hate you, because of me. But whoever holds out to the

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. But be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will 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

16. **Just like sheep.** Defenceless by human means among fierce and cruel enemies. **Cautions as snakes.** Snakes were symbolic of extreme caution. **Gentle as doves.** Doves were symbolic of gentleness, purity, and innocence—just the opposite of “wolves and dogs” (see Phil. 3:2).

17. **Watch out.** Some religious leaders would severely oppose their work of renewal. They could expect to be arrested, tried in court, and whipped in the synagogues (see Acts 22:19; 26:11).

18. **You will be brought to trial.** Just like criminals! See Acts 12:1-5.

19-20. **Do not worry.** They are promised supernatural help from the Holy Spirit. The maximum speed had to be maintained until Jerusalem was destroyed (70 AD). See note on Matt. 24:14. **Your father.** Jesus emphasized this new relationship to God. Also, God was his Father in a different sense than he is our Father.

21. **Men will hand over their own brothers.** This is not “make-believe!” Jesus causes division—for the very reason that each must decide just who he is! Note verse 34! Families would be literally torn to pieces over Jesus and his claims. “Christ on the Cross” is offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles (1 Cor. 1:21-24).

22. **Everyone will hate you.** Hypocrites do not like to be exposed. As the followers of Christ expose sin, all who love sin and who follow Satan, will hate them (see Rev. 11:7-14). **But whoever holds out.** The one final victory was won in the Cross. The one who “holds out” faithfully to the end of their life—will not lose what God has promised them!

end will be saved. ²³And when they persecute you in one town, run away to another one. I tell you, you will not finish your work in all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴“No pupil is greater than his teacher; no slave is greater than his master. ²⁵So a pupil should be satisfied to become like his teacher, and a slave like his master. If the head of the family is called Beelzebul, the members of the family will be called by even worse names!”

Whom to Fear

(Also Luke 12.2-7)

²⁶“Do not be afraid of men, then. Whatever is covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known. ²⁷What I am telling you in the dark you must repeat in broad daylight, and what you have heard in private you must tell from the housetops. ²⁸Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather be afraid of God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell. ²⁹You can buy two sparrows for a penny; yet not a single one of them falls to the

will be saved. When you are ²³ persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

“A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant ²⁴ above his master. It is ²⁵ enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

“So do not be afraid of ²⁶ them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I ²⁷ tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. Do not ²⁸ be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold ²⁹ for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your

23. **Run away to another one.** They were not to forfeit their life foolishly—for no good purpose. Life is sacred and must not be flung away! But, they must value Christ even more than their own life! **Before the Son of Man comes.** That is, before he is glorified in the death of the Cross. (See *Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1*. Jesus was there when his Kingdom came with power, at Pentecost (*Acts 2*) and Jesus was there when “judgment” came on Jerusalem in its destruction. This latter event brought an end to the Jewish persecution of the Christians. Jesus is coming again **IN PERSON** to judge the world, but the meaning in this verse does not include that event.

24-25. **No pupil is greater than his teacher.** The disciples must expect to be treated just as Jesus would be. **If the head of the family is called Beelzebul.** The name given to the Devil as the chief of evil spirits. Some who opposed Jesus called him that (*John 8:48*).

26. **Do not be afraid of men, then.** Christ will win the final victory in the Cross. Those who oppose him will be exposed for what they are.

27. **You must repeat in broad daylight.** Jesus taught them in private what they are not to “Shout from the housetops.” The eastern houses had flat roofs which made a “stage” for the speaker to attract attention.

28. **Do not be afraid.** The worst anyone could do was to destroy the body. God, who will raise the dead, can destroy the soul. **In hell.** Eternal punishment (**GEHENNA**—see note on *Matt. 5:22*).

29. **Two sparrows for a penny.** Among the smallest and least valuable birds. So cheap, yet God is aware of them.

ground without your Father's consent. ³⁰As for you, even the hairs of your head have all been counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!"

Confessing and Denying Christ

(Also Luke 12.8-9)

³²"Whoever declares publicly that he belongs to me, I will do the same for him before my Father in heaven. ³³But whoever denies publicly that he belongs to me, then I will deny him before my Father in heaven."

Not Peace, but a Sword

(Also Luke 12.51-53; 14.26-27)

³⁴"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world; no, I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; ³⁶a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family.

Father. And even the very ³⁰ hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be a-³¹ afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

"Whoever acknowledges ³² me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But who-³³ ever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

"Do not suppose that I ³⁴ have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn ³⁵

'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

A man's enemies will be ³⁶ the members of his own household.'

30-31. **Even the hairs of your head.** Assurance of our Father's concern for his children. The next verse shows to whom this applies.

32. **Whoever declares publicly.** To "confess Christ" is not to accept some creed, but to openly show yourself as a follower of Jesus, and to live as he directs. This implies: (1) A confession [declaration] of faith (as Peter in Matt. 16:16). (2) Giving yourself as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2). It isn't enough to just say: "Lord, Lord!" (Matt. 7:21-23). **I will do the same.** As he sits on the throne of Judgment, he will return the favor!

33. **But whoever denies publicly.** The Jews repudiated him as Messiah. Those who refuse to accept him, **DENY HIM.** Those who allow the worries and problems of life to turn them from their Christianity—**DENY HIM. I will deny him.** As Judge, he will say: "*I never knew you*" (Matt. 7:23).

34. **Do not think.** To bring peace, evil must be defeated. Therefore, to preach purity and peace brings the opposition of evil. While Christ is the great "peacemaker," yet his coming would bring great struggle and bloodshed. **A sword.** Symbolic of great struggle. The only sword Christ and his followers would use is the "*sword of the Spirit*," but some will use violence against the Christian. The sword is sent, because persecutors use it against the church (messianic community).

35. **I came to set sons against their fathers.** This is the result, not the purpose. When one became a follower of Christ, this would at once set him against his own people who did not follow Christ. Families stand together, but religious feuds break up family ties. (But notice verse 37!)

36. **A man's worst enemies.** This has been proved thousands of times. Many have been thrown out and banished because they had confessed Christ.

³⁷“Whoever loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; whoever loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸Whoever does not take up his cross and follow in my steps is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever tries to gain his own life will lose it; whoever loses his life for my sake will gain it.”

Rewards

(Also Mark 9.41)

⁴⁰“Whoever welcomes you, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes God’s messenger because he is God’s messenger will share in his reward; and whoever welcomes a truly good man, because he is that, will share in his reward. ⁴²And remember this! Whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of these my followers, because he is my follower, will certainly receive his reward.”

The Messengers from John the Baptist

(Also Luke 7.18-35)

11 When Jesus finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, he left that place and went on to teach and preach in the towns near there.

“Anyone who loves his 37 father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and any- 38 one who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever 39 finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

“He who receives you 40 receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. Anyone who 41 receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. And if anyone gives a cup of 42 cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”

Jesus and John the Baptist

11 After Jesus finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee.

37. **Whoever loves his father or mother more than me.** The Lord does not ask that we love these less, but that we love him more! He must have the highest priority! **Is not worthy of me.** A sharp line is drawn between those who do love Christ, and those who are indifferent.

38. **Whoever does not take up his cross.** Symbolic of being faithful—even at the price of pain and suffering. No one can be neutral about Jesus! We take up our cross daily! **Follow in my steps.** Use his teaching to set our standards of life.

39. **Whoever tries to gain.** Some would deny Christ to save their lives. Some would give up their integrity and compromise with the world. The emphasis is on Eternity! See *Romans 6:4-11*.

40. **Whoever welcomes you.** They were being sent out in Jesus’ name—by his authority. As his messengers and ambassadors, they officially represent Jesus, and to receive them is to receive him. (*Compare 2 Cor. 5:16-21*.)

41. **Because he is God’s messenger.** The one who welcomes, does so because he loves Christ. Therefore, he will share the reward.

42. **And remember this!** No act of kindness is too small to be rewarded, if the motives are right. Six things are mentioned in following Christ: (1) Confessing (*verses 32-33*); (2) Combat (*verses 34-37*); (3) Taking his cross (*verse 38*); (4) Self-sacrifice (*verse 39*); (5) Assistance (*verses 40-42*); (6) Risking life (*verse 39*). This is the life of a soldier.

²When John the Baptist heard in prison about Christ's works, he sent some of his disciples to him. ³"Tell us," they asked Jesus, "are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

⁴Jesus answered, "Go back and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: ⁵the blind can see, the lame can walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor. ⁶How happy is he who has no doubts about me!"

⁷While John's disciples were going back, Jesus spoke about John to the crowds, "When you went out to John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A blade of grass bending in the wind? ⁸What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in fancy clothes? People who dress like that live

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When Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John:

"What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings'

2. **When John the Baptist heard.** John had been in prison about a year now. Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee had put him there because he had objected to Herod's adulterous marriage with his brother Philip's wife (*Matt. 14:1-11*). Josephus says that Machaerus, a strong fort built by Herod the Great (Antipas' father) was the prison. It was about ten miles east of the Dead Sea. **He sent some of his disciples to him.** The Jews expected a political kingdom. John may wonder why Jesus does not declare himself King, overthrow Herod and the Romans, and release him from prison. [Even the apostles still thought in these terms at the time Jesus ascended back to the Father (*Acts 1:6*).]

3. **Are you the one?** John had predicted the One who would come (*Matt. 3:1-12*). Perhaps he hopes to prod Jesus into acting (to set up a political action.).

4. **Go back and tell John.** Luke adds: "*At that very time Jesus healed many people.*" Jesus points to his work as the answer. There may be a gentle rebuke in this, in response to John's weakening faith.

5. **The dead are raised to life.** Luke mentions the raising of the widow's son at Nain just before this. Matthew has shown the raising of the Jewish official's daughter. **The Good News is preached to the poor.** The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law despised the poor. The philosophers and the theologians had no message for those who could not pay for it. Jesus is unique in his treatment of the poor, the outcasts, and women. The actions of Jesus were evidence of his Messiahship. All of this is still convincing to those who will listen.

6. **How happy is he.** This implies that John had doubts about Christ—probably because he had not set up the political kingdom which he expected. This also implies strongly that Jesus knows best **WHAT** his Kingdom is.

7. **What did you expect to see?** John the Baptist preached in the desert, and the people came to him. Jesus emphasized the dignity of John, as if John's being in prison, and his doubts, might cause them to devalue what he had done. John did not bend with every breath of wind that blew.

8. **What did you go out to see?** His clothes? He wore the very cheapest! John was raw, unsophisticated—a powerful man. God chose this type of men to be his spokesmen.

in palaces! ⁹Tell me, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you—you saw much more than a prophet. ¹⁰For John is the one of whom the scripture says: 'Here is my messenger, says God; I will send him ahead of you to open the way for you.' ¹¹Remember this! John the Baptist is greater than any man who has ever lived. But he who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the time John preached his message until this very day the Kingdom of heaven has suffered violent attacks, and violent men try to seize it. ¹³All the prophets and the Law of Moses, until the time of John, spoke about the Kingdom; ¹⁴and if you are willing to believe their message, John is Elijah, whose coming was predicted. ¹⁵Listen, then, if you have ears!

¹⁶"Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the market place. One group shouts to the other,

palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written:

I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.

I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear.

"To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

9. **You saw much more than a prophet.** John was a reformer—one who called the people to renewal. Also, he was the "advance man" for Jesus—which made him unique in all of history.

10. **For John is the one.** See note on *Matt. 3:3*.

11. **Remember this!** A paradox. John is greater than kings, statesmen, even the prophets of old. Herod would have been forgotten, had he not put John in prison. All this is true—yet Jesus says: **But he who is least.** This shows the importance of the Kingdom of heaven. Also (1) It implies that John was not in the Kingdom. [John lived and died under the law.] (2) It implies that no one else had entered the Kingdom at that time [since John was greater than any man who has ever lived—Jesus said]. (3) The Kingdom was yet to come, and both John and Jesus said it was "NEAR." (4) Even the very humblest in the Kingdom would be superior to John—indicating the blessings to be found in Christ. A boy or girl in Christ is greater IN PRIVILEGES than John the Baptist!

12. **From the time John preached his message.** Men of violence tried to force their way in—as they would try to conquer a city. (Compare note on *Mark 15:7*.) They attempted to make Jesus a political King (*John 6:15*).

13. **All the prophets and the Law of Moses.** We find the meaning in *Luke 16:16*, in the words: "Since then the Good News about the Kingdom of God is being told." This was the beginning of John's work as "advance man," preparing for the work of Christ, and the announcement that the Old Era was about to close (*compare Heb. 8:13*).

14. **John is Elijah.** Not a reincarnation, but spiritual Elijah—the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy that Elijah would come before the Day of the Lord (*Mal. 4:5*).

15. **Listen!** Christ makes it emphatic!!!

16. **Now, to what can I compare?** See *Matt. 7:31-35; 23:29-36*. **They are like children.** Ancient towns had an open market place, where children would often come and play.

¹⁷“We played wedding music for you, but you would not dance! We sang funeral songs, but you would not cry!” John came, and he fasted and demon in him!” ¹⁹The Son of Man came, and he ate and drank, and everyone said, “Look at this man! He is a glutton and wine-drinker, a friend of tax collectors and outcasts!” God’s wisdom, however, is shown to be true by its results.”

The Unbelieving Towns

(Also Luke 10.13-15)

²⁰Then Jesus began to reproach the towns where he had performed most of his miracles, because the people had not turned from their sins. ²¹“How terrible it will be for you, Chorazin! How terrible for you too, Bethsaida! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, long ago the people there would have put on sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes on themselves to show they had

‘We played the flute for 17
you, and you did not
dance:

we sang a dirge, and
you did not mourn.’

For John came neither eating 18
nor drinking, and they say,
‘He has a demon.’ The Son 19
of Man came eating and
drinking, and they say, ‘Here
is a glutton and a drunkard,
a friend of tax collectors and
“sinners.” ‘But wisdom is
proved right by her actions.’

Woes on Unrepentant Cities

Then Jesus began to de- 20
nounce the cities in which
most of his miracles had
been performed, because
they did not repent. “Woe to 21
you, Chorazin! Woe to you,
Bethsaida! If the miracles
that were performed in you
had been performed in Tyre
and Sidon, they would have
repented long ago in sack-

17. **We played wedding music.** A mock wedding, then a mock funeral, but the children were not happy with either, and would neither dance nor cry. Nothing could please them.

18. **He fasted and drank no wine.** John lived an “ascetic” life. They accused him of being under the influence of evil spirits—a fanatic.

19. **The Son of Man came.** Jesus lived as we do. He was not an “ascetic.” His first miracle was at a wedding-feast (*John 2:1-11*), and he attended Matthew’s feast (*Matt. 9:10*). He drank the light, harmless wine of Palestine (not like our commercial wine). **A friend of tax collectors and outcasts.** He loved the common people. See note on *Matt. 9:12-13*. **Is shown to be true by its results.** This is proof positive! The wise will listen to wisdom.

20. **Then Jesus began to reproach.** Compare *Luke 10:12-15*. The cities around the Lake of Galilee had received most of his attention, therefore they had the least excuse for not accepting him. It makes Jesus sad because the people did not turn from their sins (*see Matt. 23:37-39*). We know of many miracles in these cities: The Roman officer’s servant, Peter’s mother-in-law, two men with demons, a paralyzed man, the diseased woman, etc.,—were all healed. Jairus’ daughter was raised from death. Of course, this was only a small part of the work which he did. The purpose of the gospel is to persuade people to turn from sin and live a new life!

21. **How terrible it will be.** Chorazin has vanished. It is mentioned only here and in *Luke 10:13*. About two miles from the ruins of Tell-Hum (thought to be Capernaum) there are ruins now called Kerazeh which include a synagogue and columns and walls of building, which may mark the site of Chorazin. Bethsaida means “house of fish,” implying it was a fishing town. It was the home of Peter, Andrew and Philip (*John 1:44*) who were fishermen also. It is thought that the city was built just where the Jordan empties into the Lake of Galilee. **Tyre and Sidon.** These were rich Phoenician trading cities on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Tyre was the commercial center of the world. These cities did not have the opportunities which Chorazin and Bethsaida were given. **Sackcloth and ashes.** Symbolic of turning from sin.

turned from their sins! ²²Remember, then, that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to the people of Tyre and Sidon than to you! ²³And as for you, Capernaum! You wanted to lift yourself up to heaven? You will be thrown down to hell! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would still be in existence today! ²⁴Remember, then, that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to Sodom than to you!"

Come to Me and Rest

(Also Luke 10.21-22)

²⁵At that time Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. ²⁶Yes, Father, this was done by your own choice and pleasure.

²⁷"My Father has given me all things. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no

cloth and ashes. But I tell ²²you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, ²³will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I tell ²⁴you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Rest for the Weary

At that time Jesus said, "I ²⁵praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, ²⁶this was your good pleasure. ²⁷"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and

22. **God will show more mercy.** This teaches: (1) There will be a Day of Judgment. (2) People will be judged in view of their opportunities. (3) The "UNPARDONABLE SIN" is rejection of Christ.

23. **And as for you, Capernaum.** Capernaum was a city of 30,000. It may have been on the lake shore, at the ruins called Tell-Hum. It was the Galilean home of Christ, who taught in the streets and houses, and performed many miracles there. The people were very proud of themselves, but they will be thrown down to hell because they would not turn from their sins. Within forty years time, the Romans destroyed this city. **Sodom.** Note the implication: (1) Sodom was destroyed for its sins; (2) The knowledge that Capernaum had been given would have caused Sodom to repent—and it would still be in existence; (3) It is sin that destroys cities and nations; (4) Modern cities and nations who deliberately live in sin and rebellion can expect to be thrown down to hell.

24. **God will show more mercy to Sodom.** They made better use of the opportunities they had been given. Sodom had been destroyed two thousand years before Christ, yet he speaks of a future judgment. (1) There will be a judgment after death. (2) Earthly punishment for sin does not fulfill the requirements of Divine justice. (3) The people of Sodom were not annihilated, but were alive—waiting for that Day of Judgment.

25. **At that time Jesus said.** At the conclusion of reproaching the towns. **Father, Lord of heaven and earth.** Jesus shows his humility. Four more times, in deep emotion, Jesus speaks to his Father (*John 11:41; 12:28; 17:1; Luke 23:34*). **What you have hidden from.** From the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. Their pride and prejudice made it impossible for them to understand. See *1 Cor. 1:18-31*.

26. **Yes, Father.** It is God's deliberate act which made the gospel what it is.

27. **My Father has given me all things.** This would be made fully true in the act of the Cross. See *Col. 1:15-23*. **No one knows.** Both Jesus [the Eternal Logos] and God the Father are "unknowable" by human minds. Jesus reveals to us the nature of God—both in himself and in his teaching. And, he reveals to us how God views us in this world. Those who "learn" Christ by believing him and doing things his way, will "learn" to know the Father as well.

one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying your heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. ³⁰The yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light.”

The Question about the Sabbath

(Also Mark 2.23-28; Luke 6.1-5)

12 Not long afterward Jesus was walking through the wheat fields on a Sabbath day. His disciples were hungry, so they began to pick heads of wheat and eat the grain. ²When the Pharisees saw this, they said to Jesus, “Look, it is against our Law for your disciples to do this on the Sabbath!”

³Jesus answered, “Have you never read what David did that time when he and his men were

no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Lord of the Sabbath

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, “Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.”

He answered, “Haven’t you read what David did when he and his companions

28. **Come to me.** A promise! Kings and rulers make themselves difficult to reach. Our Divine Savior says: “Come to me!” It is the Lord who speaks. He says: “Come!” He invites those who are “tired from carrying their heavy loads.” He promises to give these rest. Millions in all ages of time since then, know that this is true. Jesus gives “peace” that is not influenced by external things and problems.

29. **Take my yoke.** Symbolic of placing yourself in his hands and control. We seize his promise by obediently become his disciples (*Matt. 28:19-20*).

30. **The yoke I will give you is easy.** His yoke is very easy and light, compared to the penalty which sin imposes. The load which Christ gives us is carried in love—and he helps us to carry it. (*See Rom. 8:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:13*.) EVERYONE MAY COME!!!

1. **Not long afterward.** Not far from the first of May—about the time when grain begins to ripen in the fields of Judea. **Walking through the wheat fields.** There were paths through the fields. **Began to pick the heads.** Moses permitted this (*see Deut. 23:25*).

2. **When the Pharisees saw this.** See note on *Matt. 3:7*. Some of them were always trying to trap Jesus. **Look, it is against our Law.** Moses said doing this was legal, but the Tradition of the Elders said it was illegal to eat grain on the Sabbath which had been threshed out in the hand by rubbing, since this involved work on the Sabbath day. The Pharisees made strict laws about everything, carrying these to absurd extremes. They said an egg, laid on Sunday, could not be eaten, since it represented work done on the Sabbath [Saturday]. (*See note of Acts 1:12*.)

3. **Jesus answered.** He cites the case of David to show that what his disciples have done is not wrong. (*1 Samuel 21:1-6*)

hungry? ⁴He went into the house of God, and he and his men ate the bread offered to God, even though it was against the Law for them to eat that bread—only the priests were allowed to eat it. ⁵Or have you not read in the Law of Moses that every Sabbath the priests in the temple actually break the Sabbath law, yet they are not guilty? ⁶There is something here, I tell you, greater than the temple. ⁷The scripture says, 'I do not want animal sacrifices, but kindness.' If you really knew what this means, you would not condemn people who are not guilty; ⁸because the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

The Man with a Crippled Hand

(Also Mark 3.1-6; Luke 6.6-11)

⁹Jesus left that place and went to one of their synagogues. ¹⁰A man was there who had a crippled hand. There were some men present who wanted to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing; so they

were hungry? He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

4. **He went into the house of God.** The tent (Holy place—*Heb. 9:2*) at Nob. [the temple had not yet been built at that time.] The bread offered to God: "the Bread of the Presence" (*Heb. 9:2*). Twelve loaves, each made of seven quarts of flour, were arranged in two rows on a special table. After being there seven days, they were eaten by the priests, and twelve new loaves placed on the table. They were symbolic of Israel's special relationship to God! also of the Bread of life—Jesus Christ—who would be given to the whole world.

5. **Or have you not read.** The Sabbath was the busiest day for the Priests, who technically were in violation of the Sabbath Law, because of the work they were doing on that day. (*compare John 7:22-23*). Jesus cites this to prove his point.

6. **Greater than the temple.** If the priests can do this (*verse 5*), then the disciples of the *Lord of the temple* are blameless in their service to Christ.

7. **The scripture says.** They said that they obeyed the scriptures. Jesus argues that kindness to the hungry pleases God more than the animal sacrifices on the altar in the temple.

8. **Lord of the Sabbath.** It was for the good of man that the Sabbath was made (*Mark 2:27*) The Son of Man (Lord of Mankind) can do with the Sabbath whatever he wishes to do.

9. **Went to one of their synagogues.** Jesus and his disciples must have been on the way to it when they met the Pharisees.

10. **Is it against our Law?** Luke says it was the man's right hand. It was crippled [withered, paralyzed], so it could not be used. This made a perfect test-case for the Pharisees and teachers of the Law (see Luke's record), since there was no urgency to heal it. The Pharisees and teachers of the Law had "strange" ideas about their rules and regulations. They believed that even to build a fire, or to put out a fire, was displeasing to God if it was done on the Sabbath. The sick were expected to wait until the next day, and it was against their rules to set a broken bone on the Sabbath. They were looking for an excuse to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing before the authorities.

asked him, "Is it against our Law to cure on the Sabbath?"

¹¹Jesus answered, "What if one of you has a sheep and it falls into a deep hole on the Sabbath? Will you not take hold of it and lift it out? ¹²And a man is worth much more than a sheep! So then, our Law does allow us to help someone on the Sabbath." ¹³Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."

He stretched it out, and it became well again, just like the other one. ¹⁴The Pharisees left and made plans against Jesus to kill him.

God's Chosen Servant

¹⁵When Jesus heard about it, he went away from that place; and many people followed him. He healed all the sick, ¹⁶and gave them orders not to tell others about him, ¹⁷to make come true what God had said through the prophet Isaiah,

¹⁸ "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, the one I love, with whom I am well pleased.

I will put my Spirit on him, and he will announce my judgment to all peoples.

He said to them, "If any ¹¹ of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much ¹² more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

Then he said to the man, ¹³ "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the ¹⁴ Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

God's Chosen Servant

Aware of this, Jesus with- ¹⁵ drew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed all their sick, warning them ¹⁶ not to tell who he was. This ¹⁷ was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

"Here is my servant whom ¹⁸ I have chosen, the one I love and in whom I delight;

I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

11. **What if one of you has a sheep?** Their "strange" idea of "law" allowed them to do this.
12. **And a man is worth much more than a sheep.** If they were allowed to rescue a sheep, why not a man? **So then, our Law does allow us.** The Sabbath was meant for man's good. Therefore, says Jesus, it is right to do good on the Sabbath.
13. **Stretch out your hand.** Jesus heals him by speaking a word. So, they have no excuse to charge him with breaking the Sabbath. [Note the man was required to stretch out his hand—which demonstrated his faith in Christ.]
14. **Made plans against Jesus to kill him.** Mark says they met with some members of Herod's party (see *Mark 3:6*). These people made a "show" of being very religious, but were really enemies of God.
15. **When Jesus heard about it.** Jesus had a special work to do, so he avoided confrontation with these people at this time, by leaving Capernaum.
16. **Not to tell others about him.** Those healed were not to tell others [at this time] since it would intensify the problem with the Pharisees and interfere with his mission.
17. **To make come true.** Matthew says this a number of times. Prophecy coming true was very important to the Jew. This prophecy is from *Isaiah 42:1-4*.
18. **Here is my servant.** Christ came as a servant. (*Phil. 2:6-11*) **I will put my Spirit on him.** See *Matt. 3:16-17*. **To all peoples.** Not just to the Jews. Compare *Mark 3:8*.

- ¹⁹ But he will not argue or shout,
nor make loud speeches in the streets.
²⁰ He will not break off a bent reed,
nor put out a flickering lamp.
He will persist until he causes justice to
triumph;
²¹ and all peoples will put their hope in him."

Jesus and Beelzebul

(Also Mark 3.20-30; Luke 11.14-23)

²²Then some people brought to Jesus a man who was blind and could not talk because he had a demon. Jesus healed the man, so that he was able to talk and see. ²³The crowds were all amazed. "Could he be the Son of David?" they asked.

²⁴When the Pharisees heard this they replied, "He drives out demons only because their ruler Beelzebul gives him power to do so."

²⁵Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Any country that divides itself into groups that fight each other will not last very long. And any town or family that divides itself into groups that fight each other will fall apart.

He will not quarrel or cry 19
out; no one will hear his
voice in the streets.
A bruised reed he will not 20
break, and a smoldering
wick he will not quench,
till he leads justice to
victory.
In his name the nations 21
will put their hope."

Jesus and Beelzebul

Then they brought him a 22
demon-possessed man who
was blind and mute, and
Jesus healed him, so that he
could both talk and see. All
the people were astonished 23
and said, "Could this be the
Son of David?"

But when the Pharisees 24
heard this, they said, "It is
only by Beelzebul, the
prince of demons, that this
fellow drives out demons."

Jesus knew their thoughts 25
and said to them, "Every
kingdom divided against it-
self will be ruined, and every
city or household divided
against itself will not stand.

19. **But he will not argue or shout.** He would not be a demagogue.

20. **He will not break off a bent reed.** The hollow stem of a reed lost its strength when bent. This is symbolic of his kindness to our need. He does not break, but heals. **Nor put out a flickering lamp.** Their lamps were a cup of oil with a wick of flax floating on it. The flickering light of such a lamp is symbolic of our human weakness. He helps us, even though we are imperfect (*1 John 1:8-10*).

He will persist until. Justice did triumph when Jesus rose from death on the third day (*John 16:33*).

21. **And all peoples.** The prophets said many times that the Messiah would be the world's Savior—not just the Jews only, but the Gentiles as well. He is the hope of all mankind (*compare John 4:42*).

22. **Then some people brought to Jesus.** A man who was demon-possessed. See notes on *Matt. 8:28-29*.

23. **Could he be the Son of David?** That is, the Messiah-King who was expected to come (*Isa. 11:10; 2 Sam. 23:1-5*).

24. **When the Pharisees heard this.** Mark says some of these were teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem. The religious authorities were watching Jesus closely. **Beelzebul gives him power to do so.** This is the charge they made. See note on *Matt. 10:25*. "Beelzebul" is another name for Satan, the Devil.

25. **Jesus knew what they were thinking.** They had not spoken to Jesus, but had spoken directly to the people. **Any country that divides itself.** A broad truth. Governments and nations fall when they are divided internally.

²⁶So if one group is fighting another in Satan's kingdom, this means that it is already divided into groups and will soon fall apart! ²⁷You say that I drive out demons because Beelzebul gives me the power to do so. Well, then, who gives your followers the power to drive them out? Your own followers prove that you are wrong! ²⁸No, it is God's Spirit who gives me the power to drive out demons, which proves that the Kingdom of God has already come upon you.

²⁹"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.

³⁰"Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering. ³¹For this reason I tell you: men can be forgiven any sin and any evil thing they say; but whoever says evil things against the Holy

If Satan drives out Satan, he 26
is divided against himself.
How then can his kingdom
stand? And if I drive out 27
demons by Beelzebul, by
whom do your people drive
them out? So then, they will
be your judges. But if I drive 28
out demons by the Spirit of
God, then the kingdom of
God has come upon you.

"Or again, how can any- 29
one enter a strong man's
house and carry off his poss-
essions unless he first ties
up the strong man? Then he
can rob his house.

"He who is not with me is 30
against me, and he who does
not gather with me scatters.
And so I tell you, every sin 31
and blasphemy will be for-
given men, but the blasphem-
y against the Spirit will not

26. **So if one group is fighting another.** If it is Satan's power that drove out the demon, Satan would be fighting himself—which would be absurd. [Be wary of saying a good work is the work of Satan! Listen to Gamaliel (*Acts 5:33-39*).]

27. **Well, then, who gives your followers the power?** There were Jewish exorcists who drove out evil spirits (demons). See *Acts 19:13-14*. Their own followers proved them wrong in what they had said—by driving out evil spirits through God's power.

28. **No, it is God's Spirit.** This is a sharp confrontation. The power of God's Spirit in Jesus proves he is the Son of David—the promised Messiah (*verse 23*). **The Kingdom of God has already come upon you.** See *Luke 17:20-21*; *Rom. 14:17*. The question was: Did the power of Jesus represent Satan or God? Jesus declares it is the power of God!

29. **No man can break into.** What Jesus means here, is that in freeing the demon-possessed man, he has also shown himself much stronger than Satan.

30. **Anyone who is not for me.** The Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of Christ oppose each other. No one can be neutral! If you do not help Christ gather men and women for God, then you are guilty of helping the Devil scatter them! *Not to decide—is to decide!* See *Matt. 7:15-23*.

31. **For this reason I tell you.** What he has just said in *verse 30*. No one can be neutral. **Will not be forgiven.** *Mark 3:30* explains that this sin was saying that the Spirit in Jesus was really the spirit of the Devil. This sin will not be forgiven, because the person who does this cuts himself off from the only source of help. It is "unforgivable," because the one who says this **WILL NOT COME** to Jesus to ask forgiveness—since he firmly believes Jesus is working for the Devil. The one who commits this sin would not "worry about it," since he does not believe he has committed a sin.

Spirit will not be forgiven. ³²Anyone who says something against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but whoever says something against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven—now or ever.”

A Tree and Its Fruit

(Also Luke 6.43-45)

³³“To have good fruit you must have a healthy tree; if you have a poor tree you will have bad fruit. For a tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears. ³⁴You snakes—how can you say good things when you are evil? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. ³⁵A good man brings good things out of his treasure of good things; a bad man brings bad things out of his treasure of bad things.

³⁶“I tell you this: on the Judgment Day everyone will have to give account of every useless word he has ever spoken. ³⁷For your words will be used to judge you, either to declare you innocent or to declare you guilty.”

be forgiven. Anyone who ³² speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

“Make a tree good and its ³³ fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of ³⁴ vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The ³⁵ good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I ³⁶ tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For ³⁷ by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

32. **Against the Son of Man.** Many said things against Jesus while he was here in human form—and later learned the truth, repented, and were set free from their sins. Note that Christ prayed for those who nailed him to the Cross. **Against the Holy Spirit.** They said evil things against the Holy Spirit when they said that what Jesus did was the work of Satan. The New Testament is the voice of the Holy Spirit here in this world. We have in it the complete will of God. If anyone rejects this, no further evidence will be given. This is an eternal sin, because no sin unforgiven here, in this world, will ever be pardoned or forgiven in eternity. The very worst sin is to reject the Holy Spirit's evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. The very best work is to believe the Holy Spirit's evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.

33. **To have good fruit.** Fruit is evidence (*Matt. 7:15-20*). Jesus is saying that if his own actions and life were evil, this might prove he was working through the power of Satan. But if his actions and life were good, this proved his power came from God. Compare what Paul said in *1 Cor. 12:3*.

34. **How can you say good things?** They were poisonous and evil, like snakes [these enemies of his]. They could not praise God or say good things, because of their condition. Read Jesus' prophecy on Jerusalem (*Matt. 23:37-39*).

35. **A good man brings good things.** This is evidence of his motivation in life. See *Gal. 5:22-23*. **A bad man brings bad things.** That's all he has! See *Gal. 5:19-21*.

36. **Give account of every useless word.** This is much stronger than it seems. Useless means: “hostile, malicious, slanderous, poisonous, evil.” The thing which some of the Pharisees were doing in saying Jesus worked through the power of the Devil. [It does not mean laughing and joking (clean jokes).]

37. **For your words will be used.** We will face our words! Evil words spoken against God and the Holy Spirit will bring his wrath and vengeance. See *Jude 15*. Declaring Jesus' name publicly will gain his promise! (*Matt. 10:32*)

The Demand for a Miracle

(Also Mark 8.11-12; Luke 11.29-32)

³⁸Then some teachers of the Law and some Pharisees spoke up. "Teacher," they said, "we want to see you perform a miracle."

³⁹"How evil and godless are the people of this day!" Jesus exclaimed. "You ask me for a miracle? No! The only miracle you will be given is the miracle of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰In the same way that Jonah spent three days and nights in the belly of the big fish, so will the Son of Man spend three days and nights in the depths of the earth. ⁴¹On the Judgment Day the people of Nineveh will stand up and accuse you, because they turned from their sins when they heard Jonah preach; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Jonah! ⁴²On the Judgment Day the Queen from the South will stand up and accuse you, because she traveled halfway around the world to listen to Solomon's wise teaching; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Solomon!"

The Sign of Jonah

Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you."

He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here."

38. We want to see you perform a miracle. See Matt. 16:1; Luke 11:16 & 29. They had just seen him drive out an evil spirit. They wanted to trap Jesus.

39. How evil and godless. Remember: he is speaking to his enemies — those who said he did his miracles by means of Satan's power. He did not do miracles to satisfy curiosity, or to make himself popular.

40. In the same way that Jonah. See Jonah 1:17. (Note there is no "whale" there. It was a "big fish," possibly a white shark which is reported to be able to swallow a horse whole. God prepared it specially.) The miracle was that Jonah's life was protected during the time spent in the big fish. This is symbolic of the time Jesus would spend in the grave and then be raised from death. **Three days and three nights.** This is a Jewish expression. Jesus said in Matt. 16:21, that he would be raised to life "on the third day." Mark records this as "after three days" (Mark 8:31). In Jewish usage, "three days and three nights," "on the third day," and "after three days," all mean the same period of time. (See 2 Chron. 10:5&12; Esther 4:16 & 5:1.) Christ was buried Friday evening, was in the grave Saturday, and raised from death very early Sunday morning.

41. On the Judgment Day. The example of the people of Nineveh cancels any excuse these Jews might have for their failure to repent. When Jonah warned the people of the city, they turned from their sins. Jesus is superior to Jonah, but these Jews would not turn from their sins at his warning.

42. The Queen from the South. The Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1). Her example condemns these Jews. Jesus is greater than Solomon, yet they do not come to him to learn.

The Return of the Evil Spirit

(Also Luke 11.24-26)

⁴³“When an evil spirit goes out of a man, it travels over dry country looking for a place to rest. If it can’t find one, ⁴⁴“it says to itself, ‘I will go back to my house which I left.’ So it goes back and finds the house empty, clean, and all fixed up. ⁴⁵Then it goes out and brings along seven other spirits even worse than itself, and they come and live there. So that man is in worse shape, when it is all over, than he was at the beginning. This is the way it will happen to the evil people of this day.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

(Also Mark 3.31-35; Luke 8.19-21)

⁴⁶Jesus was still talking to the people when his mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside, asking to speak with him. ⁴⁷So one of the people there said to him, “Look, your mother and brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak with you.”

⁴⁸Jesus answered, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” ⁴⁹Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “Look! Here are my mother

“When an evil spirit ⁴³ comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to ⁴⁴ the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it ⁴⁵ goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

While Jesus was still talk- ⁴⁶ ing to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, “Your ⁴⁷ mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.”

He replied, “Who is my ⁴⁸ mother, and who are my brothers?” Pointing to his ⁴⁹ disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers.

43-45. **When an evil spirit.** This is a parable, and its meaning is based on the last sentence: “*This is the way it will happen to the evil people of this day.*” This is the climax of the passage which goes back to verse 22. Many (but not all) of the Jews rejected Christ and said evil things about him. It was this group who crucified Jesus. It was this group who began persecuting the church of Christ. And it was this group who ravaged and destroyed themselves in the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) when 1,100,000 of them died. John the Baptist called them to repent (*the evil spirit going out*); but when they were pure (*empty, clean, and all fixed up*) they did not fill themselves with Christ. Therefore, when the evil spirit (*sin*) returned, he brought seven others worse than himself — which implies they became seven times as evil as they had been! (See *Matt. 23:29-36.*) TO US TODAY: if we do not fill our purified lives with good, we lay ourselves open to the powers of the Devil. (See *Heb. 6:4-6.*)

46-47. **His mother and brothers.** On his brothers, see *Matt. 13:55.* At this time, his brothers did not yet believe he was the Messiah.

48-49. **Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?** The fact he is the Messiah supersedes ordinary relationships. **Look! Here are my mother and my brothers!** The strongest ties are the spiritual ties. Those who are united to Christ spiritually (*Gal. 3:26-27*) are closer to him and to each other — than any can be through the “blood ties” of human relationship.

and my brothers! ⁵⁰Whoever does what my Father in heaven wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother."

The Parable of the Sower

(Also Mark 4.1-9; Luke 8.4-8)

13 That same day Jesus left the house and went to the lakeside, where he sat down to teach. ²The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it, while the crowd stood on the shore. ³He used parables to tell them many things.

"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. ⁶When 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,

For whoever does the will of ⁵⁰ my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

The Parable of the Sower

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying:

"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.

1. **That same day.** This is just following his first serious confrontation with the Jewish leaders. **To the lakeside.** Lake Galilee, probably near Capernaum.

2. **The crowd.** Luke says that people kept coming to Jesus from one town after another. This may have been the largest crowd he taught.

3. **He used parables.** This begins a change in his teaching career. From this time on he taught in parables, using these over and over as he taught different groups of people. A parable is a story, true to nature, told to illustrate a moral or spiritual principle. "You can only learn on the basis of what you already know." A parable takes familiar things and uses them to teach new facts. **There was a man who went out to sow.** In that era, farmers lived in villages, and went out into their fields to work. Everyone understood how a farmer would sow grain (He would walk through the field, dipping his hand into a sack of seed, scattering it around him as he walked.)

4. **As he scattered the seed.** Jesus explains the meaning of this parable in *verses 18-23*. As the man scattered the seed, he could not avoid getting some of it into places not right for it. **Along the path.** Narrow footpaths crisscrossed the fields. As the seed lay on the hard-packed ground, the birds would eat it.

5. **Rocky ground.** Some parts of a field would have only a very thin covering of soil over the rocks. Much of Palestine is very rocky.

6. **It burned the young plants.** Not enough soil or moisture to allow them to survive.

7. **Fell among thorns.** Palestine has been noted for thorns, thistles, brambles, and thorny-bushes. The plants could not compete with the thorns.

which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸But some seeds fell in good soil, and bore grain: some had one hundred grains, others sixty, and others thirty."

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

The Purpose of the Parables

(Also Mark 4.10-12; Luke 8.9-10)

¹⁰Then the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you talk to them?"

¹¹Jesus answered, "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹²For the man who has something will be given more, so that he will have more than enough; but the man who has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he has. ¹³The reason that I use parables to talk to them is this: they look, but do not see, and they listen, but do not hear or understand. ¹⁴So the prophecy of Isaiah comes true in their case:

Still other seed fell on good 8
soil, where it produced a
crop, a hundred, sixty or
thirty times what was sown.
He who has ears, let him 9
hear."

The disciples came to him 10
and asked, "Why do you
speak to the people in par-
ables?"

He replied, "The know- 11
ledge of the secrets of the
kingdom of heaven has been
given to you, but not to
them. Whoever has will be 12
given more, and he will have
an abundance. Whoever
does not have, even what he
has will be taken from him.
This is why I speak to them 13
in parables:

Though seeing, they do
not see;
though hearing, they do
not hear or understand.
In them is fulfilled the 14
prophecy of Isaiah:

8. **But some seeds fell in good soil.** This last soil is the exact opposite of the other. It has all the good qualities needed to grow a good crop. **Some had one hundred grains.** That is, each "one grain of seed" planted, would produce "one hundred grains of seed" in the harvest. In Luke's record, it is all "one hundred grains," while Matthew and Mark list "sixty grains" and "thirty grains" as well. This is not important, as the same parable was told many times. "Thirty grains" would be a very good crop.

9. **Listen, then.** Those who hear this are to learn the lesson which it teaches.

10. **Why do you use parables?** Jesus had not used this method of teaching before.

11. **Has been given to you.** Spiritual training is required to be able to understand spiritual truth (see 1 Cor. 2:6, 11, 14).

12. **Will be given more.** Those who have made some progress, will find still more. Jesus repeated this principle in the Parable of the Three Servants (Matt. 25:29). **Will have taken away.** Those who do not have a great desire to please God (Matt. 5:6), will lose their ability to respond to God. An opportunity — UNUSED — turns into a punishment.

13. **The reason that I use parables.** This is said about those who are satisfied to be spiritually ignorant (such as those in Matt. 12:38). No one will find Truth who does not actively search for it.

14-15. **So the prophecy of Isaiah comes true.** Isa. 6:9-10. Isaiah sees the spiritual apathy of the people—which describes conditions in Christ's time. Those whom God cannot convince, he confuses (see 2 Thess. 2:11-12).

'You will listen and listen, but not understand;
 you will look and look, but not see,
¹⁵ because this people's minds are dull,
 and they have stopped up their ears,
 and have closed their eyes.
 Otherwise, their eyes would see,
 their ears would hear,
 their minds would understand,
 and they would turn to me, says God,
 and I would heal them.'

¹⁶As for you, how fortunate you are! Your eyes see and your ears hear. ¹⁷Remember this! Many prophets and many of God's people wanted very much to see what you see, but they could not, and to hear what you hear, but they did not."

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

(Also Mark 4.13-20; Luke 8.11-15)

¹⁸"Listen, then, and learn what the parable of the sower means. ¹⁹Those who hear the message about the Kingdom but do not understand it are like the seed that fell along the path. The Evil One comes and snatches away what was sown in them. ²⁰The seed that fell on rocky ground stands for those who receive the message gladly as soon as they hear it. ²¹But it does not sink deep in them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of

'You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
 you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.
 For this people's heart has ¹⁵ become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes.
 Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

But blessed are your eyes ¹⁶ because they see, and your ears because they hear. For ¹⁷ I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear did not hear it.

"Listen then to what the ¹⁸ parable of the sower means: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. What was sown on rocky ²⁰ places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since ²¹ he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quick-

16. **How fortunate you are!** Compare *Matt. 16:17*. They allowed God to teach them the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven.

17. **Wanted very much to see what you see.** The ancient people had yearned to see the Messiah, but the time was not fulfilled while they were alive. God's Plan had to remain secret until Jesus came (*1 Cor. 2:7-10*).

18-23, **Listen, then, and learn.** Jesus tells them plainly the meaning of the parable about the Sower. Christ (and the messianic community) is the sower. Luke says the seed is the word of God (the Good News about the Kingdom — see *Matt. 16:18-19*). Note that in each case, the seed is the same, and it is the soil that makes the difference. The soil symbolizes the reaction of the one who hears. **The Path.** This person is "Too hard" because of: sin, indifference, prejudice, false teaching, etc. **The Rocky Soil.** This person has no strong conviction of belief: not really committed to Christ, and therefore

the message, they give up at once. ²²The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear the message, but the worries about this life and the love for riches choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. ²³And the seed sown in the good soil stands for those who hear the message and understand it: they bear fruit, some as much as one hundred, others sixty, and others thirty."

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴Jesus told them another parable, "The Kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵One night, when everyone was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶When the plants grew and the heads of grain began to form, then the weeds showed up. ²⁷The man's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, it was good seed you sowed in your field; where did the weeds come from?' ²⁸'It was some enemy who did this,' he answered. 'Do you want us to go and pull up

ly falls away. What was sown among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But what was sown on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

The Parable of the Weeds

Jesus told them another 24 parable:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, 25 his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat 26 sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

"The owner's servants 27 came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where did the weeds come from?'

"An enemy did this,' he 28 replied.

unwilling to "pay the price" to follow Jesus (*Luke 14:27*). **Soil with Thorns on it.** This person is committed to Jesus, but is so busy with the worries of this life (*1 John 2:15-17*), the love for riches (*1 Tim. 6:7-10*), and pleasures, that the seed of the word is choked out. **The Good Soil.** This person finds new life in Jesus, and give him the highest priority of importance (*Matt. 10:37-39*). This person loves the Truth and works to honor Christ and God (*1 Cor. 15:58*). Matthew mentions three levels of "fruit bearing," but all will receive the same gift of Eternal Life (*Compare Matt. 20:1-16*). To us TODAY: scatter the seed of the Word so the soil will have its chance to react and show what type it is.

24. **Jesus told them another parable.** Jesus used a series of parables to tell and explain the characteristics of the Kingdom. In this parable, the Kingdom of heaven is the man who sowed good seed. **Good seed.** The message about the Kingdom (*verse 19*). The Kingdom (people) do what the sower does in this parable. It sows the good seed. **His field.** Not the Kingdom/church. It is the place where the good seed is sowed. The field is the world (*verse 38*).

25. **One night.** Many people hide their actions under the cover of night. **An enemy.** This enemy sowed weed seed in the field of wheat, with the idea of causing harm to the man who sowed the good seed. The weeds were "darnel," and looked just like wheat while they were growing together.

26. **Then the weeds showed up.** No heads of grain would form on the weeds, so they identify themselves.

27-28. **Where did the weeds come from?** Certainly not from the good seed that was planted. Just as the people of the Kingdom sow good seed, there are those who belong to the Evil One who sow the weed seed. **Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?** Since the field is the world, this cannot speak of "church discipline."

the weeds?' they asked him. ²⁹'No,' he answered, 'because as you gather the weeds you might pull up some of the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let the wheat and the weeds both grow together until harvest, and then I will tell the harvest workers: Pull up the weeds first and tie them in bundles to throw in the fire; then gather in the wheat and put it in my barn.' "

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Also Mark 4.30-32; Luke 13.18-19)

³¹Jesus told them another parable, "The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man takes and sows in his field. ³²It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it grows up it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds come and make their nests in its branches."

The Parable of the Yeast

(Also Luke 13.20-21)

³³Jesus told them another parable, "The Kingdom of heaven is like yeast. A woman takes it and mixes it with a bushel of flour, until the whole batch of dough rises."

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'"

"'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast

He told them another parable: 31

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches." 32

He told them still another parable: 33

"The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

29. **You might pull up.** The wheat and the seeds grew so close together that you could not pull one without damaging the other.

30. **Let the wheat and the weeds both grow together.** When the harvest time comes, the separation can be easily done. For the application of this parable, see notes on verses 36-43. Compare Matt. 24:37-42.

31. **The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.** Here the Kingdom is the seed. The round mustard seed was the smallest seed planted.

32. **But when it grows up.** It grew to as much as ten feet high. The Kingdom of heaven was to begin small, then grow to include many crowds of people (see Acts 15:14-18; Rev. 7:9-10).

33. **The Kingdom of heaven is like yeast.** Here the Kingdom is the yeast. A small amount of "old dough" was kept in a jar as a "starter." This was mixed with the flour as we use yeast today, to make it rise. Just a small pinch of yeast would spread throughout the whole bushel of flour. This is how the Kingdom/church is active in the world. (Kingdom/church — see Matt. 16:18-19.)

Jesus' Use of Parables

(Also Mark 4.33-34)

³⁴Jesus used parables to tell all these things to the crowds; he would not say a thing to them without using a parable. ³⁵He did this to make come true what the prophet had said,

"I will use parables when I speak to them; I will tell them things unknown since the creation of the world."

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds

³⁶Then Jesus left the crowd and went indoors. His disciples came to him and said, "Tell us what the parable of the weeds in the field means."

³⁷Jesus answered, "The man who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world; the good seed is the people who belong to the Kingdom; the weeds are the people who belong to the Evil One; ³⁹and the enemy who sowed the weeds is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvest workers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are gathered up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age: ⁴¹the Son of Man will send out his angels and they will gather up out of his Kingdom all who cause people to sin, and all other evildoers, ⁴²and throw them into the fiery furnace, where

Jesus spoke all these ³⁴ things to the crowd in parables, and he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet:

"I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

Then he left the crowd ³⁶ and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

He answered, "The one ³⁷ who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is ³⁸ the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the ³⁹ enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

"As the weeds are pulled ⁴⁰ up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will ⁴¹ send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They ⁴² will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and grind-

34. Jesus used parables. See verse 3.

35. To make come true. Matthew paraphrases Psalm 78:2. The "things unknown" means the Good News of Jesus and his Kingdom (See 1 Cor. 2:9; Rev. 5:7-10).

36-43. Tell us what the parable of the weeds in the field means. This parable is in verses 24-30. (1) The Kingdom is compared to the man who sows. (2) The man is the Son of God—Jesus himself. [Son of Man—see Luke 22:69-70] Jesus sows by "proxy" through his Kingdom. (3) The good seed is the people who belong to the Kingdom (those who have accepted the message about the Kingdom—the Gospel). (4) The field is the world. It is Christ's field. He has full authority both in heaven and on earth. (Matt. 28:18). (5) The harvest is the end of the world, when separation will be done (compare Matt. 25:31-46). (6) The weeds are not bad Christians, but bad people who would not believe the message of the Kingdom, and who have been under the influence of the Evil One. (7) Both good and bad people are mixed together in the world and their lives are intertwined until the time of separation. (8) Kingdom in verse 41 includes all the world. (9) Father's Kingdom speaks of Eternity, after Jesus gives back the Kingdom to the Father (see 1 Cor. 15:28).

they will cry and gnash their teeth. ⁴³Then God's people will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Listen, then, if you have ears!"

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

⁴⁴"The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. A man happens to find it, so he covers it up again. He is so happy that he goes and sells everything he has, and then goes back and buys the field."

The Parable of the Pearl

⁴⁵"Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like a buyer looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶When he finds one that is unusually fine, he goes and sells everything he has, and buys the pearl."

The Parable of the Net

⁴⁷"Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown out in the lake, which catches all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸When it is full, the fishermen pull it to shore and sit down to divide the fish: the good ones go into their buckets, the worthless ones are thrown away. ⁴⁹It will be like this at the end of the age: the angels will go out and gather up the evil people from among the good, ⁵⁰and throw them into the fiery furnace. There they will cry and gnash their teeth."

ing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

"The kingdom of heaven ⁴⁴is like treasure hidden in a field. when a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

"Again, the kingdom of ⁴⁵heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great ⁴⁶value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The Parable of the Net

"Once again, the king- ⁴⁷dom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the ⁴⁸fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it ⁴⁹will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw ⁵⁰them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth."

44. Is like a treasure hidden. People then would bury things of value to keep them safe. This parable teaches the immense value of the message about the Kingdom [the Gospel]. One who finds this will give up everything to make it his!

45-46 The Kingdom of heaven is like a buyer. Pearls were extremely valuable. When he finds one unusually fine, he sells everything to be able to buy it. The treasure of *verse 44* was found by accident, while the pearl was "looked for." Yet both parables illustrate the attitude which "searches out" God and wisdom. Eternal life is worth any price! Jesus produced the treasure that we search to find (*Rom. 5:17*).

47-50. The Kingdom of heaven is like a net. All kinds of people will be in the messianic community, which is the Kingdom/church on earth. No attempt to sort them out will be done now. But, when time ends, the angels will be sent to separate the good from the bad. The evil people are thrown into the furnace—symbolic of eternal punishment for those who have not escaped through trusting Christ (see *Matt. 8:12*).

New and Old Truths

⁵¹“Do you understand these things?” Jesus asked them.

“Yes,” they answered.

⁵²So he replied, “This means, then, that every teacher of the Law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of heaven is like a homeowner who takes new and old things out of his storage room.”

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

(Also *Mark 6.1-6; Luke 4.16-30*)

⁵³When Jesus finished telling these parables, he left that place ⁵⁴and went back to his home town. He taught in their synagogue, and those who heard him were amazed. “Where did he get such wisdom?” they asked. “And what about his miracles? ⁵⁵Isn’t he the carpenter’s son? Isn’t Mary his mother, and aren’t James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas his brothers? ⁵⁶Aren’t all his sisters living here? Where did he get all this?” ⁵⁷And so they rejected him.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is respected everywhere except in his home town and by his own family.” ⁵⁸He did not perform many miracles there because they did not have faith.

“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

A Prophet Without Honor

When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. Coming to his home town, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. “Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?” they asked. “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” And they took offense at him.

But Jesus said to them, “Only in his home town and in his own house is a prophet without honor.”

And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

51-52. **Every teacher of the Law.** A teacher of the Law would study Jesus in the context of the Old Testament. He would bring out old truths which come true in Jesus and his Kingdom. See *verse 35*.
53-54. **And went back to his home town.** Nazareth. He taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath (*Mark 6:2*). **Where did he get such wisdom?** Sarcasm (see *verse 58*).

55-56 **Isn’t he!** Joseph was his *legal* father [the Holy Spirit was his real father]. Brothers and sisters (see note on *John 2:12*).

57 **And so they rejected him.** They thought they knew both he and his family. So they rejected his claims without closely studying them. Familiar things often fail to impress us.

58. **He did not.** Miracles would not impress these people, because they had already decided not to believe.

The **SYNAGOGUE** was like the **CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION**. Wherever ten Jews lived in the same area, it was their duty to form a synagogue. This name was also applied to the building in which they met every Sabbath [Saturday] for their public worship. The building was used as a social center and as a school for Jewish children during the week. In their worship, a reader would read a set lesson from the Old Testament Scriptures, and after the reading and prayers, any Jewish teacher could speak to them. Jesus, and later Paul and others, often used the synagogue as a place to teach the Good News. [They often went first to the synagogue in a new town.]

The Death of John the Baptist

(Also Mark 6.14-29; Luke 9.7-9)

14 It was at that time that Herod, the ruler of Galilee, heard about Jesus. ²“He is really John the Baptist, who has come back to life,” he told his officials. “That is why these powers are at work in him.”

³For Herod had ordered John’s arrest, and had him tied up and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. “John the Baptist kept telling Herod, “It isn’t right for you to marry her!” ⁵Herod wanted to kill him, but he was afraid of the Jewish people, because they considered John to be a prophet.

“On Herod’s birthday the daughter of Herodias danced in front of the whole group. Herod was so pleased ⁷that he promised her, “I swear that I will give you anything you ask for!”

John the Baptist Beheaded

14 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the reports about Jesus, and he said to his attendants, “This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him.” 2

Now Herod had arrested John and bound Him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, for John had been saying to him: “It is not lawful for you to have her.” Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered him a prophet. 3

On Herod’s birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for them and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. 4
5
6
7

1. **Herod.** Herod Antipas (see note on *Matt. 2:1*). **Heard about Jesus.** He had been away in a war with Aretas, king of Arabia, and probably did not hear much until he returned.

2. **He is really John the Baptist.** Herod was a Sadducee, and they did not believe in a life after death. But his guilt makes him think John the Baptist had come back from the dead. **That is why.** John the Baptist did not do miracles (*John 10:41*). Herod thought that being raised from death had given John the Baptist new powers. (Others thought this also. See *Matt. 16:14; Mark 8:28*).

3. **For Herod had ordered.** This arrest of John had happened a year earlier, just before Jesus made his second visit to Galilee (*Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14*). **He did this because of Herodias.** While the guest of his brother Philip in Rome, he had fallen in love with his brother’s wife, and took her with him when he left. His legal wife was the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia. Herodias was the granddaughter of “Herod the King,” niece to both her legal husband and to Herod Antipas, with whom she was now living.

4. **It isn’t right for you to marry her.** (1) Philip, the husband of Herodias, was still living. (2) Antipas’ wife was still living. (3) Jewish law did not allow a man to marry his niece. See *Mark 6:16-29* for a more complete account.

5. **Herod want to kill him.** This shows something of the power of public opinion. Mark says he was afraid of John also. He, too, believed John to be a prophet, and liked to listen to him, even though he did not like some things which John told him.

6. **On Herod’s birthday.** The Herodian princes imitated the Roman emperors, by celebrating their birthdays with a feast, which was a “wild party.” **The daughter of Herodias.** Salome—the daughter of Herod’s brother Philip. It was not usual for ladies of high rank to dance outside the privacy of the harem. Herod knew Salome danced because she wanted to ask a favor.

7. **He promised her.** He rashly swears a vow, offering to give her anything at all. [See *Matt. 5:34-36* about taking a vow.]

⁸At her mother's suggestion she asked him, "Give me right here the head of John the Baptist on a plate!"

⁹The king was sad, but because of the promise he had made in front of all his guests he gave orders that her wish be granted. ¹⁰So he had John beheaded in prison. ¹¹The head was brought in on a plate and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. ¹²John's disciples came, got his body, and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also Mark 6.30-44; Luke 9.10-17; John 6.1-14)

¹³When Jesus heard the news, he left that place in a boat and went to a lonely place by himself. The people heard about it, left their towns, and followed him by land. ¹⁴Jesus got out of the boat, and when he saw the large crowd his heart was filled with pity for them, and he healed their sick.

¹⁵That evening his disciples came to him and said, "It is already very late, and this is a lonely place. Send the people away and let them go to

Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted and had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already get-

8. **At her mother's suggestion.** Mark tells us she went out and asked her mother what she should ask for. Her mother had told her to dance just so this opportunity would come. She is told to ask for the "head of John the Baptist" on a large serving plate.

9. **The king was sad.** Very unhappy at this. **Because of his promise.** He has sworn a vow, and also because he fears the taunts of the guests.

10. **So he had John beheaded.** In spite of public opinion and his own fear of John as a "holy man."

11. **Who took it to her mother.** Jezebel was the woman who wanted to kill Elijah (*1 Kings 19:1-2*). Herodias is "Jezebel" to the "second Elijah" (*Matt. 11:14*), John the Baptist.

12. **Then they went and told Jesus.** John the Baptist had pointed out Jesus as the Messiah (*John 3:25-36*). In this time of deep sorrow, John's disciples look to Jesus for sympathy and help.

13. **When Jesus heard the news.** John the Baptist was both a close friend and a relative of Jesus (*Luke 1:36*). He felt the deep sorrow, just as we would. Also, the twelve had just returned from a very successful tour, Jesus' popularity was at its peak, and the crowds kept coming (see *Mark 6:30-31*). Jesus and his disciples crossed the Lake of Galilee (*John 6:1*) and went toward Bethsaida—Julias (*Luke 9:10*) on the eastern shore.

14. **His heart was filled with pity for them.** The crowds were already there when he got out of the boat. The area west of Lake Galilee was heavily populated, with Capernaum alone having some 30,000 people. There were twelve other cities near its shores. *John 6:3* implies he first went up the mountain, but then returned to the crowd, because of his sympathy for them. Note there were 5,000 men, plus women and children (*verse 21*). This miracle appears in all four Gospels.

15. **It is already very late.** This was the "first evening," from 3 to 6 P.M. The "second evening" began at sundown (6 P.M.). It would soon be dark and they must get their food before sunset. **This is a lonely place.** There were no farmhouses in Palestine. The people lived in villages, and farmers often went

the villages and buy food for themselves.”

¹⁶“They don’t have to leave,” answered Jesus. “You yourselves give them something to eat.”

¹⁷“All we have here are five loaves and two fish,” they replied.

¹⁸“Bring them here to me,” Jesus said. ¹⁹He ordered the people to sit down on the grass; then he 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 the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ²⁰Everyone ate and had enough. Then the disciples took up twelve baskets full of what was left over. ²¹The number of men who ate was about five thousand, not counting the women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

(Also Mark 6.45-52; John 6.15-21)

²²Then Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side of

ting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go the villages and buy themselves some food.”

Jesus replied, “They do ¹⁶ not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”

“We have here only five ¹⁷ loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

“Bring them here to me,” ¹⁸ he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the ¹⁹ grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those ²¹ who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

Immediately Jesus made ²² the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he

many miles to their fields. Jesus and the crowds are probably out on the narrow plain of *El-Batihah*. They must go to inhabited areas to buy food.

16. You yourselves give them something to eat. He said this to test his disciples (*Compare John 6:5-6*). They did not understand how it could be done.

17. Five loaves and two fish. It was Andrew who spoke (*John 6:8*). The loaves of barley-bread were probably “hardtack,” large, flat, and thin, similar to a cracker. They were what poor people ate. This seemed like nothing at all, because they could see that it would cost \$200. [in 1974 dollars] to feed so many people.

19. He ordered the people to sit. They sat down in rows (*Mark 6:40*) **And gave thanks to God.** He asked God to bless this food. [People at that time, stood up, with eyes and hands raised toward the sky, as they prayed to God.]

20. Everyone ate and had enough. This was not a skimpy miracle! **Twelve baskets full.** This showed how much food was provided. It also teaches us to conserve our resources. [Jews took along baskets when they traveled, to carry food, so they would not have to depend upon the Gentiles and risk “ritual defilement.”]

21. The number of men. Five thousand men *plus* women and children. A large crowd. There was one loaf to each thousand men. It is a Divine principle, that they more they give to the hungry, the more they have for themselves!

22. Then Jesus made the disciples get into the boat. Jesus sent them on ahead, perhaps so he could have some peace and quiet to meditate. John says they went toward Capernaum.

the lake, while he sent the people away. ²³After sending the people away, he went up a hill by himself to pray. When evening came, Jesus was there alone; ²⁴by this time the boat was far out in the lake, tossed about by the waves, because the wind was blowing against it. ²⁵Between three and six o'clock in the morning Jesus came to them, walking on the water. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the water they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and screamed with fear.

²⁷Jesus spoke to them at once. "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!"

²⁸Then Peter spoke up. "Lord," he said, "if it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you."

²⁹"Come!" answered Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. ³⁰When he noticed the wind, however, he was afraid, and started to sink down in the water. "Save me, Lord!" he cried.

³¹At once Jesus reached out and grabbed him and said, "How little faith you have! Why did you doubt?"

dismissed the crowd. After ²³ he had dismissed them, he went, up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

During the fourth watch ²⁵ of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw ²⁶ him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately ²⁷ said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's you," Peter ²⁸ replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," he said. ²⁹

Then Peter got down out of the boat and walked on the water to Jesus. But when ³⁰ he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately Jesus reached ³¹ ed out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith,"

23. He went up a hill by himself to pray. After sending the crowd away. Their excitement had bordered on frenzy (see *John 6:14-15*). In time of crisis, Jesus would go off alone to pray.

24. The boat was far out in the lake. About three or four miles from where they started. The fury of the wind was whipping up waves (*Mark 6:48*).

25. Walking on the water. Having finished his prayer, he now came to them *walking on the water!* The language is very firm in pointing out that it is the water itself which he walks upon.

26. It's a ghost! Compare *Luke 24:37*. In the dark stormy night, they had no reason to expect Jesus to be walking across the water to them.

27. Jesus spoke to them at once. He finds it necessary to again and again speak to quiet their fears and strengthen their faith—both here and at other times. **It is I.** ΕΓΩ ΕΜΙ. This is the same expression he uses at Jerusalem (*John 8:58*), and is a form of the "I AM" (*Exod. 3:14*). He means to imply that it is the "I AM" who comes, the One who rules wind and wave.

28. Then Peter spoke up. Impulsive Peter! "Lord, order me to come out on the water to you." This may be the voice of pride.

29. Come! answered Jesus. Perhaps to teach Peter a lesson. Peter gets out and begins to walk toward Jesus *on the water*.

30. When he noticed the wind. His faith is not as strong as he thought. As he becomes afraid, he begins to sink!

31. At once Jesus reached out. True faith doesn't need to "show off." Peter's act didn't demonstrate faith, but rather, doubt. The Bible points out weakness as well as strength in its human heroes. No book of myths would do that.

³²They both got into the boat, and the wind died down. ³³The disciples in the boat worshipped Jesus. "Truly you are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

(Also Mark 6.53-56)

³⁴They crossed the lake and came to land at Gennesaret, ³⁵where the people recognized Jesus. So they sent for the sick people in all the surrounding country and brought them to Jesus. ³⁶They begged him to let the sick at least touch the edge of his cloak; and all who touched it were made well.

The Teaching of the Ancestors

(Also Mark 7.1-13)

15 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the Law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked him, ²"Why is it that your disciples disobey the teaching handed down by our ancestors? They don't wash their hands in the proper way before they eat!"

he said, "why did you doubt?"

And when they climbed ³² into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were ³³ in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

When they had crossed ³⁴ over, they landed at Gennesaret. And when the men of ³⁵ that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him and begged him to let the ³⁶ sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

Clean and Unclean

15 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, ²"Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!"

32. **And the wind died down.** They were safe—the Lord of wind and wave was with them! (*Psalm 107:29*)

33. **Truly you are the Son of God!** They are convinced by his power. Compare *John 20:28-29*.

34. **Came to land at Gennesaret.** A small, very fertile area, four miles long and two or three miles wide, just south of Capernaum on the shore of Lake Galilee.

35. **Where the people recognized Jesus.** His coming causes a near riot as the sick from the surrounding area are brought to Jesus to heal. Medical care was not generally available, so the people gather in great crowds.

36. **They begged him.** There were so many he could not speak to them individually. Those who touched the fringe on the edge of his cloak were immediately made well! [Shortly after this, Jesus taught about the "Bread of Life" (see *John 6:22-65*) in the synagogue at Capernaum, and many of his followers left him.]

1. **Then some Pharisees and teachers of the Law.** They came to protest against Jesus and his teaching, and to turn the people back to the Tradition. See *Mark 7:1-13* for a more complete account.

2. **Why is it that your disciples disobey?** Not God's Law, but the teaching handed down by the ancestors. These teachings formed an "unwritten law" which they followed carefully (see *Gal. 1:14*). **In the proper way.** A religious ritual. It was said that Rabbi Akiba, put in prison by the Romans and with barely enough water to stay alive, used it for ritual washing. Note that these bigots even knew the way in which the disciples ate their meals.

³Jesus answered, "And why do you disobey God's command and follow your own teaching? 'For God said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and 'Anyone who says bad things about his father or mother must be put to death.' ⁵But you teach that if a person has something he could use to help his father or mother, but says, 'This belongs to God,' ⁶he does not need to honor his father. This is how you disregard God's word to follow your own teaching. ⁷You hypocrites! How right Isaiah was when he prophesied about you!

⁸"These people, says God, honor me with their words, but their heart is really far away from me. ⁹It is no use for them to worship me, because they teach man-made commandments as though they were God's rules! "

The Things That Make a Person Unclean

(Also Mark 7.14-23)

¹⁰Then Jesus called the crowd to him and

Jesus replied, "And why ³ do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, ⁴ 'Honor your father and mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' But ⁵ you say that if a man says to his father or mother, 'What- ever help you might other- wise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,' ⁶ he is not to 'honor his father' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You hypo- ⁷ crites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

"These people honor me ⁸ with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

They worship me in vain; ⁹ their teachings are but rules made by man."

Jesus called the crowd to ¹⁰ him and said, "Listen and

3. **Jesus answered, "And why do you . . .?"** He does not deny their charge, but shows that their "unwritten law" caused them to break God's Law.

4. **For God said.** (*Exodus 21:7*) Only God has the right to make religious laws. Jesus quotes one which they did not follow, and the punishment for breaking it.

5. **But you teach.** Their Tradition said just the opposite of God's command. **This belongs to God.** CORBAN. The teachers of the Law said that if a person said about his money and property, "This belongs to God," he did not have to take care of this mother and father, even though he did not use his money and property for religious causes.

6. **This is how.** They contradicted God by what they taught. Church tradition can lead to dogma that directly contradicts what God has said. The PRIMAL FORM of the church of Christ became distorted due to the dogma of tradition.

7. **You hypocrites!** One who fools himself as well as one who fools others. Jesus quotes *Isa. 29:13* to show God's evaluation of them.

8. **These people . . . honor me with their words.** Talk is cheap. True worship involves the heart as well (*See Rom. 12:1-2*).

9. **It is no use for them.** Their worship is a waste of time. **Because they teach man-made commandments.** They substituted their Tradition for the rules of God. Many "standard practices" in churches today cannot be found in God's rules. To please God, go directly to the New Testament and do as much or as little as you find God has ordered you to do.

10. **Listen, and understand!** He shows the people that these teachers of the Law do not really understand what it says.

said to them, "Listen, and understand! ¹¹It is not what goes into a person's mouth that makes him unclean; rather, what comes out of it makes him unclean."

¹²Then the disciples came to him and said, "Do you know that the Pharisees had their feelings hurt by what you said?"

¹³"Every plant which my Father in heaven did not plant will be pulled up," answered Jesus.

¹⁴"Don't worry about them! They are blind leaders; and when one blind man leads another one, both fall into a ditch."

¹⁵Peter spoke up, "Tell us what this parable means."

¹⁶Jesus said to them, "You are still no more intelligent than the other. ¹⁷Don't you understand? Anything that goes into a person's mouth goes into his stomach and then on out of the body. ¹⁸But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart; such things make a man unclean. ¹⁹For from his heart come the evil ideas which lead him to kill, commit adultery, and do other immoral things; to rob, lie, and

understand. What goes into ¹¹ a man's mouth does not make him 'unclean,' but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him 'unclean.'"

Then the disciples came ¹² to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?"

He replied, "Every plant ¹³ that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them; ¹⁴ they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Peter said, "Explain the ¹⁵ parable to us."

"Are you still so dull?" ¹⁶ Jesus asked them. "Don't ¹⁷ you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that ¹⁸ come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' For ¹⁹ out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

11. **It is not what goes into a person's mouth.** Jesus shows that a pure heart is far more important than "ritually clean food" in the stomach. God had commanded certain dietary laws [since repealed, Acts 10:9-16] to demonstrate moral purity, but the teachers of the Law seriously distorted these through their traditions. **What comes out.** This shows the true man. See verses 16-20.

12. **Had their feelings hurt?** Because he "kicked" their Tradition. Perhaps even the disciples felt some of this themselves.

13. **Every plant . . . will be pulled up.** Some ideas are harmless, some are harmful, but only God's Truth will stand the test. Since we "act out" what we believe, everyone who bases their hope on "man-made commandments" will be "pulled up" (compare Matt. 13:30).

14. **Don't worry about them.** Don't be concerned by the hurt feelings and the opposition of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. **They are blind leaders.** They claim to be spiritual guides, but they cannot find their own way, much less lead others.

15. **Tell us what this parable means.** Peter is aware that there is a deep meaning to this (in what Jesus said in verse 11).

16-17. **Jesus said to them.** His disciples still cannot think in spiritual terms. The things eaten, pass through the body and are expelled. Such things cannot defile the soul.

18-19. **For from his heart.** The heart symbolizes the "real man." Evil actions and evil words begin from evil ideas. Compare Matt. 7:15-20.

slander others. ²⁰These are the things that make a man unclean. But to eat without washing your hands as they say you should—this does not make a man unclean.”

A Woman's Faith

(Also Mark 7.24-30)

²¹Jesus left that place and went off to the territory near the cities of Tyre and Sidon. ²²A Canaanite woman who lived in that region came to him. “Son of David, sir!” she cried. “Have mercy on me! My daughter has a demon and is in a terrible condition.”

²³But Jesus did not say a word to her. His disciples came to him and begged him, “Send her away! She is following us and making all this noise!”

²⁴Then Jesus replied, “I have been sent only to the lost sheep of the people of Israel.”

²⁵At this the woman came and fell at his feet. “Help me, sir!” she said.

²⁶Jesus answered, “It isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.”

These are what make a man ²⁰“unclean”; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him ‘unclean.’”

The Faith of the Canaanite Woman

Leaving that place, Jesus ²¹withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.”

Jesus did not answer a ²³word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”

He answered, “I was sent ²⁴only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

The woman came and ²⁵kneelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.

He replied, “It is not right ²⁶to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.”

20. **These are the things.** Sin makes a man unclean in the eyes of God. (*Gal. 5:19-21*).

21. **Jesus left that place.** Tyre and Sidon are cities of Phoenicia on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea about one hundred miles northwest of Jerusalem. Tyre was the leading seaport. These were Gentile cities in a Gentile country, and this was the only time Jesus went outside Palestine.

22. **A Canaanite woman.** Mark says she was a foreigner, born in Phoenicia of Syria. **Son of David.** She knew the prophecies. Two bright examples of faith are this woman and the Roman officer (*Matt. 8:8-9*). **Have mercy on me.** Her daughter's problem is her own. She begs a favor from Jesus. **A demon.** (See *Matt. 8:28-29*).

23. **But Jesus did not say a word to her.** He acted this way in order to be able to teach an important lesson here.

24. **I have been sent only to.** His *personal* mission was only to the Jews, and his disciples were sent only to the Jews (*Matt. 10:5-6*). But after he was crucified and raised to glory, God canceled the binding rules, nailing them to his cross (*Col. 2:13-14*). The Great Commission sent the followers of Christ to the whole world (*Mark 16:15-16*).

25. **Help me, sir!** She “fell at his feet” (see note on *Rev. 5:14*). She would not give up!

26. **It isn't right.** What he said was not an insult, but normal Jewish language emphasizing the separation between Jew and Gentile. Jesus is giving her an opportunity to declare her faith.

²⁷"That is true, sir," she answered; "but even the dogs eat the leftovers that fall from their master's table."

²⁸So Jesus answered her, "You are a woman of great faith! What you want will be done for you." And at that very moment her daughter was healed.

Jesus Heals Many People

²⁹Jesus left that place and went along by Lake Galilee. He climbed a hill and sat down. ³⁰Large crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the dumb, and many other sick people, whom they placed at Jesus' feet; and he healed them. ³¹The people were amazed as they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they praised the God of Israel.

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

(Also Mark 8.1-10)

³²Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I feel sorry for these people, because they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat. I don't want to send them away with-

"Yes, Lord," she said, ²⁷
"But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus answered, ²⁸
"Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

Jesus left there and went ²⁹
along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up into the hills and sat down. Great ³⁰
crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the dumb and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were a- ³¹
mazed when they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

Jesus called his disciples ³²
to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way."

27. But even the dogs eat the leftovers. She admits the truth of what Jesus said, but will not give up asking him to help her daughter.

28. You are a woman of great faith. She showed her great faith by: (1) She came to Christ in spite of the separation between Jew and Gentile. (2) She did not give up even when her prayer seemed unanswered. (3) She did not give up when arguments against her were presented. (4) She continued until her request was answered (compare Luke 18:1-8). Her daughter was healed. Immediately! Mark's account follows her home to find the daughter lying on the bed, with the demon gone.

29. And went along by Lake Galilee. Mark tells that Jesus circled around to come through the territory of the Ten Towns to reach Lake Galilee. Mark mentions a miracle not recorded by the others (Mark 7:32-37).

30. Large crowds came to him. People will sacrifice their health to make a fortune, and then spend their fortune to try to recapture health. Jesus was a true healer, and very popular.

31. The people were amazed. Some of these who were healed, were their own kinfolk. The truth of what Jesus was doing amazed them! They praised the God of Israel. The miracles which Christ did caused people to praise Jehovah [God the Father], although used of Christ in Psalm 97:7, quoted in Heb. 1:6; Isa. 40:3, quoted in Matt. 3:1-3; Jer. 23:5-6, quoted in Rev. 22:6,16.].

32. I feel sorry for these people. They had been with him on the hill for three days, without regular food.

out feeding them, because they might faint on their way home."

³³The disciples asked him, "Where will we find enough food in this desert to feed this crowd?"

³⁴"How much bread do you have?" Jesus asked.

"Seven loaves," they answered, "and a few small fish."

³⁵So Jesus ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. ³⁶Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks to God, broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ³⁷They all ate and had enough. The disciples took up seven baskets full of pieces left over. ³⁸The number of men who ate was four thousand, not counting the women and children.

³⁹Then Jesus sent the people away, got into the boat, and went to the territory of Magadan.

The Demand for a Miracle

(Also Mark 8.11-13; Luke 12.54-56)

16 Some Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus. They wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle for them, to show God's approval. ²But Jesus answered, "When the

His disciples answered, ³³ "Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?"

"How many loaves do you ³⁴ have?" Jesus asked.

"Seven," they replied, "And a few small fish."

He told the crowd to sit ³⁵ down on the ground. Then ³⁶ he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. They all ate and ³⁷ were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The ³⁸ number of those who ate was four thousand, besides women and children. After ³⁹ Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan.

The Demand for a Sign

16 The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.

He replied, "When even- ²

33. **Where will we find enough food?** Their question is a hint to Jesus to perform a miracle.

34. **How much bread do you have?** "Seven loaves and a few small fish." Compare this with *Matt. 14:15-21*.

35-37. **So Jesus ordered the crowd to sit down.** Again, Jesus gives thanks to the Father, asking him to bless this food, and breaks it in pieces. All have enough to eat, and seven baskets full of pieces are gathered up.

38. **Four thousand men.** Not quite as many as the former feeding of five thousand men.

39. **Then Jesus sent the people away.** To rest. Also, he could not allow the people to make him an earthly king, since his mission was to be God's sacrifice (*Luke 9:31; Col. 1:20*). Jesus gets into a boat and goes to the territory of Magdan (Mark says Dalmanutha) near Magdala, about three miles north of Tiberias on the western shore of Lake Galilee.

1. **Pharisees and Sadducees.** See note on *Matt. 3:7*. They wanted to trap him. They had already made up their minds about Jesus, and they had rejected the miracles he had just done. Now they ask for a "sign from heaven" which only God could do—to "prove" to them that he works by God's power. (See *1 Cor. 1:22*.)

2-3. **But Jesus answered.** He reminds them of what they already know—that the signs in the sky indicate what the weather will be like. **But you cannot interpret the signs.** They could "read" the weather in the sky, but they were "blind" to the signs concerning these times. Old Testament prophecies were

sun is setting you say, 'We are going to have fine weather, because the sky is red.' ³And early in the morning you say, 'It is going to rain, because the sky is red and dark.' You can predict the weather by looking at the sky; but you cannot interpret the signs concerning these times! 'How evil and godless are the people of this day! You ask me for a miracle? No! The only miracle you will be given is the miracle of Jonah.'

So he left them and went away.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

(Also Mark 8.14-21)

⁵When the disciples crossed over to the other side of the lake, they forgot to take any bread. ⁶Jesus said to them, "Look out, and be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

⁷They started discussing among themselves, "He says this because we didn't bring any bread."

⁸Jesus knew what they were saying, so he asked them, "Why are you discussing among yourselves about not having any bread? How little faith you have! ⁹Don't you understand yet? Don't you remember when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand men? How many baskets did you

ing comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, ³'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away. ⁴

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

But when they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. "Be careful," ⁶Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

⁷They discussed this among themselves and said, "It is because we didn't bring any bread."

⁸Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? Do you still not understand? ⁹Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you

coming true in Jesus and the things he was doing. These showed clearly the Jewish Age was about to close and Messiah's Kingdom was about to be set up (Acts 2:16-21).

4. **The miracle of Jonah.** When they saw this miracle, they would know he was the Son of God! See Matt. 12:38-40.

5. **When the disciples crossed over.** To the eastern shore of Lake Galilee. They forgot to take any bread. They were going to Caesarea Philippi and would need extra food, since they were going through a deserted area. Mark says they had one loaf, but no extra (Mark 8:14-21).

6. **The yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.** Their need for bread gave the opportunity for this teaching. "Influence" spreads like yeast, and the influence of the Pharisees and Sadducees was evil. [Mark says: "of Herod." Herod and his followers were Sadducees.]

7-11. **They started discussing among themselves.** The disciples felt guilty about their carelessness, and this was all they could think about—so they really did not listen to what Jesus was saying. They thought that they were being scolded because they forgot to bring extra bread. **How is it that you don't understand?** They knew how Jesus had fed the five thousand and the four thousand. Jesus tells them

fill? ¹⁰And what about the seven loaves for the four thousand men? How many baskets did you fill? ¹¹How is it that you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? Guard yourselves from the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!"

¹²Then the disciples understood that he was not telling them to guard themselves from the yeast used in bread, but from the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

(Also Mark 8.27-30; Luke 9.18-21)

¹³Jesus went to the territory near the town of Caesarea Philippi, where he asked his disciples, "Who do men say the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴"Some say John the Baptist," they answered. "Others say Elijah, while others say Jeremiah or some other prophet."

¹⁵"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

gathered? Or the seven 10
loaves for the four thousand,
and how many basketfuls
you gathered? How is it you 11
don't understand that I was
not talking to you about
bread? But be on your guard
against the yeast of the
Pharisees and Sadducees."
Then they understood that 12
he was not telling them to
guard against the yeast used
in bread, but against the
teaching of the Pharisees
and Sadducees.

Peter's Confession of Christ

When Jesus came to the 13
region of Caesarea Philippi,
he asked his disciples,
"Who do people say the Son
of Man is?"

They replied, "Some say 14
John the Baptist; others say
Elijah; and still others, Jere-
miah or one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he 15
asked. "Who do you say I
am?"

plainly that it is not bread he is speaking about. The influence of the Pharisees and Sadducees did not seem to be as evil as it really was, so that those not on their guard against it could be tricked into sinning.

12. **Then the disciples understood.** He made it so plain they could not misunderstand. He was warning them against false teaching.

13. **Near the town of Caesarea Philippi.** Near Mount Hermon in north-east Palestine. Herod Philip rebuilt this town and called it "Caesarea Philippi" to honor himself, also to avoid confusion with Caesarea on the coast of the Mediterranean. *Who do men say the Son of Man is?* "Son of Man" is a favorite expression of Jesus (see Luke 22:69-70). He is not asking about what the Pharisees, Sadducees, and teachers of the Law say. He asks: "Who do the common people say that I am?"

14. **Some say John the Baptist.** Who had been killed by Herod Antipas a few months before. This Herod seemed to think John the Baptist had come back to life and was now able to work miracles (Matt. 14:2). Many of the people seemed to believe this also [likely those who had never seen John]. **Others say Elijah.** Prophecy spoke of Elijah's return (Mal. 4:5). Elijah himself did return at the Transfiguration (Luke 9:30) Jesus identified John the Baptist as [spiritual] Elijah. See Luke 1:17; Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13. **Others say Jeremiah.** The Jews believed that all the prophets would return to earth when the Messiah came.

15. **Who do you say I am?** This is the key question which every human being must answer for himself. The disciples must declare their faith.

¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷"Good for you, Simon, son of John!" answered Jesus. "Because this truth did not come to you from any human being, but it was given to you directly by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And so I tell you: you are a rock, Peter, and on this rock foundation I will build my church, which not even death will ever be able to overcome. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven; what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven."

Simon Peter answered, ¹⁶ "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus replied, "Blessed ¹⁷ are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and ¹⁸ on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I ¹⁹ will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

16. Simon Peter answered. He spoke immediately, putting into words what the others believed also. **You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.** This declaration says that Jesus is both the Messiah (Christ means the same thing) and Divine [God in human form—see *John 1:1-5*]. What Peter declares here, sets the pattern for all the followers of Jesus, and is the very foundation stone of the church which Jesus built.

17. Good for you, Simon, son of John. Jesus here gives Peter's full name to emphasize what he is saying. **Because this truth.** Human reasoning did not tell him this. The Jews did not expect the Messiah to be Divine. No one can make this declaration from the heart unless the Holy Spirit has revealed this to him through the message of the Gospel (*1 John 4:1-2; 1 Cor. 12:3*). God spoke to Peter directly. God speaks to us through his Son—that is, through the New Testament which records for us everything that Jesus said and did, which we need to know.

18. You are a rock, Peter. Jesus gave the name Peter to this Simon, son of John (*John 1:42*). "Peter" means a single stone. **And on the rock foundation.** Here Jesus uses a word that means a large mass of solid rock—the "rock foundation." Peter's confession in verse 16 clearly identifies this "rock foundation" as Jesus himself. Paul writes: "*For God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid*" (*1 Cor. 3:11*). Jesus uses two different forms of the word for rock: **PETROS**—Peter, a single stone; **PETRA**—rock foundation, a large mass of rock. **I will build my church.** *Future*—as Jesus says this; *fact*—in *Acts 2*. ["Church" is used with only two meanings in the New Testament. It means: (1) the spiritual Kingdom, the "messianic community of all the followers of Christ; (2) the local church or messianic community, made up of a group of believers who unite together for worship and work. This word "church" is NEVER used in the New Testament to mean: the building where the church meets together; or denomination—a group who adopt certain distinctive things (usually of human origin) which "wall them off" from others.] There is: (1) The Builder—Christ; (2) a Temple, built out of living stones (*1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:22*); (3) the rock foundation for that Temple—Jesus himself; (4) an enemy—death—which will oppose the building of the church; (5) a key-holder who will open the door. [*Gates of hades* is a symbolic phrase which meant "Death" and "the powers of death."] **Which not even death.** The Jewish leaders believed that death would end the claims of Jesus, and make it impossible for him to set up his Kingdom. But it was not possible for death to overcome Jesus (*Acts 2:24*). Death could not prevent his rising from death to set up his spiritual Kingdom. Death cannot destroy the church (Kingdom) by capturing the people who make up the church. All the powers of the Devil and Hell cannot defeat the Plan of God! Jesus raised from death as the guarantee that we too will be raised!

19. The keys of the Kingdom of heaven. This is part of the thought in *verse 18*. Keys are used to open doors. Peter formally opened the doors to the church: (1) to the Jews, on Pentecost (*Acts 2*); (2) to the Gentiles just seven years later (*Acts 10*). All that is said here to Peter is said to all the other apostles as well (*John 20:19-23*). **What you prohibit on earth.** God's terms. See note on *Matt. 18:18*.

²⁰Then Jesus ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Jesus Speaks about His Suffering and Death

(Also Mark 8.31-9.1; Luke 9.22-27)

²¹From that time on Jesus began to say plainly to his disciples, "I must go to Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. I will be put to death, and on the third day I will be raised to life."

²²Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "God forbid it, Lord!" he said. "This must never happen to you!"

²³Jesus turned around and said to Peter, "Get away from me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my way, because these thoughts of yours are men's thoughts, not God's!"

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me. ²⁵For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever

Then he warned his disciples ²⁰ not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

Jesus Predicts His Death

From that time on Jesus ²¹ began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and ²² began to rebuke him. "Perish the thought, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

Jesus turned and said to ²³ Peter, "Out of my sight, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Then Jesus said to his dis- ²⁴ ciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For ²⁵ whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find

20. **Not to tell.** The apostles had too many wrong ideas still in their heads to properly teach his Messiahship. Also, he came to die as our sin-offering (Luke 9:31), and it was to be after he raised from death that repentance and forgiveness of sins would be preached in his name (Luke 24:46-47).

21. **From that time on.** He had to prepare them for the great shock of the Cross. [They still thought he would be a political ruler.] **Suffer much.** Making Isaiah 53 come true. **The elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law.** The Jewish leadership. These are the "Jews" who opposed Jesus. **On the third day.** See note on Matt. 12:40.

22. **Peter took him aside.** Peter strongly rebukes Jesus, because he expects Jesus to become an earthly King. The crucifixion would destroy Peter's hopes.

23. **Get away from me, Satan!** Peter's very human ideas came from the Devil. This is a temptation to bypass the Cross (compare Matt. 4:9-10).

24. **If anyone wants to come with me.** This is what it will cost to follow Jesus and be his disciple. **He must forget himself.** He must be willing to say "No" to human goals. **Carry his cross.** Luke adds: "everyday." The cross is the symbol of making oneself a "living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1-2) by using his principles to make our decisions and guide our life—even to the point of dying rather than to repudiate him. **And follow me.** To follow Jesus is to believe his teaching, to work for his Plan, to live by his commands, and to keep on doing this even when it costs our life to do so.

25. **For whoever.** If you repudiate Christ to save your earthly life, you will forfeit your life eternally. If you lose your earthly life for the sake of Christ and his Kingdom, you will find life in eternity.

loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶Will a man gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life? Of course not! There is nothing a man can give to regain his life. ²⁷For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he will repay everyone according to his deeds. ²⁸Remember this! There are some here who will not die until they have seen the Son of Man come as King."

The Transfiguration

(Also Mark 9.2-13; Luke 9.28-36)

17 Six days later Jesus took with him Peter and the brothers James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ²As they looked on, a change came over him: his face became as bright as the sun, and his clothes as white as light. ³Then the three disciples saw

it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

The Transfiguration

17 After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there

26. **Will a man gain anything?** This is still part of the same thought. Power, money, popularity, and pleasure—mean nothing to a dying man! [The same Greek word *ψυχή* is translated both "life" and "soul," according to the text where it is found.] **There is nothing a man can give.** If a man had the total world to give as a price, it still could not regain his life. **Christ is the only hope of living in eternity!**

27. **For the Son of Man is about to come.** This emphasizes the *fact* that Christ will come in Judgment! He will come the second time as the Judge of all earth (*Acts 17:31*).

28. **Remember this!** What he says in this verse applies to the coming of his spiritual Kingdom on Pentecost. *See Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:16,36.* It was to come in the normal lifetime of some who heard him there that day. Mark says: "*There are some here who will not die until they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power.*"

1. **Six days later.** Luke says about a week. **Jesus took with him.** Peter, James, and John were the three chosen to be the closest associates of Jesus. **Up a high mountain.** Not Mount Tabor, since there was a town and a fortress on its top [as Josephus the historian tells us in his book]. It must have been Mt. Hermon, and, Jesus was already near to it (see note on *Matt. 16:13*). Hermon was 10,000 feet high, and could be seen from most of Palestine.

2. **As they looked on, a change came over him.** This was to show his Divine Glory to these three [and to the others and to us as well] before he went to the Cross. **His face became as bright as the sun.** Symbolic of the supernatural, and proof that Jesus is Divine. We have a share in this as well (*1 John 3:2*).

3. **Moses and Elijah.** Both were special in Jewish thinking. Elijah had not died at all (*2 Kings 2:11*), being taken directly in a "chariot of fire." Moses, who at the moment of death, was snatched bodily from the Devil's power (*Jude 9; Deut. 34:6*). Both come from the world of the dead [*Hades*] to be with Jesus in this Transfiguration. Moses was the representative of the Law; Elijah of the Prophets (compare *Matt. 7:12*). **Talking with Jesus.** About how he would soon fulfill God's purpose by dying in Jerusalem (*Luke 9:31*). God chose to make this historical act of Jesus' death the "focal point" of his saving grace. Compare *Heb. 9:15; Col. 1:20*.

Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus. "So Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is a good thing that we are here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

"While he was talking, a shining cloud came over them and a voice said from the cloud: "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased—listen to him!"

"When the disciples heard the voice they were so terrified that they threw themselves face down to the ground. "Jesus came to them and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid!" "So they looked up and saw no one else except Jesus.

"As they came down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone about this vision you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from death."

"Then the disciples asked Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah has to come first?"

appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased. Listen to him!"

When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

The disciples asked him, "Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

4. **So Peter spoke up.** This was just as Moses and Elijah were leaving (*Luke 9:33*). **Lord, it is a good thing.** The spiritual power of this small piece of Eternity seen here. **I will make three tents.** Small tents or booths were made for the feast of Tabernacles, which celebrated the time when the ancient Hebrews lived in tents. Perhaps Peter thinks that making three of these would keep Moses and Elijah from going back to the world of the dead, and that this would bring the "earthly Kingdom of Messiah" that Peter still looked for.

5. **A shining cloud came over them.** This cloud would be immediately accepted by the disciples as showing God's presence. In the Old Testament era, a shining cloud signalled the presence of the Lord. **This is my own dear Son.** The same voice heard at his baptism (*Matt. 3:17*). This confirms Peter's declaration (*Matt. 16:16*). Almost a generation later, Peter emphasized that they had been eyewitnesses of these things (*2 Pet. 1:16-21*). **Listen to him!** Luke says when the voice stopped, there was Jesus all alone. In this way God showed that both Moses (*the Law*) and Elijah (*the Prophets*) were fulfilled and superseded. "*But in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son*" (*Heb. 1:2*). Jesus Christ (therefore—the New Testament) is the ONLY source of Truth and Life in this final age of time.

6. **They were so terrified.** Like Israel at Mount Sinai (*Heb. 12:18-21*).

7. **Get up! Don't be afraid!** As the "go-between" who arranges a new covenant between God and man [it is a "will" to we humans (*Heb. 9:15-18*).] Jesus removes fear. Compare *1 John 4:18*.

8. **No one else except Jesus.** The vision of the supernatural was ended.

9. **Don't tell anyone . . . until.** They did not understand the meaning of this, and would not until Jesus raised from death. The proper time for telling others would come after Jesus finished his work on the Cross.

10. **Why do the teachers of the Law?** These teachers said that Elijah must come before the Messiah could appear. See note on *Matt. 16:14*. The disciples had just seen Elijah come, but he did not stay.

¹¹"Elijah does indeed come first," answered Jesus, "and he will get everything ready. ¹²But I tell you this: Elijah has already come and people did not recognize him, but treated him just as they pleased. In the same way the Son of Man will also be mistreated by them."

¹³Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon

(Also Mark 9.14-29; Luke 9.37-43a)

¹⁴When they returned to the crowd, a man came to Jesus, knelt before him, ¹⁵and said, "Sir, have mercy on my son! He is epileptic and has such terrible fits that he often falls in the fire or in the water. ¹⁶I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him."

¹⁷Jesus answered, "How unbelieving and wrong you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you? Bring the boy here to me!" ¹⁸Jesus commanded the demon and it went out, so that the boy was healed at that very moment.

Jesus replied, "To be 11
sure, Elijah comes and will
restore all things. But I tell 12
you, Elijah has already
come, and they did not
recognize him, but have
done to him everything they
wished. In the same way the
Son of Man is going to suffer
at their hands." Then the 13
disciples understood that he
was talking to them about
John the Baptist.

The Healing of an Epileptic Boy

When they came to the 14
crowd, a man approached
Jesus and knelt before him.
"Lord, have mercy on my
son," he said. "He is an epi-
leptic and is suffering great-
ly. He often falls into the fire
or into the water. I brought 16
him to your disciples, but
they could not heal him."

"O unbelieving and per- 17
verse generation," Jesus re-
plied, "how long shall I stay
with you? How long shall I
put up with you? Bring the
boy here to me." Jesus re- 18
buked the demon, and it
came out of the boy, and he
was healed from that mo-
ment.

11-12. **Elijah does indeed come first.** John the Baptist came in the "spirit" of Elijah. Compare *Mal. 3:1, 4:5* with *Mark 1:1-3*. John was killed (*Matt. 14:6-12*), and Jesus was to be killed also.

13. **Then the disciples understood.** It was clear to them that John the Baptist fulfilled the prophecy. It is not to be expected that "Elijah" will come a second time to fulfill a prophecy that has already come true. Elijah could not now restore Judaism, because that system was superseded in Christ and the new covenant. Elijah would not likely be chosen to restore Christianity, if it needed restoration, since a Jewish prophet would be "out of place." One of the apostles would better fit that job.

14. **A man came to Jesus.** When they came down from the mountain and returned to the crowd, Luke says this took place the following day.

15. **My son . . . he is epileptic.** The symptoms were those of epilepsy, but in this case it was a demon causing the problem (*Mark 9:17*). Mark says also that he was unable to talk.

16. **But they could not heal him.** The disciples had tried, and failed, to heal this boy. [The nine apostles who had been left below.]

17. **How unbelieving and wrong you people are.** This rebuke is aimed at the disciples who could not cure this boy. **How long?** Jesus expects more rapid progress from them. [*Compare Heb. 5:11-14.*] **Bring the boy here to me.** He will do what they should have been able to do.

18. **Jesus commanded the demon.** Both Mark and Luke give more details about this. The boy was healed at that very moment.

¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked him, "Why couldn't we drive the demon out?"

²⁰"It was because you do not have enough faith," answered Jesus. "Remember this! If you have faith as big as a mustard seed, you can say to this hill, 'Go from here to there!' and it will go. You could do anything! [²¹But only prayer and fasting can drive this kind out; nothing else can.]"

Jesus Speaks Again about His Death

(Also Mark 9.30-32; Luke 9.43b-45)

²²When the disciples all came together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be handed over to men ²³who will kill him; but on the third day he will be raised to life."

The disciples became very sad.

Payment of the Temple Tax

²⁴When Jesus and his disciples came to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and asked, "Does your teacher pay the temple tax?"

Then the disciples came 19 to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

He replied, "Because you 20 have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

When they came together 22 in Galilee, he said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, 23 and on the third day he will be raised to life." And the disciples were filled with grief.

The Temple Tax

After Jesus and his dis- 24 ciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"

19-20. **Why couldn't we drive the demon out?** Jesus gives the answer, that they did not have enough faith. Faith is the means to tap into the power of Jesus. **You could do anything!** They could, if they had the right kind of faith.

21. **But only prayer and fasting.** Faith reaches out through prayer and fasting to seize the power of Christ (for one who is already a Christian—*John 9:31*). [Do not think of fasting and prayer as a ritual of exorcism. These are general principles of spiritual growth.]

22-23. **When the disciples all came together in Galilee.** Mark says they went on through Galilee. **Jesus said to them.** He tells them of his death and his raising from death. **The disciples became very sad.** Because he said he must be killed.

24. **When Jesus and his disciples came to Capernaum.** From Mt. Hermon through Galilee to Capernaum. See map. **Does your teacher pay the temple tax?** Every Jewish male over twenty years old paid a yearly tax to support the Temple (*Exod. 30:12; 2 Chron. 24:5*). This was a *half-shekel*, a silver coin worth about \$13.00 in "1974 dollars." [The figures given in older books are from an era when the best suit of clothes sold for \$9.00.]

²⁵“Of course,” Peter answered.

When Peter went into the house, Jesus spoke up first, “Simon, what is your opinion? Who pays duties or taxes to the kings of the world? The citizens of the country or the foreigners?”

²⁶“The foreigners,” answered Peter.

“Well, then, replied Jesus, “that means that the citizens don’t have to pay. ²⁷But we don’t want to offend these people. So go to the lake and drop in a line; pull up the first fish you hook, and in its mouth you will find a coin worth enough for my temple tax and yours; take it and pay them our taxes.”

Who Is the Greatest?

(Also Mark 9.33-37; Luke 9.46-48)

At that moment the disciples came to Jesus, asking, “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?”

²Jesus called a child, had him stand in front of them, ³and said, “Remember this! Unless you change and become like children, you will never

“Yes, he does,” he replied. 25

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. “What do you think, Simon?” he asked. “From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes—from their own sons or from others?”

“From others,” Peter answered. 26

“Then the sons are exempt,” Jesus said to him. “But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.” 27

The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: 2

“I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will 3

25. Of course. Peter answered before thinking [as he often did]. Jesus spoke up first. He knew what Peter was thinking. Who pays duties or taxes? Not from citizens, but from foreigners. This was the practice of the ancient world.

26. That means the citizens don't have to pay. Jesus says that he does not really need to pay the temple tax. The Son of the King does not pay tax.

27. But we don't want to offend these people. Even though he need not pay, he will do it to keep peace. So go to the lake. Peter is to catch a fish, and in its mouth find a silver shekel which will pay the temple tax for both he and Jesus. A miracle—and this prevents a problem from forming.

1. Who is the greatest? They had been arguing this question on the road (Mark 9:34). They still thought of an earthly kingdom, in political terms. They must have argued this question of “greatness” many times (compare Luke 22:24-30).

2. Jesus called a child. He used the child to teach them a lesson. [This was a common way to teach: Jesus washed the disciples' feet (John 13); Agabus tied his own hands and feet with Paul's belt (Acts 21:11).]

3. Unless you change. This is a command to his disciples—something which they were to do themselves. It is not something which was to be done for them. Become like children. Humble, teachable, without selfish ambition, without sinful pride. If they were to enter the Kingdom of heaven, they should not waste time arguing about who is the greatest, and find out whether they would even be allowed to enter it.

enter the Kingdom of heaven. ⁴The greatest in the Kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like this child. ⁵And whoever welcomes in my name one such child as this, welcomes me.”

Temptations to Sin

(Also *Mark 9.42-48; Luke 17.1-2*)

⁶“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 drowned in the deep sea. ⁷How terrible for the world that there are things that make people turn away! Such things will always happen—but how terrible for the one who causes them!

⁸“If your hand or your foot makes you turn away, cut it off and throw it away! It is better for you to enter life without a hand or a foot than to keep both hands and both feet and be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹And if your eye makes you turn away, take it out and throw it away! It is better for you to enter life with only one eye than to keep both eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.”

never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.

⁶“But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. ⁷Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! If ⁸your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes ⁹you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

4. **The greatest.** Humility is the key. There is a lesson here for us all. See *1 Cor. 13:4-7*.

5. **And whoever welcomes.** Christ comes to us in many forms. What we do to others, we do to him. See *Matt. 25:31-46*.

6. **If anyone should cause.** “Little ones” included not only children, but all the followers of Christ as well. The Jews (*Matt. 16:21*) would turn some away from faith in Christ. **It would be better for that man.** This was a common form of execution. The lesson is that being killed in this way would only involve death, while destroying the faith of these “little ones” would bring eternal punishment on that person.

7. **How terrible for the world.** There are many temptations to make people turn away from Christ. But this does not take away the punishment from the one who causes such things.

8-9 **If your hand or your foot.** Symbolic (Compare *Matt. 5:29-30*). If there were no other way to avoid sin, it would be a small price to pay to be able to enter life [that is, to lose hand or foot and so avoid the eternal fire]. He does not intend to say that anyone should injure themselves, but he uses this to show the importance of a holy life.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

(Also Luke 15.3-7)

¹⁰“See that you don’t despise any of these little ones. Their angels in heaven, I tell you, are always in the presence of my Father in heaven. [¹¹For the Son of Man came to save the lost.]

¹²“What do you think? What will a man do who has one hundred sheep and one of them gets lost? He will leave the other ninety-nine grazing on the hillside and go to look for the lost sheep. ¹³When he finds it, I tell you, he feels far happier over this one sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not get lost. ¹⁴In just the same way your Father in heaven does not want any of these little ones to be lost.”

A Brother Who Sins

¹⁵“If your brother sins against you, go to him and show him his fault. But do it privately, just between yourselves. If he listens to you, you have

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

“See that you do not look 10 down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

“What do you think? If a 12 man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he 13 finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father 14 in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

A Brother Who Sins Against You

“If your brother sins 15 against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your

10. See that you don’t despise any of these little ones. In the Kingdom of heaven, there are no unimportant people! The Jews [Pharisees, teachers of the Law, Sadducees] believed they were the “elite” and the common people not worth trying to save. These Jews were shocked when Jesus went among ordinary people (Matt. 9:10-13; 11:19). God’s act in Christ makes salvation available to EVERY human being who will listen and come. **Their angels in heaven.** Who dares to despise these “little ones” when they have angels standing at the throne of God? [The service of angels is a basic doctrine in the scriptures. See 2Kings 19:35; Psalm 91:11; Hebrews 1:14; Acts 27:23.]

11. **For the Son of Man.** Christ died for every human being (Heb. 2:9). Jesus came into the world to save, not to judge (John 3:16-17). [HE WILL RETURN AS JUDGE!]

12-13. **What do you think?** This parable is to show how God feels about these “little ones” which the Jews despise. The shepherd takes time to look for the sheep that is lost. Jesus is the “Good Shepherd.”

14. **Your Father in heaven.** God through Christ came to “look for” his “lost sheep.” [Christianity is unique in showing God who comes down to man to act in history so that each man and woman is given the opportunity to come to him and receive life eternal.] **τοϋ!** (Luke 15:7).

15. **If your brother sins against you.** Compare Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49. A fellow believer who does you wrong in some way. **Go to him.** You are to go to him! **Show him his fault.** Have a quiet talk with him. He may not know how he has hurt you. **If he listens to you.** You will have won your brother back to yourself, by restoring peace and good will; and won him back to God, by showing him his sin and causing him to repent.

won your brother back. ¹⁶But if he will not listen to you, take one or two other persons with you, so that 'every accusation may be upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses,' as the scripture says. ¹⁷But if he will not listen to them, then tell the whole thing to the church. And then, if he will not listen to the church, treat him as though he were a foreigner or a tax collector."

Prohibiting and Permitting

¹⁸"And so I tell all of you: what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven; what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.

¹⁹"And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them."

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

²¹Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times can my brother sin against me and I have to forgive him? Seven times?"

brother over. But if he will ¹⁶not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he ¹⁷refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

"I tell you the truth, ¹⁸whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

"Again, I tell you that if ¹⁹two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where ²⁰two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

Then Peter came to Jesus ²¹and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

16. **But if he will not listen to you.** Then take one or two others to help talk over this thing.

17. **Then tell the whole thing to the church.** Only after the first two attempts have failed, do you then tell it to the church. ["Church" here means *congregation*. The first use of "church" is in *Matt. 16:18*] **If he will not listen to the church.** The church leaders [elders] had the right to exclude such a person from the fellowship of the group, with the purpose of causing him to repent. [Orthodox Jews would not even speak to foreigners and tax collectors.]

18. **And so I tell all of you.** What Jesus had said to Peter (*Matt. 16:19*), he now tells to them all. He said this again (*John 20:23*). Since the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit (*John 14:26*), the things which they prohibited and permitted would be the Plan of God.

19-20. **Whenever two of you on earth.** Just two [or more] form a "messianic community" [church, congregation]. The united prayers of this group will be heard by God. **I am there with them.** Jesus promises to be part of every group [messianic community] which meets in his name [through the Holy Spirit *Eph. 2:22*]. His presence makes their prayer to be his prayer [he is the "go-between"].

21. **Then Peter came to Jesus and asked.** Jesus had just spoken about going to a brother who had sinned against you, to make peace. Peter wants to know just how far he is obligated to forgive someone. **Seven times?** The teachers of the Law said that one who repented should be forgiven up to a maximum of three times for the same sin. Peter thinks Jesus would require more, and so he says "seven times."

²²"No, not seven times," answered Jesus, "But seventy times seven. ²³Because the Kingdom of heaven is like a king who decided to check on his servants' accounts. ²⁴He had just begun to do so when one of them was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. ²⁵The servant did not have enough to pay his debt, so his master ordered him to be sold as a slave, with his wife and his children and all that he had, in order to pay the debt. ²⁶The servant fell on his knees before his master. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay you everything!' ²⁷The master felt sorry for him, so he forgave him the debt and let him go.

²⁸"The man went out and met one of his fellow servants who owed him a few dollars. He grabbed him and started choking him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he said. ²⁹His fellow servant fell down and begged him, 'Be patient with me and I will pay you back!' ³⁰But he would not; instead, he had him thrown into jail until he should pay

Jesus answered, "I tell 22 you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

"Therefore, the kingdom 23 of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, 25 the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

"The servant fell on his 26 knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master 27 took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

"But when that servant 28 went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

"His fellow servant fell to 29 his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

"But he refused. Instead, 30 he went off and had the man thrown in prison until he

22. **Seventy times seven.** This is a Jewish saying, which means *an unlimited number*. Jesus said later: "If he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time he comes to you saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him" (Luke 17:4). Our forgiveness must be just as unlimited as God's! Notice God forgives only when we repent of our sin.

23. **Because the Kingdom of heaven is like.** He now uses a parable to explain this idea of forgiveness. A king who decided to check on his servants' accounts. A king had people working for him who managed his money and his business. This king decides to check up on what his servants are doing.

24. **When one of them was brought in.** Notice he was *brought in!* His accounts were short millions of dollars. [Remember this is a parable.] The debt is beyond human ability to pay.

25. **His master ordered him to be sold as a slave.** This was the usual way of doing when a debt could not be paid. This man had used his king's money, and now could not pay it back.

26. **Be patient with me!** This servant gets down on his knees and begs for mercy! **I will pay you everything!** This promise is beyond his ability to pay, but he may have believed that he could.

27. **So he forgave him the debt and let him go.** The king felt sorry for the man, and just like that, he "wrote off" the debt of millions of dollars. [10,000 talents might be worth \$75,000,000 in 1974 dollars.]

28. **And met one of his fellow servants.** This one who had just been forgiven his huge debt, now meets a fellow servant who owes him a few dollars. [100 denarii would be worth maybe \$180 in 1974 dollars.]

29. **Be patient with me.** The fellow servant also begs for mercy.

30. **But he would not!** No mercy, no delay—he has the fellow servant put in jail until the debt is paid. [The law allowed this to be done.]

the debt. ³¹When the other servants saw what had happened, they were very upset, and went to their master and told him everything. ³²So the master called the servant in. 'You worthless slave!' he said, 'I forgave you the whole amount you owed me, just because you asked me to. ³³You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you.' ³⁴The master was very angry, and he sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount."

³⁵And Jesus concluded, "That is how my Father in heaven will treat you if you do not forgive your brother, every one of you, from your heart."

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

(Also Mark 10.1-12)

19 When Jesus finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the territory of Judea, on the other side of the Jordan River. ²Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

could pay the debt. When ³¹the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

"Then the master called ³²the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had ³³mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him ³⁴over to the jailers until he paid back all he owed.

"This is how my heavenly ³⁵Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Divorce

19 When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan. Large crowds followed ²him, and he healed them there.

31. **They were very upset.** The other servants saw what was being done, and it did not please them at all. So, they went to the master and told him what had happened.

32-33. **You worthless slave!** This man had already received mercy for his debt. He should have given the same mercy to his fellow servant!

34. **He sent the servant to jail.** Prisoners in the ancient world were sometimes treated cruelly. This servant was to be punished [tortured] until he should pay back the millions of dollars. Since he could not do this, he would be in prison permanently.

35. **That is how my Father in heaven will treat you.** Jesus says *my* heavenly Father. God will not be their Father, unless they imitate the spirit of Christ. The parable is to show that God forgives us the impossibly huge debt of sin (through our union with Christ (*Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12*)). Therefore, we are expected to also forgive others. The central idea of this parable is that the way in which we forgive others is just the way in which God will forgive us! This answers Peter's question: "*Lord, how many times can my brother sin against me and I have to forgive him?*"

1. **He left Galilee.** He is leaving this area for the last time before his death. **On the other side of the Jordan River.** Jesus started from Galilee, and went down the eastern side of the Jordan River to finally reach Jerusalem in Judea. This teaching about divorce took place in Perea (see map).

2. **Large crowds.** He was now famous throughout all of Palestine.

³Some Pharisees came to him and tried to trap him by asking, "Does our Law allow a man to divorce his wife for any reason he wishes?"

⁴Jesus answered, "Haven't you read this scripture? 'In the beginning the Creator made them male and female, ⁵and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two will become one." ' ⁶So they are no longer two, but one. Man must not separate, then, what God has joined together."

⁷The Pharisees asked him, "Why, then, did Moses give the commandment for a man to give his wife a divorce notice and send her away?"

⁸Jesus answered, "Moses gave you permission to divorce your wives because you are so hard to teach. But it was not this way at the time of creation. ⁹I tell you, then, that any man who divorces his wife, and she has not been unfaithful, commits adultery if he marries some other woman."

Some Pharisees came to 3
him to test him. They asked,
"Is it lawful for a man to di-
vorce his wife for any and
every reason?"

"Haven't you read," he 4
replied, "that at the begin-
ning the Creator 'made
them male and female,' and 5
said, 'For this reason a man
will leave his father and
mother and be united to his
wife, and the two will be-
come one flesh'? So they are 6
no longer two, but one.
Therefore what God has
joined together, let man not
separate."

"Why then," they asked, 7
did Moses command that a
man give his wife a certifi-
cate of divorce and send her
away?"

Jesus replied, "Moses per- 8
mitted you to divorce your
wives because your hearts
were hard. But it was not
this way from the beginning.
I tell you that anyone who 9
divorces his wife, except for
marital unfaithfulness, and
marries another woman
commits adultery."

3. **Some Pharisees.** These are some of the "Jews" who were always trying to trap him. **Does our Law allow a man to divorce his wife?** Hillel, the most famous of the Jewish Rabbis, taught that almost any reason at all would permit divorce. Even "burning the bread" was given as a reason. Josephus the historian says he "divorced his wife because he was not pleased with her manners."

4-5. **Haven't you read this scripture?** God's word gives the answer. In the beginning, one man and one woman were joined in marriage for life. **For this reason.** The marriage bond is stronger than the bond between parents and their children. **The two will become one.** "One flesh" in the sex act (compare *I Cor. 6:16*). It is God's plan that the man and the woman form a "unity" which would continue unbroken until the death of one. God's original marriage law is found in *Gen. 2:18*. "*And God the Eternal said: It is not good, that the man is alone; I will create him a companion-counterpart to him.*" [Zamenhof's version of the Masoretic text.] Compare what Paul said in *I Cor. 7:3-5*.

6. **What God has joined together.** God's authority backs up the marriage bond.

7-8. **Why, then, did Moses?** They are saying that what Jesus says does not agree with what Moses said. **Moses gave you permission.** Moses [by God's authority] permitted some things to be done that were not good, yet which were necessary. The Law permitted some things which were below the standard of Christ [such as divorce for any reason; more than one wife; etc.] **At the time of creation.** God's original plan was for *one man and one woman* to be joined together for life.

9. **I tell you.** Here is Christ's law. **And she has not been unfaithful.** "Unfaithful" means guilty of a sex act involving someone rather than her spouse. [This would apply to the husband as well; and would include sex acts between woman and woman; between man and man; and between a woman and a man who are not married to each other. The technical term is "fornication."] **Commits adultery if he marries some other woman.** Because where the spouse was not "unfaithful," the original marriage bond is not broken. Alford (Greek Testament) says: "Notice, as on ch. v. 32, **ΑΠΟΛΕΛΜΕΝΟΝ** without

¹⁰His disciples said to him, "If this is the way it is between a man and his wife, it is better not to marry."

¹¹Jesus answered, "This teaching does not apply to everyone, but only to those to whom God has given it. ¹²For there are different reasons why men cannot marry: some, because they were born that way; others, because men made them that way; and others do not marry because of the Kingdom of heaven. Let him who can do it accept this teaching."

The disciples said to him, ¹⁰
"If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry."

Jesus replied, "Not every ¹¹
one can accept that, but only those to whom it has been given. For some ¹²
are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

(Also Mark 10.13-16; Luke 18.15-17)

¹³Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray, but the disciples scolded those people. ¹⁴Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

The Little Children and Jesus

Then little children were ¹³
brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Jesus said, "Let the little ¹⁴
children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs

the art., and thus logically confined to the case of her who has been divorced *ME EPI PORNEIA* [not been unfaithful]. This not having been seen, expositors have fallen into the mistake of supposing that the dictum applies to the marrying a woman divorced *EPI PORNEIA* [because of unfaithfulness], which grammatically would require *TEN APOLELUMENEN*. The proper English was of rendering the word as it now stands, would be, *a woman thus divorced*, viz., *ME EPI PORNEIA* [not been unfaithful]." A man who divorces his wife in spite of the fact that she has not been unfaithful to him, and marries another commits adultery, because he is still married to his former wife; also, if anyone marries this divorced woman, *who was not unfaithful*, he marries another man's wife. [For a special case, see *1 Cor. 7:15*.]

10. It is better not to marry. This shows the attitude of the disciples. If a man could not get rid of his wife when he became tired of her, it was better not to marry in the first place—they said.

11-12. This teaching does not apply to everyone. What the disciples had just said in *verse 10*. Marriage is normal; celibacy is abnormal, and only those with a special "gift" should attempt to practice it. Jesus gives three examples: (1) one who is born sexless; (2) one who has been "desexed". [It was common in the ancient world to take healthy young male slaves and "desex" them. Often they were given high positions in the government, as the Eunuch in *Acts 8:27*]; (3) one who for religious reasons did not marry. Paul himself was such a one [although he was possibly a widower when he became a Christian].

NOTE THE OTHER APOSTLES WERE MARRIED—*1 Cor. 9:5*.

13. Some people brought children to Jesus. It was Jewish custom for people to bring their children to the synagogue on their first birthday, for the Rabbi to bless them. These thought of Jesus as the greatest Rabbi of all. But the disciples scolded those people. Women and children were "second class citizens." The disciples didn't want Jesus to waste his time on these children.

14. Let the children come to me. Jesus treated women, children, and men the same way. All people were equally important to him. Because the Kingdom of heaven. The love, humility and trust of a child should be qualities of the one who claims to follow Christ. See *Matt. 18:3*. What Jesus says here, shows: (1) infants are not "totally depraved"; (2) that children can come to Christ [as soon as they have faith]; (3) that no one should forbid them from coming; (4) that parents should bring them to Jesus.

¹⁵He placed his hands on them and left.

The Rich Young Man

(Also Mark 10.17-31; Luke 18.18-30)

¹⁶Once a man came to Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what good thing must I do to receive eternal life?"

¹⁷"Why do you ask me concerning what is good?" answered Jesus. "There is only One who is good. Keep the commandments if you want to enter life."

¹⁸"What commandments?" he asked.

Jesus answered, "Do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not lie; ¹⁹honor your father and mother; and love your fellow-man as yourself."

²⁰"I have obeyed all these commandments," the young man replied. "What else do I need?"

²¹Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, 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."

to such as these." When he ¹⁵ had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

The Rich Young Man

Now a man came up to ¹⁶ Jesus and asked, "Teacher; what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

"Why do you ask me ¹⁷ about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

"Which ones?" the man ¹⁸ inquired.

Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor ¹⁹ your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"All these I have kept," the ²⁰ young man said. "What do I still lack?"

Jesus answered, "If you ²¹ want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

15. He placed his hands on them. He blessed them.

16. Teacher . . . what good thing? A young man, who was a leader, and rich—ran to Jesus, knelt, and asked this question. He wants to know what work of merit will bring him eternal life. (Compare John 6:28-29).

17. Why do you ask me? Jesus says this because the young man is to some degree a religious fanatic, and self-righteous. There is only One who is good. Jesus, in the flesh, shared our weak human nature (Phil. 2:7) but without ever sinning (1 Pet. 2:22). The young man wants to worship Jesus [as he is in human form], but God is the One who must be worshipped. Keep the commandments. Jesus had not yet died, and the Law was still in effect. Obeying the Law would bring eternal life—yet no one could obey the Law (James 2:10), so that really, no one could be "good" but God himself. [The Christian's "goodness" comes through Christ. See Rom. 8:1-4]

18-19. What commandments? Jesus skips over the first four commandments, and gives those that deal with human activities. He does this to bring out the self-righteous spirit of the young man.

20. I have obeyed all these commandments. This young man was not a hypocrite. He had kept these commandments. Mark says: "Jesus looked straight at him with love." What else do I need? He still felt an "emptiness" in his life.

21. If you want to be perfect. What Jesus tells him brings out the fact that this young man has made an "idol" out of his riches. [It is the love of money which is sin (1 Tim. 6:10).] Sell all you have. Jesus did not tell this to the rich who had not made money their "god." [Zacchaeus—Luke 19:8.] But this struck right to the heart of the young man's problem.

²²When the young man heard this he went away sad, because he was very rich.

²³Jesus then said to his disciples, "It will be very hard, I tell you, for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven. ²⁴I tell you something else: it 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."

²⁵When the disciples heard this they were completely amazed. "Who can be saved, then?" they asked.

²⁶Jesus looked straight at them and answered, "This is impossible for men; but for God everything is possible."

²⁷Then Peter spoke up, "Look," he said, "we have left everything and followed you. What will we have?"

²⁸Jesus said to them, "I tell you this: when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne in the New Age, then you twelve followers of mine will also sit on thrones, to judge the twelve tribes

When the young man 22 heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?"

Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his throne in heavenly glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

22. **He went away sad.** He really wanted to follow Jesus, but he thought the price was too high to pay. We are to give OURSELVES as a living sacrifice to God (*Rom. 12:1-2*).

23. **Jesus then said to his disciples.** Notice he does not say "impossible," but "very hard." A few versions add in *Mark 10:24* "For those who trust in riches."

24. **Than for a camel to go through.** [This may have been a "saying" about a camel entering a courtyard through a low, narrow gate in the wall called the "eye of a needle." See also *Matt. 7:13-14*.] The lesson is clear: the love of money will keep a person from entering the Kingdom. See *verse 22*.

25-26. **Who can be saved, then?** Human efforts alone can never save. Only God's grace can save! We reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ (see *Col. 2:12*). "When anyone is joined to Christ he is a new being; the old has gone, the new has come" (*2 Cor. 5:17*). The "vision" of the Savior, Crucified, Risen—is stronger than any worldly ties! See *John 3:14; 8:28*.

27. **Look . . . we have left everything.** What had just happened with the rich young man makes Peter ask this. **What will we have?** Not "salvation," but "reward." Compare *Mark 10:28-31*. [*Fullness of life now*—is promised in this present age (*John 10:10*).]

28. **In the New Age.** The "New Age" is the "messianic community," the "Kingdom/church" which is still future as he says this; which could not begin until after his death, burial, and resurrection. The Twelve were to do a special work in this Kingdom. They would "judge" the twelve tribes of Israel (and Paul would be sent to the Gentiles). The apostles were given a special portion of the Holy Spirit and were taught everything which Jesus had said (see *John 20:22-23; Acts 1:1-2; 2 Pet. 1:15*). When Jesus comes again (*Rev. 1:7*), we look for this earth to be destroyed by fire, and then a new earth (*2 Pet. 3:10-13*).

of Israel. ²⁹And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake, will receive a hundred times more, and will be given eternal life. ³⁰But many who now are first will be last, and many who now are last will be first."

The Workers in the Vineyard

20 "The Kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a vineyard who went out early in the morning to hire some men to work in his vineyard. ²He agreed to pay them the regular wage, a silver coin a day, and sent them to work in his vineyard. ³He went out again to the market place at nine o'clock and saw some men standing there doing nothing, 'so he told them, 'You also go to work in the vineyard, and I will pay you a fair wage.' ⁵So they went. Then at twelve o'clock and again at three o'clock he did the same thing. ⁶It was nearly five o'clock when he went to the market place and saw some other men still standing there. 'Why are you wasting the whole day

And everyone who has left 29
houses or brothers or sisters
or father or mother or chil-
dren or fields for my sake
will receive a hundred times
as much and will inherit et-
ternal life. But many who 30
are first will be last, and
many who are last will be
first."

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

20 "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He ²
agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.
"About the third hour he ³
went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He ⁴
told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.
"He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh ⁶
hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

29. **And every one.** Not just the apostles. **A hundred times more.** Mark adds: "In this present age." God will bless in this present world, as well as in Eternity!

30. **First will be last . . . last will be first.** Some who are rich in this world, will be poor in the next. Some who are poor in this world, will be rich in the next. The one who loves Jesus enough to give everything he has, INCLUDING HIMSELF—to the work of the Kingdom (*Matt. 10:34-39*)—will not lose his reward!

1. **The Kingdom of heaven is like the owner.** This is a parable to teach plainly what Jesus has just said in the last few verses of *chapter 19*. The owner is God. The vineyard is the Kingdom of Christ, which here includes the world (*Matt. 13:38*). [The people of the Kingdom work in the world to recruit new people for the Kingdom.] The workers represent the disciples of Christ. **Who went out early in the morning.** Those looking for work would meet in the market place and wait for someone to hire them.

2. **And sent them to work.** This was just at sunrise—about 6 A.M. A "silver coin" was the normal wage, and would buy as much in proportion as a day's wage now.

3-4 **He went out again . . . at nine o'clock.** And hired more workers, promising them a fair wage.

5-6. **Then at twelve o'clock and again at three o'clock.** He hires still more workers. **It was nearly five o'clock.** The owner visits the market place for the final time [it is just one hour until sunset]. **Why are you wasting the whole day?** No one would pay them for their wasted hours.

here doing nothing?' he asked them. ⁷'It is because no one hired us,' they answered. 'Well, then, you also go to work in the vineyard,' he told them.

⁸"When evening came, the owner told his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with those who were hired last, and ending with those who were hired first.' ⁹'The men who had begun to work at five o'clock were paid a silver coin each. ¹⁰So when the men who were the first to be hired came to be paid, they thought they would get more; but they too were given a silver coin each. ¹¹They took their money and started grumbling against the employer. ¹²'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'while we put up with a whole day's work in the hot sun—yet you paid them the same as you paid us!' ¹³'Listen, friend,' the owner answered one of them. 'I have not cheated you. After all, you agreed to do a day's work for a silver coin. ¹⁴Now, take your pay and go home. I want to give this man who was hired last as much as I have given you. ¹⁵Don't I have the right to do as I wish with my own money? Or are you jealous because I am generous?'"

" 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered. ⁷

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.' ⁸

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.' ⁸

"The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.' ⁹

"But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁰

7. Well, then, you also go to work. Notice that they were not working because no one asked them to do so. This is not the same as the one who refused to work. Be sure to notice also that they still have one hour to work before the sun sets.

8. The owner told his foreman. To pay each the wage he was to receive for his work in the vineyard. [The order of payment is only to allow the first hired to see what was paid to the last hired.]

9. Were paid a silver coin each. They received what they were guaranteed, but they thought they should get more because they worked harder. (Compare the older brother, *Luke 15:28-31*.)

13-14. Listen friend. The owner had not cheated them at all. They had no reason to complain. If the owner wanted to be generous, that was his privilege. The central idea taught in this parable is that the workers in the Kingdom of heaven will all receive the same reward (Eternal Life) even though they work different periods of time. Some come to Christ early in life, and "work all day." Others do not learn of Christ until late in life, and only work "one hour." [Also, there are differing levels of responsibility.] This is the complete answer to Peter's question in *Matt. 19:27*. ALL WILL BE EQUALLY REWARDED.

¹⁶And Jesus concluded, "So those who are last will be first, and those who are first will be last."

Jesus Speaks a Third Time about His Death

(Also *Mark 10.32-34; Luke 18.31-34*)

¹⁷As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem he took the twelve disciples aside and spoke to them privately, as they walked along. ¹⁸"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 ¹⁹and then hand him over to the Gentiles, who will make fun of him, whip him, and nail him to the cross; and on the third day he will be raised to life."

A Mother's Request

(Also *Mark 10.35-45*)

²⁰Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons, bowed before him, and asked him for a favor.

²¹"What do you want?" Jesus asked her.

She answered, "Promise that these two sons of mine will sit at your right and your left when you are King."

"So the last will be first, 16
and the first will be last."

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

Now as Jesus was going up 17
to Jerusalem, he took the
twelve disciples aside and
said to them, "We are going 18
up to Jerusalem, and the
Son of Man will be betrayed
to the chief priests and the
teachers of the law. They
will condemn him to death
and will turn him over to the 19
Gentiles to be mocked and
flogged and crucified. On
the third day he will be
raised to life!"

A Mother's Request

Then the mother of Zeb- 20
edee's sons came to Jesus
with her sons and, kneeling
down, asked a favor of him.

"What is it you want?" he 21
asked.

She said, "Grant that one
of these two sons of mine
may sit at your right and the
other at your left in your
kingdom."

16. **And Jesus concluded.** The first - last; and the last - first. Here, this teaches that the Jews, who were first to be called by God, would not receive more than the Gentiles, who were last to be called. The first people who came into the Kingdom of heaven were Jews (*Acts 2:5, 41*). But God grafted in the Gentiles as well (*Rom. 11:16-24*).

17. **Spoke to them privately.** During the six months since Peter's declaration at Caesarea Philippi (*Matt. 16:16*), Jesus had been preparing his followers for his death.

18-19. **We are going up to Jerusalem.** Jesus is going to fulfill God's Plan by dying on the Cross (*Luke 9:31*). Jesus gives a detailed prophecy here. (1) Handed over or betrayed by Judas. (2) Condemned to death. (3) Handed over to the Gentiles (Roman soldiers). (4) Make fun of him (mock). (5) Whip him. (6) Death by being nailed to the cross. (7) Raised to life the third day. [Third day: see note on *Matt. 12:40*.] The death of Jesus would destroy the materialistic hopes for a political kingdom, which the disciples and the Jews still looked for.

20. **Then the mother of Zebedee's sons.** Salome, mother of James and John, who was probably a sister of the mother of Jesus. [See note on *John 19:25*.]

21. **Promise that these two sons of mine.** Mark tells us they asked a favor before they told what it was. They ask through their mother. Note they still looked for him to be an earthly King, even though he has just detailed his death to them. To sit at a King's right and left was to be in a very high position of power in his government.

²²“You don’t know what you are asking for,” Jesus answered them. “Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?”

“We can,” they answered.

²³“You will indeed drink from my cup,” Jesus told them, “but I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. These places belong to those for whom my Father has prepared them.”

²⁴When the other ten disciples heard about this they became angry with the two brothers.

²⁵So Jesus called them all together to him and said, “You know that the rulers have power over the people, and their leaders rule over them.

²⁶This, however, is not the way it shall be among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; ²⁷and if one of you wants to be first, he must be your slave—²⁸like the Son of Man, who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life to redeem many people.”

“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said to them. “Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?”

“We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink from my cup, 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 by my Father.”

When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the 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 first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

22. **You don’t know what you are asking for.** In less than a month they would see two criminals at the right and left of his Cross (*Matt. 27:38*). **Can you drink the cup?** That is: Can you share the suffering I am about to experience? **“We can,” they answered.** They thought they were able, not knowing what they were saying.

23. **You will indeed.** Not just now, but later, they would experience much suffering; both during their ministry, and in their death. All the apostles died violently, except John. **But I do not have the right.** He could not act on the basis of their worldly ambitions. **For whom my Father.** It is the Father’s Plan which Jesus is fulfilling.

24. **When the other ten disciples.** By doing this, they showed the same worldly attitude the brothers had shown. We often condemn others for the very things we do ourselves.

25. **So Jesus called them.** They had not showed their anger to Jesus. **You know.** To show them the difference between his Kingdom and the kingdoms of the world, he points out what they already know. The rulers and leaders of government domineer their people.

26. **This . . . is not the way.** In Christ’s Kingdom, things were to be different. **He must be the servant of the rest.** Greatness in Christ’s Kingdom does not come through domineering others, but by love and service.

27. **He must be your slave.** This is how to be first. In the Kingdom/church, greatness comes through loving others, not through giving them orders.

28. **Like the Son of Man.** Jesus did have the right to order people around. Yet he did not do this. He came to serve others. His greatest act was to give his life to redeem many people. “Many” in Jewish usage means “all”—that is, all who will reach out to seize his salvation.

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

(Also Mark 10.46-52; Luke 18.35-43)

²⁹As they were leaving Jericho a large crowd followed Jesus. ³⁰Two blind men who were sitting by the road heard that Jesus was passing by, so they began to shout, "Son of David! Have mercy on us, sir!"

³¹The crowd scolded them and told them to be quiet. But they shouted even more loudly, "Son of David! Have mercy on us, sir!"

³²Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked them.

³³"Sir," they answered, "we want you to open our eyes!"

³⁴Jesus had pity on them and touched their eyes; at once they were able to see, and followed him.

Two Blind Men Receive Sight

As Jesus and his disciples 29 were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

The crowd rebuked them 31 and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

Jesus stopped and called 32 them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

"Lord," they answered, 33 "we want our sight."

Jesus had compassion on 34 them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

29. **A large crowd followed Jesus.** Mark's gospel explains the seeming contradiction between Luke and Matthew. Jesus was ahead of the crowd; went on into Jericho; the noise of the crowd disturbed the blind men [Mark and Luke tell only of Bartimaeus and say nothing of the other man]; and as Jesus is leaving the town, this healing takes place; and then the meeting with Zacchaeus (*Luke 19*).

30. **Two blind men.** Bartimaeus was probably very well known by the people. **Son of David!** This was calling Jesus the Messiah, and was a declaration of their faith.

31. **The crowd scolded them.** For interrupting. Possibly some did not like to hear Jesus called the Son of David [Messiah]; and others, expecting Jesus to be crowned as King of Israel when they reached Jerusalem, thought he should not waste time on blind beggars.

32. **Jesus stopped.** He took time for everyone—even a blind beggar. **What do you want?** This is an offer to meet their need.

33. **We want you to open our eyes.** Their great need was to be able to see! (Compare *John 9:35-41*.)

34. **Jesus had pity on them.** God the Son gives mercy to blind beggars! Note their faith: (1) asked about Jesus; (2) began to shout; (3) declared him to be the Son of David [Messiah]; (4) asked for mercy; (5) continued to shout, even more loudly; (6) jumped up and came to Jesus [Mark]; (7) asked Jesus to open their eyes.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also Mark 11.1-11; Luke 19.28-40; John 12.12-19)

21 As they approached Jerusalem they came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of the disciples on ahead with these instructions, "Go to the village there ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied up and her colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³And if anyone says anything, tell him, 'The Master needs them'; and he will let them go at once."

⁴This happened to make come true what the prophet had said:

⁵"Tell the city of Zion,

Now your king is coming to you.

He is gentle and rides on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

⁶So the disciples went ahead and did what Jesus had told them to do: ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, threw their cloaks over

The Triumphant Entry

21 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away." 2

³This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 3

"Say to the daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" 4

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and 5

6

7

1. **As they approached Jerusalem.** Jesus went through Jericho, where he healed two blind men, and set Zacchaeus free from sin. Coming up the mountain pass to Jerusalem, he stopped at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany, stayed there during the Sabbath [Saturday], and on Sunday morning, made his Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem. As they approached Jerusalem, they went up the Mount of Olives. There were three paths over the Mount of Olives: (1) on the north, in the hollow between two peaks of the hill; (2) over the main peak; (3) on the south, between the Mount of Olives and the Hill of Offence. This is the path Jesus took. **To Bethphage.** Bethphage and Bethany were suburban villages close to each other, and on the direct line of travel from Jericho to Jerusalem. **Mount of Olives.** Named for the Olive trees on it. A hill, just east of Jerusalem, a "public park."

2. **Go to the village.** Bethphage. **You will find a donkey tied up there.** These very useful animals were a common means of transportation. But more important, every Jew expected the Messiah to come riding into Jerusalem on a young donkey (*Zech. 9:9*).

3. **The Master needs them.** The owner was likely a follower of Christ.

4-7. **This happened to make come true.** The prophecy of *Isaiah 62:11* and *Zechariah 9:9*. Both the donkey and the colt were brought, but *John 12:15* speaks of Jesus riding only the young colt. Only animals that had never been ridden were thought of as being proper for holy uses [*Num. 19:2; 1 Sam. 6:7*]. (1) The animal was borrowed. (2) He rode without a saddle, using borrowed cloaks. (3) It was on a young donkey [a colt] which had never been ridden before.

them, and Jesus got on. ⁸A great crowd of people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds walking in front of Jesus and the crowds walking behind began to shout, "Praise to David's Son! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! Praise be to God!"

¹⁰When Jesus entered Jerusalem the whole city was thrown in an uproar. "Who is he?" the people asked.

¹¹"This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee," the crowds answered.

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also Mark 11.15-19; Luke 19.45-48; John 2.13-22)

¹²Jesus went into the temple and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple; he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and

Jesus sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Jesus at the Temple

Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the benches of

8. A great crowd of people spread their cloaks. The Law required the Jewish people to gather in Jerusalem for the Passover. Josephus, the historian, says a few million people would be there. Some thousands of Galileans who had seen Jesus perform miracles would be there, and they thought of him as the Messiah-King. Spreading their cloaks on the road was a way of showing honor and praise. Cut branches from the trees. Palm fronds (John 12:13). These would form a soft, level carpet. They were symbolic of joy after victory (Rev. 7:9).

9. Praise to David's Son. Declaring that Jesus is the Messiah! In the name of the Lord. Partly from Psalm 118:25-26, a song of praise used at the close of Passover, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. This was used commonly to speak of the Messiah.

10. The whole city was thrown in an uproar. At this point Jesus could have proclaimed himself King, with the popular support of the people, and the Pharisees and teachers of the Law would have been powerless against him. Yet he came to die as our "sin offering" (Luke 9:31; Heb. 9:15); and his Kingdom was spiritual (Luke 19:11; John 18:36).

11. This is the prophet Jesus. Only his disciples knew his true identity as the Son of God [the people did not expect the Messiah to be Divine]. The Galileans believed Jesus to be the Prophet spoken about by Moses in Deut. 18:18.

12. Jesus went into the temple. On the following day (Mark 11:11). This is the second time Jesus made the temple ritually pure. [The other time was at the beginning of his ministry (John 2:13-17).] Drove out all those. Animals for sacrifice were bought and sold inside the temple [in the court of the Gentiles]. This was not proper for them to do. Tables of the moneychangers. The Greek and Roman money in common use, would not be accepted by the priests. They required only Jewish coins to be used: (1) to buy animals, etc., for offering and sacrifices; (2) as a gift to the temple treasury; (3) to pay the half-shekel temple tax [see note on Matt. 17:24]. This exchange of money made the priests a fortune, because it gave them a chance to cheat the people. Pigeons. See Luke 2:24.

the stools of those who sold pigeons, ¹³and said to them, "It is written in the Scriptures that God said, 'My house will be called a house of prayer.' But you are making it a hideout for thieves!"

¹⁴The blind and the crippled came to him in the temple and he healed them. ¹⁵The chief priests and the teachers of the Law became angry when they saw the wonderful things he was doing, and the children shouting and crying in the temple. "Praise to David's Son!"

¹⁶So they said to Jesus. "Do you hear what they are saying?"

"Indeed I do," answered Jesus. "Haven't you ever read this scripture? 'You have trained children and babies to offer perfect praise.'"

¹⁷Jesus left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

(Also Mark 11.12-14, 20-24)

¹⁸On his way back to the city, early next morning, Jesus was hungry. ¹⁹He saw a fig tree by the side of the road and went to it, but found nothing on it except leaves. So he said to the tree, "You will never again bear fruit!" At once the fig tree dried up.

those selling doves. "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers."

The blind and the lame ¹⁴ came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But ¹⁵ when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

"Do you hear what these ¹⁶ children are saying?" they asked him.

"Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read,

'From the lips of children and infants you have raised up praise?'"

And he left them and ¹⁷ went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

The Fig Tree Withers

Early the next morning, ¹⁸ as he was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the road, ¹⁹ he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you never bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered.

13. **It is written.** *Isaiah 56:7.* A house of prayer. A holy place for worship. A hideout for thieves. It is a sin to use religion as a money making scheme (*1 Tim. 6:5*).

14. **The blind and the crippled.** These people followed Jesus, hoping he would heal them.

15. **The chief priests and the teachers of the Law.** These arch-enemies of Jesus were angry because of what he had done in the temple, and because the people were praising him.

16. **Do you hear what they are saying?** They vent their anger against the children, because they think this will cause them the least amount of trouble. **Indeed I do.** He scolds all who despise children. He quotes *Psalms 8:2.* The praise of little children is pure and perfect.

17. **Jesus left them.** It was not safe for him to spend the night in Jerusalem. He goes to Bethany, about two miles east.

18. **On his way back to the city.** Having spent the night in Bethany. This is early Monday morning.

19. **He saw a fig tree.** Fig trees bear fruit first, then leaves. Fruit would form as early as February and be fully ripe as early as April. Mark says: "because it was not the right time for figs." But although it was too early for fruit, it was too early for leaves also, and the leaves should have been proof of fruit. **You will never again bear fruit.** Peter calls this a curse (*Mark 11:21*). The next day it was dead all the way down to the roots (*Mark 11:20*). This was a parable about the Jewish nation which had "leaves," but no "fruit." It too would be cursed and die (*Matt: 23:29-36*).

²⁰The disciples saw this and were astounded. "How did the fig tree dry up so quickly?" they asked.

²¹"Remember this!" Jesus answered. "If you believe, and do not doubt, you will be able to do what I have done to this fig tree; not only this, you will even be able to say to this hill, 'Get up and throw yourself in the sea,' and it will. ²²If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

The Question about Jesus' Authority

(Also Mark 11.27-33; Luke 20.1-8)

²³Jesus came back to the temple; and as he taught, the chief priests and the Jewish elders came to him and asked, "What right do you have to do these things? Who gave you this right?"

²⁴Jesus 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. ²⁵Where did John's right to baptize come from: from God or from men?"

They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we answer, 'From God,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe John?' ²⁶But if we say, 'From men,' we are afraid of what the people might do, because they are all convinced that John was a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked.

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?"

Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'From men'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet."

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

21-22. **If you believe!** See note on *Matt. 17:20*. However, belief and prayer cannot be used for selfish purposes.

23. **Jesus came back to the temple.** This was on Tuesday, after the lesson at the fig tree. **What right do you have?** The chief priests, the Jewish elders (Mark and Luke add: the teachers of the Law), ask him what right he has to do these things—such as purifying the temple the day before.

24. **I will ask you just one question.** Jesus answers them with a question which will expose their motives.

25-26. **Where did John's right to baptize come from?** These leaders had not received John's baptism, even though the people had done so. They argued among themselves about the consequences of saying "From God," or "From men."

27. **We don't know.** These leaders could neither admit John's authority nor deny his words. **Neither will I tell you.** Jesus will not allow them to decide the question of his authority, when they say they do not know the origin of John's mission.

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

The Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸"Now, what do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the older one and said, 'Son, go work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹'I don't want to,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went to the vineyard. ³⁰Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. 'Yes, sir,' he answered, but he did not go. ³¹Which one of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The older one," they answered.

"And I tell you this," Jesus said to them. "The tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John the Baptist came to you showing you the right path to take, and you would not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. Even when you saw this you did not change your minds later on and believe him."

The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard

(Also Mark 12.1-12; Luke 20.9-19)

³³"Listen to another parable," Jesus said. "There was a landowner who planted a vineyard,

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

The Parable of the Two Sons

"What do you think? ²⁸ There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

"'I will not,' he answered, ²⁹ but later he changed his mind and went.

"Then the father went to ³⁰ the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

"Which of the two did ³¹ what his father wanted?"

"The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John ³² came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

The Parable of the Tenants

"Listen to another para- ³³ ble:

"There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He

28-31. Now, what do you think? He calls their attention to something which they will be required to answer. There was a man. The two sons stand for the Jewish leaders and the Jewish people. Both groups of people were told to work in the vineyard. The "sinners" [common people, tax collectors, prostitutes, etc.] had said no, but turned from sin when they heard John, and did what the Lord told them to do. The leaders had said yes, but did not do it, and did not listen to John. The tax collectors and the prostitutes. The very worst of the common people believed John and came to God.

32. Even when you saw this. They saw the crowds who came to John and believed what he said; yet they would not be sorry for their unbelief and change their minds.

33. Listen to another parable. This also scolds the Jewish leaders for their unbelief. There was a landowner. God. The details of the parable show how he had worked with Israel. Who planted a vineyard. He placed Israel in the rich land of Palestine. Put a fence around it. The Law which preserved the identity of Israel. Dug a hole for the winepress. Two tub-shaped holes. Grapes were put in the higher one, crushed by walking on them with bare feet, the juice then running out a hole in the side into the lower of the two holes. The winepress is used to harvest the grapes. Built a watchtower. Where guards could keep out intruders. Then he rented the vineyard. The Jewish leaders are the tenants. Left home on a trip. God gave Israel time, to see what they would do with his blessings.

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.

³⁴When the time came to harvest the grapes he sent his slaves to the tenants to receive his share.

³⁵The tenants grabbed his slaves, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again the man sent other slaves, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. ³⁷Last of all he sent them his son. 'Surely they will respect my son,' he said.

³⁸But when the tenants saw the son they said to themselves, 'This is the owner's son. Come on, let us kill him, and we will get his property!' ³⁹So they grabbed him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

⁴⁰"Now, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" Jesus asked.

⁴¹"He will certainly kill those evil men," they answered, "and rent the vineyard out to other tenants, who will give him his share of the harvest at the right time."

put a wall around it, dug a wine press in it and built a tower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

"The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.

"But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.' So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"

"He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

34. **When the time came.** No special time, but symbolic of harvest. **To receive his share.** The rent for the use of the vineyard. The slaves were the prophets of old, whom God sent to his people Israel.

35. **The tenants grabbed his slaves.** The central idea of the whole parable is that the Jewish leaders rejected everyone whom God sent to them. Some of the prophets they did murder (See *Matt. 23:29-31*).

36. **Again the man sent other slaves.** Compare *Heb. 11:35-38*. God sent many prophets, kings, and holy men in his name.

37. **Last of all he sent them his son.** This was God's final offer of mercy to them. [Mercy was offered through Christ's DEATH—*Heb. 9:15*. This is the greatest of heaven's wealth; it is the fulness of their sin—*Matt. 23:35-36*.]

38. **Let us kill him.** They made plans to kill him (*John 11:53*). If they could kill the son, they thought the vineyard would be theirs to keep.

39. **So they grabbed him.** This is his prophecy that the very men he is speaking to will kill him.

40-41. **What will he do to those tenants?** They are so wrapped up in what Jesus says, that they answer without seeing they are the guilty ones. **He will certainly kill those evil men.** They make a prediction themselves, without knowing it. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says the Jewish Nation was nearly wiped out in the war with Rome. He records that 1,100,000 people died in the siege of Jerusalem [70 A. D.]. **To other tenants.** The Gentiles. See *Acts 15:14-21*; *Eph. 2:19-22*.

⁴²Jesus said to them, "Haven't you ever read what the Scriptures say?"

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

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

⁴³"And so I tell you," added Jesus, "the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and be given to a people who will produce the proper fruits. [⁴⁴Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and if the stone falls on someone it will crush him to dust.]"

⁴⁵The chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables and knew that he was talking about them, ⁴⁶so they tried to arrest him. But they were afraid of the crowds, who considered Jesus to be a prophet.

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

(Also Luke 14.15-24)

22 Jesus again used parables in talking to the people. ²⁴"The Kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son.

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the people held that he was a prophet.

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his

42. **The very stone which the builders rejected.** *Psalm 118:22-23.* This speaks of a stone being thrown aside by the builders, who then discover it is the most important stone, the key-stone of the foundation. The "cornerstone" joined together two walls. Alford (Greek Testament) thinks this speaks of the union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ's church. **This was done by the Lord.** God gives the authority to the most important stone.

43. **The Kingdom of God will be taken away from you.** This is what they had predicted unknowingly (*verses 40-41*). God was rejecting the first covenant, and making a new covenant for those who believed. See *Heb. 8:7-13.*

44. **Whoever falls on this stone.** Those who will not confess him as Messiah. "*We proclaim Christ on the cross, a message that is offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles*" [*1 Cor. 1:23*]. **And if the stone falls on someone.** The wrath of Christ in the judgment which was the siege of Jerusalem. Also that Day when Christ the Lamb will judge in wrath from the Great White Throne. See *Rev. 6:15-17.*

45-46. **Knew that he was talking about them.** So they tried to arrest him, but there were too many people who still thought of Jesus as The Prophet who Moses had predicted.

1. **Jesus again used parables.** The Jewish leaders had gone away (*Mark 12:12*). So what he says is not directly to the leaders, but to the people.

2. **The Kingdom of heaven is like a king.** What he says here, is like the parable in *Luke 14:16-24*, but changed to fit the people who hear. It is a king who gives the wedding feast in Matthew. The invitation is a command when the king gives it. Those who do not come, are not simply left out, but punished

³He sent his servants to tell the invited guests to come to the feast, but they did not want to come. ⁴So he sent other servants with the message: "Tell the guests, "My feast is ready now; my steers and prize calves have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!"' ⁵But the invited guests paid no attention and went about their business: one went to his farm, the other to his store, ⁶while others grabbed the servants, beat them, and killed them. ⁷The king was very angry; he sent his soldiers, who killed those murderers and burned down their city. ⁸Then he called his servants. "My wedding feast is ready," he said, "but the people I invited did not deserve it. ⁹Now go to the main streets and invite to the feast as many people as you find." ¹⁰So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, good and bad alike; and the wedding hall was filled with people.

son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

"Then he sent some more servants and said, "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet."

"But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

"Then he said to his servants, "The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find." So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and

severely. **Who prepared a wedding feast for his son.** By Jewish custom, the "promise of marriage" came about twelve months before the official wedding. It was more than our "engagement," because it was considered that the two were legally married from that time (See *Deut. 23:22-27*), even though the official ceremony had not been performed. [In view of this, read *Matt. 1:18-24*.] The official wedding feast was a bigger celebration than is the custom in our society. [See the wedding feast in *John 2*.]

3. **He sent his servants to tell.** Custom was to invite the guests, then just before the Wedding feast, to send messengers to tell them to come.

4. **So he sent others servants.** Still a further invitation to come to the feast. **Everything is ready.** There can be no excuse for their delay.

5. **But the invited guests paid no attention.** Two types of people refused to come. These pay no attention to the call, but continue their business activities.

6. **While others grabbed the servants.** The first type were not loyal to their king. The second type are violently opposed to the king. This was true of the Jewish leaders, who persecuted the messianic community [after Christ had been raised to glory].

7. **The king was very angry.** To insult the king's servants is to insult the king himself. **Who killed those murderers.** God used the Roman armies to punish the Jewish Nation (See *Matt. 21:40-41*). [Note the Christian Jews escaped this.]

8. **The people I invited did not deserve it.** Those who will not respond to the Good News of Christ, are not worthy of Eternal Life (*Acts 13:46*).

9. **As many people as you find.** They are to invite everyone they meet! This came true when the Good News of Christ was preached to everybody in the world (*Col. 1:23*).

10. **Good and bad alike.** God is not prejudiced as we are. The bad are invited, not to continue to be bad, but to be holy (*1 Cor. 6:9-11*).

¹¹“The king went in to look at the guests and he saw a man who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹²“Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?” the king asked him. But the man said nothing. ¹³Then the king told the servants, “Tie him up hand and foot and throw him outside in the dark. There he will cry and gnash his teeth.”

¹⁴And Jesus concluded, “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

The Question about Paying Taxes

(Also Mark 12.13-17; Luke 20.20-26)

¹⁵The Pharisees went off and made a plan to trap Jesus with questions. ¹⁶Then they sent some of their disciples and some members of Herod’s party to Jesus. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you tell the truth. You teach the truth about God’s will for man, without worrying about what people think, because you pay no attention to a man’s status. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what do you think? Is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?”

bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless.”

“Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.’

“For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Paying Taxes to Caesar

Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

11. **A man who was not wearing wedding clothes.** It was the custom for the host to furnish special clothes to be worn in honor of the feast. Alford (Greek Testament) says: “The garment is *the imputed and inherent righteousness of the Lord Jesus*, put on *symbolically* in Baptism (Gal. 3:27), and *really* by a true and living faith (Gal. 3:26).” No one can appear before God in the Kingdom of his Glory without this.

12. **How did you get in here?** He had no wedding clothes, which proved he had no right to be there. Both good and bad were called, but ALL must have the imputed [credited—Rom. 8:1-4] righteousness of Christ to be the friends of God.

13. **Then the king told the servants.** It is the king’s right to eject all who do not belong there.

14. **For many are invited, but few are chosen.** The invitation is to everyone in the world! But only those who respond and put on the wedding clothes (Titus 3:4-5; Col. 2:12) become “chosen” by choosing him. [The “few” cannot be counted (Rev. 7:9).]

15. **Made a plan to trap Jesus.** The Jews [Pharisees, teachers of the Law, etc.] were fierce enemies of Jesus.

16. **Then they sent some.** Some of their junior members who were not so well known, hoping to fool Jesus. **Teacher.** A title of respect. They wanted to get him off guard.

17. **Is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor?** [Caesar is the title of the Roman Emperor.] If he said “no,” they could turn him in to the Romans. If he said “yes,” it would make the people turn against him. They thought he was caught, whatever he said.

¹⁸Jesus was aware of their evil plan, however, and so he said, "You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap me? ¹⁹Show me the coin to pay the tax!"

They brought him the coin, ²⁰and he asked them, "Whose face and name are these?"

²¹"The Emperor's," they answered.

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

²²When they heard this, they were filled with wonder; and they left him and went away.

But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, ²⁰"Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?"

"Caesar's," they replied. ²¹

Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

When they heard this, ²²they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

Marriage at the Resurrection

That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. "Teacher," ²⁴they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. Now ²⁵there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. ²⁶The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman ²⁷died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"

The Question about Rising from Death

(Also Mark 12.18-27; Luke 20.27-40)

²³That same day some Sadducees came to Jesus. (They are the ones who say that people will not rise from death.) ²⁴"Teacher," they said, "Moses taught: 'If a man who has no children dies, his brother must marry the widow so they can have children for the dead man.' ²⁵Now, there were seven brothers who used to live here. The oldest got married, and died without having children, so he left his widow to his brother. ²⁶The same thing happened to the second brother, to the third, and finally to all seven. ²⁷Last of all, the woman died. ²⁸Now, on the day when the dead rise to life, whose wife will she be? All of them had married her."

18. **You hypocrites!** Jesus knew what they were trying to do.

19-20. **Show me the coin.** A silver denarius [worth perhaps \$1.80 in 1974 dollars]. It had the face and name of Tiberius Caesar on it.

21. **So Jesus said to them.** The fact that they used Roman coins was proof they were under Roman rule. "Pay to the Emperor what belong to him" pleased the members of Herod's party. "Pay to God what belong to God" pleased the Pharisees. What Jesus says shows that civil government and God each have certain things that belong to them alone (Compare Rom. 13:1-7). But, "we must obey God, not men" (Acts 5:29). Where the two clash, God must be obeyed!

22. **They were filled with wonder.** He was so much wiser than their own teachers.

23. **Some Sadducees came to Jesus.** See note on Matt. 3:7. **They are the ones.** This was their identifying belief—that the dead will not rise. See Acts 23:7-9.

24. **Moses taught.** Deut. 25:5-6. This was an old custom to preserve family lines (Gen. 38:6-11).

25-28. **There were seven brothers.** This is a "made up" story which they think will make the "rising from death" look like a foolish idea.

²⁹Jesus answered them, "How wrong you are! It is because you don't know the Scriptures or God's power. ³⁰For when the dead rise to life they will be like the angels in heaven, and men and women will not marry. ³¹Now, as for the dead rising to life: haven't you ever read what God has told you? He said, ³²'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' This means that he is the God of the living, not of the dead."

³³When the crowds heard this they were amazed at his teaching.

The Great Commandment

(Also Mark 12.28-34; Luke 10.25-28)

³⁴When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they came together, ³⁵and one of them, a teacher of the Law, tried to trap him with a question. ³⁶"Teacher," he asked, "which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, '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."

When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

The Greatest Commandment

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

29. **How wrong you are!** Their basic error was to say that there were no such things as spirits. So they rejected the idea of a special spiritual creation such as angels. But if man is a spirit who survives death, then the God who created him so that a "body" is necessary to his activity and happiness, would in some way restore a body to him after death. The Bible strongly teaches a "rising from death." See *1 Cor. 15:35-49*. It is because you don't know. The Scriptures proved them wrong. Jesus uses the first five books of the Old Testament [which they did believe] to prove that man is a spirit who survives death. This proves the "raising from death."

30. **For when the dead rise to life.** Angels are a separate type of creation. The dead do not become angels, but like the angels. Marriage, birth and death exist only in our present world. In the new heavens and new earth (*2 Pet. 3:13*) marriage will not exist.

31. **Haven't you ever read?** The Sadducees believed the first five books of the Bible which Moses wrote. Jesus turns to these and uses them to prove the raising from death.

32. **I am the God of Abraham.** *Exodus 3:6*. I AM, not I WAS [Zamenhof, in his translation from the Hebrew Masoretic text translates "am" in the present continuous tense.] Jesus teaches that the spirit survives death, and that there is no "time of sleep" between death and the raising of the new body (*1 Cor. 15:44*). Compare his account of the rich man and Lazarus (*Luke 16:19-31*).

33. **They were amazed!** This was a new idea to them. Some of the teachers of the Law said: "A good answer, Teacher!" (*Luke 20:39*).

34-35. **When the Pharisees heard.** The Sadducees had not been able to trap Jesus. Now the Pharisees made plans to do so.

36. **Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?** The teachers of the Law had divided into factions over which commandment was the most important. They had "expanded" the Law into 613 separate laws. So they argued over which was the most important, and taught that if this one was obeyed, the person would be given credit for obeying all the others as well.

³⁷Jesus answered, " 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸This is the greatest and the most important commandment. ³⁹The second most important commandment is like it: 'You must love your fellow-man as yourself.' ⁴⁰The whole Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets depend on these two commandments."

The Question about the Messiah

(Also Mark 12.35-37; Luke 20.41-44)

⁴¹When the Pharisees gathered together, Jesus asked them, ⁴²"What do you think about the Messiah? Whose descendant is he?"

"He is David's descendant," they answered.

⁴³"Why, then," Jesus asked, "did the Spirit inspire David to call him 'Lord'? Because David said,

⁴⁴"The Lord said to my Lord:
Sit here at my right side,
until I put your enemies under your
feet.'

⁴⁵If, then, David called him 'Lord,' how can the Messiah be David's descendant?"

Jesus replied: "Love the 37 Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is 38 the first and greatest commandment. And the second 39 is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law 40 and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Whose Son Is the Christ?

While the Pharisees were 41 gathered together, Jesus asked them, "What do you 42 think about the Christ? Whose son is he?"

"The son of David," they replied.

He said to them, "How is 43 it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says,

"The Lord said to my Lord: 44 Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'

If then David calls him 45 'Lord,' how can he be his

37-38. **You must love the Lord your God.** Jesus paraphrases the command of *Deut. 6:5*. Mark adds: "and with all your strength." Heart, soul, mind, and strength are to be lumped together as meaning "with your complete self." (Compare *1 Thess. 5:23*.) This is the most important commandment.

39. **The second most important.** *Lev. 19:18*. The first command sums up man's obligation to God. The second sums up man's obligation to his fellow-man. One who loves God will not rebel against him. One who loves his fellow-man will try to help him. [*What happens when someone does not love himself?*]

40. **Depend on these two commandments.** In the sense of *Matt. 5:17; 7:12; Rom. 13:10*.

41. **Jesus asked them.** They had tried to trap him, yet this question which Jesus asks shows no attitude of revenge.

42. **Whose descendant is he?** This is to force them to think about what they already know. **He is David's descendant.** This is true, but not the whole truth.

43-44. **Why then?** The Holy Spirit caused David to speak of his descendant as "Lord." Jesus quotes *Psalms 110:1* to show this is true. The Jews believed that David wrote that psalm, and that it spoke of the Messiah.

45. **How can the Messiah be?** These Pharisees thought Jesus was only a human being, nothing more. The answer to this question is what Jesus wants them to understand: "Christ, the descendant of David in human terms, is the Son of God—the Eternal Logos—who has appeared in human form" (*1 Tim. 3:16*).

⁴⁶No one was able to answer Jesus a single word, and from that day on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Jesus Warns against the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees

(Also Mark 12.38-39; Luke 11.43, 46; 20.45-46)

23 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples. ²“The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees,” he said, “are the authorized interpreters of Moses’ Law. ³So you must obey and follow everything they tell you to do; do not, however, imitate their actions, because they do not practice what they preach. ⁴They fix up heavy loads and tie them on men’s backs, yet they aren’t willing even to lift a finger to help them carry those loads. ⁵They do everything just so people will see them. See how big are the containers with scripture verses on their foreheads and arms, and notice how long are the hems of their cloaks! ⁶They love the best places at feasts

son?” No one could say a 46 word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Seven Woes

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. ² ³ ⁴ ⁵ ⁶ “Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels of their prayer shawls long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important

46. No one dared ask him any more. Not being able to meet his arguments, they quit trying to trap him, but continue to plot his death.

1. **Then Jesus spoke to the crowds.** Probably in the Court of the Gentiles in the temple. This is the official close of his public ministry, just as the Sermon on the Mount was the beginning. This is more than a scolding. It is a “tongue-lashing” rebuke of the anti-God actions of the teachers of the Law and Pharisees [who are called “the Jews” in some verses].

2. **The authorized interpreters.** They were the only religious teachers the people had. They did teach the Law of Moses, but added in their own traditions (*Matt. 15:1-9*).

3. **So you must obey.** They were to obey the teachers of the Law when they did teach the Law. [The Law of Moses ended at the Cross. *Gal. 3:10-14; Eph. 2:14-16.*] **Do not . . . imitate.** Their examples teach a lie.

4. **They fix up heavy loads.** The Law was itself a heavy load which no one could carry (*Acts 15:10*). But they added traditions to it to make it even heavier (*Matt. 22:36*). See *verse 2*.

5. **Just so people will see them.** They wanted to make everyone think they were holy. They made containers of calf skin, put verses of Scripture written on parchment in these, and then fastened them on their foreheads and arms to show they were always thinking about God’s word. [The verses were *Exod. 12:2-10; 13:11-21; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:18-21.*] **The hems of their cloaks.** All Jews were to wear fringes on their cloaks to remind them to obey God in all things (see *Num. 15:38-39*). They were making them extra long to impress people with their piety.

6. **They love the best places.** Where everyone would be sure to see them. They wanted the glory.

and the reserved seats in the synagogues; ⁷they love to be greeted with respect in the market places and have people call them 'Teacher.' ⁸You must not be called 'Teacher,' because you are all brothers of one another and have only one Teacher. ⁹And you must not call anyone here on earth 'Father,' because you have only the one Father in heaven. ¹⁰Nor should you be called 'Leader,' because your one and only leader is the Messiah. ¹¹The greatest one among you must be your servant. ¹²Whoever makes himself great will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be made great."

seats in the synagogues; they ⁷
love to be greeted in the
marketplaces and to have
men call them 'Rabbi.'

"But you are not to be ⁸
called 'Rabbi,' for you have
only one Master and you are
all brothers. And do not call ⁹
anyone on earth 'Father,'
for you have one Father, and
he is in heaven. Nor are you ¹⁰
to be called 'teacher,' for
you have one Teacher, the
Christ. The greatest among ¹¹
you will be your servant. For
whoever exalts himself will ¹²
be humbled, and whoever
humbles himself will be ex-
alted.

"Woe to you, teachers of ¹³
the law and Pharisees, you

Jesus Condemns Their Hypocrisy

(Also Mark 12. 40; Luke 11.39-42, 44, 52; 20.47)

¹³"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You lock the door to the Kingdom of heaven in men's faces, but you yourselves will not go in, and neither will you let people in who are trying to go in!

7. **They love to be greeted with respect.** With flattering talk. What Jesus is speaking of here, and in the next few verses, are the "religious titles" which they loved to hear, and which showed they were "boss" [one who domineers] over the faith of others.

8. **You must not be called 'Teacher.'** [Rabbi in the Hebrew language.] About the same as Doctor of Divinity. Jesus rebukes all who use religion as a means of gaining glory for themselves. This sin of "showing off" [ostentation] was the root of the Pharisees' other sins. The teachers of the Law did not allow their students to call them by name. They could only be spoken to as "Teacher." Alford (Greek Testament) gives this *warning*: "To understand and follow such commands [as Christ gives in these verses. RDI] in the slavery of the letter, is to fall into the very Pharisaism against which our Lord is uttering the caution." **All brothers of one another.** All in Christ stand equal to each other [even though they may have different duties]. **Have only one Teacher.** CHRIST [through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-2)].

9-10. **And you must not call anyone here on earth 'Father.'** That is, "Father" as a religious title. The teachers of the Law loved to be called *Abba* which means "Father," in the sense in which God alone is *Father*. **Leader.** Another religious title, used in the sense in which only Jesus is the Leader of his church. [Any word can be misused in the same way.]

11. **The greatest one among you.** The true measure of greatness is not what others do for you, but what you do to help others.

12. **Whoever makes himself great.** This is a universal rule of God. The one who is so very proud of himself is humbled. The one who is kind, gentle, and loving, will be honored by God himself. See the parable in Luke 18:9-14.

13. **How terrible for you!** He makes eight statements of impeachment against the Jewish leaders. **You lock the door.** They did this by teaching lies which prevent people from believing in Christ. See Luke 11:52.

[¹⁴“How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You take advantage of widows and rob them of their homes, and then make a show of saying long prayers! Because of this your punishment will be all the worse!]

¹⁵“How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You sail the seas and cross whole countries to win one convert; and when you succeed, you make him twice as deserving of going to hell as you yourselves are!

¹⁶“How terrible for you, blind guides! You teach, ‘If a man swears by the temple he isn’t bound by his vow; but if he swears by the gold in the temple, he is bound.’ ¹⁷Blind fools! Which is more important, the gold or the temple which makes the gold holy? ¹⁸You also teach, ‘If a man swears by the altar he isn’t bound by his vow; but if he swears by the gift on the altar, he is bound.’

¹⁹How blind you are! Which is more important, the gift or the altar which makes the gift holy?

²⁰So then, when a man swears by the altar he is swearing by it and by all the gifts on it; ²¹and when a man swears by the temple he is swearing by it and by God, the one who lives there; ²²and when a man swears by heaven he is swearing by God’s throne and by him who sits on it.

hypocrites! You shut the 14 kingdom of heaven in men’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

“Woe to you, teachers of 15 the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.

“Woe to you, blind 16 guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind fools! 17 Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? You also say, 18 ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind men! Which is 19 greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, he who swears by 20 the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And he 21 who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And he who 22 swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by one who sits on it.

14. **You take advantage of widows.** We see Jesus allowing women to help him financially out of their great love (*Luke 8:2-3*). But these teachers of the Law and Pharisees were using religion as a fraud to cheat widows of their property. Their “show” of loving God made their sin all the worse.

15. **To win one convert.** These Jewish leaders wanted to convert everyone to Judaism and make them Jews [proselytes], because they expected that God would then send the Messiah to set up a political kingdom and make them rulers over the world. **You make him twice as deserving.** They made fanatics out of their converts.

16. **Blind guides.** They deliberately shut their eyes to God’s truth, yet made people follow them. **If a man swears. Takes a vow.** In their silly thinking, they could take a vow by the temple, and not have to keep it; but if they took a vow by the gold of the temple, they were bound by it.

17. **Blind fools!** The temple makes the gold holy, so the temple is more important. They are looking at it backwards!

18-20. **You also teach.** The altar and the gift are all one—that is, equal in being holy.

21-22. **And when a man swears.** Taking a vow by the temple is equal to taking a vow by God himself. Heaven is equal to God himself. This means that all vows are by God and all equally binding. But see what Jesus said in *Matt. 5:33-37*.

²³“How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You give to God one tenth even of the seasoning herbs, such as mint, dill and cummin, but you neglect to obey the really important teachings of the Law, such as justice and mercy and honesty. These you should practice, without neglecting the others. ²⁴Blind guides! You strain a fly out of your drink, but swallow a camel!

²⁵“How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You clean the outside of your cup and plate, while the inside is full of things you have gotten by violence and selfishness. ²⁶Blind Pharisee! Clean what is inside the cup first, and then the outside will be clean too!

²⁷“How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look fine on the outside, but are full of dead men’s bones and rotten stuff on the inside. ²⁸In the same way, on the outside you appear to everybody as good, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and sins.”

“Woe to you, teachers of ²³ the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You ought to have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You ²⁴ blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

“Woe to you teachers of ²⁵ the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean ²⁶ the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

“Woe to you, teachers of ²⁷ the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean. In the same ²⁸ way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

23. **You give to God one tenth.** They were very careful to tithe even herbs in their gardens. **But you neglect to obey.** The really important things they left undone. They did not do the important things such as justice, mercy, and honesty, but were fanatics about the little things [which were also important (*Lev. 27:30*)].

24. **You strain a fly out of your drink.** *Satire.* Jesus had a sense of humor. Can you imagine them straining out the fly, and then swallowing the camel! This illustrates *verse 23*.

25-26. **You clean the outside.** They had a ritual for washing the outside of cups and plates, and they would not eat or drink from anything that had not been prepared in this way. **Clean what is inside the cup first.** Jesus says they must make their heart pure first, then the ritual purity will take care of itself. This applies to all who put ritual purity ahead of personal purity [or doctrinal purity ahead of personal purity]. *1 Pet. 1:15-16, 27-28.* **You are like whitewashed tombs.** Just before the time of Passover, all the tombs and graves were whitewashed—so no one would be made ritually unclean by touching one of them (*Num. 19:16*), and to make them beautiful. From where they stood in the temple, they could see the whitewashed tombs on the western side of Olivet. **Look fine—full of dead men’s bones.** Strong words which say these leaders are pious frauds [sanctimonious], who look fine on the outside, but are full of sins inside. Compare *Luke 11:44*.

Jesus Predicts Their Punishment

(Also Luke 11.47-51)

²⁹“How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You make fine tombs for the prophets, and decorate the monuments of those who lived good lives, ³⁰and you say, ‘If we had lived long ago in the time of our ancestors, we would not have done what they did and killed the prophets.’ ³¹So you actually admit that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets! ³²Go on, then, and finish up what your ancestors started! ³³Snakes, and sons of snakes! How do you expect to escape from being condemned to hell? ³⁴And so I tell you: I will send you prophets and wise men and teachers; you will kill some of them, nail others to the cross, and whip others in your synagogues and chase them from town to town. ³⁵As a result, the punishment for the murder of all innocent men will fall on you, from the murder of innocent Abel to the murder of Zechariah, Barachiah’s son, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar, ³⁶I tell you indeed: the punishment for all these will fall on the people of this day!”

“Woe to you, teachers of 29 the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, ‘If we 30 had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ So you testify 31 against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of 32 the sin of your forefathers!

“You snakes! You brood 33 of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am send- 34 ing you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so 35 upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berachiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you 36 the truth, all this will come upon this generation.

29. **You make fine tombs for the prophets.** They honored these men by building monuments to them, rather than by doing what they said to do. Even Herod the Great (an inhuman monster) rebuilt the tomb of David.

30. **And you say.** But they were in fact doing the very same things which their ancestors did!

31. **So you actually admit!** He is saying: “You have proved yourselves to be the same kind of people as your ancestors who murdered the prophets.” From where they stood, they could see the whitewashed tombs of the prophets on Olivet, including the tomb of Zechariah (*verse 35*).

32. **Go on, then.** As if he says: “Complete what your ancestors started—murder the Holy One.” [This can also be symbolic: “Your ancestors murdered the prophets, and you bury them by teaching lies.”]

33. **How do you expect to escape?** The Bible speaks to warn, as well as to invite.

34. **And so I tell you.** Read *Luke 11:49-51*. **I will send.** Even after the Cross, God sent the apostles and evangelists [preachers of the Good News] to offer them a chance to repent. But the Jewish leaders did just what Jesus said they would do.

35-36. **As a result.** The best explanation is the parable in *Luke 20:9-16*. These people not only approved the sins of their ancestors, but they would murder the Son of God. As a result the combined guilt of all the ages of time would fall upon this group of people. Notice, it is the people who are living right then. [But those who believed in Christ escaped this. Not one Christian Jew was killed in the siege of Jerusalem.]

Jesus' Love for Jerusalem*(Also Luke 13.34-35)*

³⁷“Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets and stone the messengers God has sent you! How many times have I wanted to put my arms around all your people, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not let me! ³⁸Now your home will be completely forsaken. ³⁹From now on you will never see me again, I tell you, until you say, ‘God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple*(Also Mark 13.1-2; Luke 21.5-6)*

24 Jesus left and was going away from the temple when his disciples came to him to show him the temple's buildings. ²⁴“Yes,” he said, “you may well look at all these. I tell you this: not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one of them will be thrown down.”

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ³⁷ you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, ³⁸ your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will ³⁹ not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

Signs of the End of the Age

24 Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. ²⁴“Do you see all these things?” he asked. ²⁵“I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

37. Jerusalem, Jerusalem! The Jewish leaders were concentrated in Jerusalem. This makes it symbolic of the whole Nation. **How many times.** The city had been warned many times by the prophets. Jesus had visited it at least six or seven times, and taught in its streets for months. Even after the Cross, Jesus told his apostles: *“the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem”* (Luke 24:45-49).

38. Now your home will be completely forsaken. This is a double prophecy. It says that when Jesus leaves the temple, God will also desert it and will no longer accept its worship. It also says that God will remove his protection and allow the city to be totally crushed (Zech. 11:6).

39. Until you say. Both a “curse” of doom, and a promise of hope! “Unbelief” is a veil which closes their minds to Truth and Eternal Life. But that veil will vanish when they turn to Jesus (2 Cor. 3:14-18). The hope of the Jews can only come true in Jesus Christ. [The Christian Jew is a FULFILLED Jew.]

1. Jesus left and was going away from the temple. Immediately after his “impeachment” of the Jewish leaders (chapter 23). Scholars do not agree on the meaning of *Matthew 24*. My understanding of this chapter is built on some years of study and comparing Scripture with Scripture; and reading what others have written. Any interpretation will be based on a “time factor,” and I believe verses 34 & 36 divide the chapter into TWO TIME PERIODS. **To show him the temple's buildings.** This is the third temple, rebuilt by Herod in such splendor that it was not finally completed until some thirty years after Jesus' death. He had just predicted its total destruction.

2. I tell you this. Other great temples stand in ruins, still showing their splendor. The Jewish temple would vanish completely from the face of the earth.

Troubles and Persecutions

(Also Mark 13.3-13; Luke 21.7-19)

³As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him in private. "Tell us when all this will be," they asked, "and what will happen to show that it is the time for your coming and the end of the age."

⁴Jesus answered, "Watch out, and do not let anyone fool you. ⁵Because many men will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and fool many people. ⁶You are going to hear the noise of battles close by and the news of battles far away; but, listen, do not be troubled. Such things must happen, but they do not mean that the end has come. ⁷Countries will fight each other, kingdoms will attack one another. There will be famines and earthquakes everywhere. ⁸All these things are like the first pains of childbirth.

⁹"Then you will be arrested and handed over to be punished, and be put to death. All mankind will hate you because of me. ¹⁰Many will give up their faith at that time; they will

As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"

Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ, and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate

3. **As Jesus sat.** He and his disciples were sitting on the Mount of Olives, looking back at the temple, as the rays of the sunset shone on it. **Tell us when all this will be.** They expect it all to take place at one time. But notice there are really three questions asked: (1) When will the temple be destroyed? (2) What will be the signs of your coming? (3) When will the age end? [the end of the world.] Remember that Jesus has three separate questions to answer.

4-5. **Do not let anyone fool you.** By pretending to be the Messiah. Since they still expected Jesus to set up a political kingdom in Jerusalem during their lifetime, they needed this warning. Josephus, the Jewish historian, details many who did claim to be the Messiah during the years before 70 A.D.

6-7. **You are going to hear the noise of battles.** All the world seemed to be at war during this time. Tacitus, the Roman historian, says: "It was full of calamities, horrible with battles, rent with seditions, savage in peace itself." At least five major earthquakes took place; along with epidemics of disease in which thousands died; and famines (see *Acts 11:28*).

8-9. **Like the first pains of childbirth.** The birth and growth of the Kingdom/church would be during the death-agony of the Jewish Age. Compare *Rev. 6*. **All mankind will hate you because of me.** The Devil used everyone and everything he could to attempt to destroy the work of Christ.

10. **Many will give up their faith.** Rather than to pay the price of suffering. Notice the opportunity that comes to those who are willing (*Mark 13:9*).

betray each other and hate each other. ¹¹Then many false prophets will appear and fool many people. ¹²Such will be the spread of evil that many people's love will grow cold. ¹³But whoever holds out to the end will be saved. ¹⁴And this Good News about the Kingdom will be preached through all the world, for a witness to all mankind; and then will come the end."

The Awful Horror

(Also Mark 13.14-23; Luke 21.20-24)

¹⁵"You will see 'The Awful Horror,' of which the prophet Daniel spoke, standing in the holy place." (Note to the reader: understand what this means!) ¹⁶"Then those who are in Judea must run away to the hills. ¹⁷The man who is on the roof of his house must not take the time to go down and get his belongings from the house. ¹⁸The man who is in the field must not go back to get his cloak. ¹⁹How terrible it will be in those days for women who are pregnant, and for mothers who have little babies! ²⁰Pray to God that you will not have to run away during the

each other, and many false 11 prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because 12 of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who 13 stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

"So when you see stand- 15 ing in the holy place 'The abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—then let 16 those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one 17 on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the 18 field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will 19 be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your 20 flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

11. **Then many false prophets.** See *Gal. 1:7-8*. It happened just as Jesus said it would.

12. **Many people's love will grow cold.** Sin eats the heart out of religion. Love grown cold is a serious matter (*Rev. 2:1-7*).

13. **But whoever holds out.** The Christian Jews who did not give up their faith, saw the signs and escaped to Pella in Perea across the Jordan, and saved their lives. This is symbolic of all who escape God's wrath through Jesus.

14. **Will be preached through all the world.** PAUL SAID IT WAS! See *Col. 1:23*. **And then will come the end.** Not the end of the world, but the end of the Jewish Age. It was to be in the lifetime of those people (*verse 34*).

15-20. **You will see 'The Awful Horror.'** Luke says: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies. (*Luke 21:20*). This identifies 'The Awful Horror' as the Roman army. Cestius Gallus, first in 66 A.D.; Vespasian, 68 A.D.; lastly under Titus, 70 A.D. The first time is understood to be what the sign meant. **Standing in the holy place.** Jerusalem itself is the Holy City (*Matt. 4:5*). [Some think the Zealots (*see Mark 15:7*) were the "cause of desolation" by seizing the temple and making one of their own people (Phannius) the high priest in direct violation of the Law. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells about it.] **Then those who are in Judea.** Not just Jerusalem only. Run away to safety! **The man who is on the roof.** It is so urgent to get away quickly, that they could not spare time to get their things! [Houses had flat roofs, and people slept out on them in good weather.] **How terrible—for women who are pregnant.** Because of the hardships. Compare what Paul says in *1 Cor. 7:26-31*. **During the winter or on a Sabbath.** Floods came in winter, making travel impossible. On the Sabbath [Saturday] the city gates were closed and locked, and no one could get out. History tells us the army of Cestius Gallus

winter or on a Sabbath! ²¹For the troubles at that time will be far more terrible than any there has ever been, from the beginning of the world to this very day. Nor will there ever be anything like it. ²²But God has already reduced the number of days; had he not done so, nobody would survive. For the sake of his chosen people, however, God will reduce the days.

²³“Then, if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or ‘There he is!’—do not believe him. ²⁴For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear; they will perform great signs and wonders for the purpose of deceiving God’s chosen people, if possible. ²⁵Listen! I have told you this ahead of time.

²⁶“Or, if people should tell you, ‘Look, he is out in the desert!’— don’t go there; or if they say, ‘Look, he is hiding here!’—don’t believe it. ²⁷For the Son of Man will come like the lightning which flashes across the whole sky from the east to the west.

²⁸“Wherever there is a dead body the vultures will gather.”

For then there will be great ²¹distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equalled again. If those days had ²²not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. At that ²³time if anyone says to you ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and ²⁴false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ²⁵ahead of time.

“So if anyone tells you, ²⁶‘There he is, out in the desert,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. For as the lightning comes ²⁷from the east and flashes to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, ²⁸there the vultures will gather.

surrounded Jerusalem in 66-67 A.D., then went back to Caesarea. This was the signal for the Christians who immediately escaped to Pella in the north of Perea.

21. For the trouble at that time. Since the punishment of all the Ages was to fall on these people (*Matt. 23:35-36*), it would be something the world had never seen before. It was far more terrible than the Flood, because these people killed each other! While the Roman armies surrounded the city, the Jews inside were fighting and killing each other and destroying the food supplies. Women killed and ate their own children because of starvation (see *Deut. 28:49-57*). Josephus, the Jewish historian, was an eyewitness, and what he writes is exactly what Jesus predicted. 1,100,000 [one million, one hundred thousand] Jews died, and 100,000 survivors were sold as slaves. [But no Christian Jews were left in the city—they all escaped in time.]

22. Reduced the number of days. That is, ‘The Days of Punishment’ (*Luke 21:20*). God in his mercy did not destroy all the people of Israel.

23-26. Then if anyone says to you. This refers to the time of the siege of Jerusalem. Even while it was happening, false Messiahs and false prophets told lies to the people in the city. [This is also symbolic of the time from Pentecost until the Second Coming of Christ.]

27. Will come like the lightning. No one will have any doubts when Christ returns! “Everyone will see him, including those who pierced him” (*Rev. 1:7*).

28. Wherever there is a dead body. The vultures will gather at Jerusalem where the dead body is lying. Symbolic of the Roman armies gathering to destroy the body that is already dead (the Jewish Nation of that time). [Some also think it to be symbolic of the end of the world.]

The Coming of the Son of Man

(Also Mark 13.24-27; Luke 21.25-28)

²⁹“Soon after the trouble of those days the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven from their courses. ³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky; then all the tribes of earth will weep, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹The great trumpet will sound, and he will send out his angels to the four corners of the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from one end of the world to the other.”

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

(Also Mark 13.28-31; Luke 21.29-33)

³²“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. ³³In the same way, when you see all these things, you will know that the time is near, ready to begin. ³⁴Remember this! All these things will happen before the people now living have all

“Immediately after the 29
distress of those days,

‘the sun will be dark-
ed,
and the moon will not
give its light;
the stars will fall from
the sky,
and the heavenly bodies
will be shaken.’

“At that time the sign of 30
the Son of Man will appear
in the sky, and all the na-
tions of the earth will
mourn. They will see the
Son of Man coming on the
clouds of the sky, with pow-
er and great glory. And he 31
will send his angels with a
loud trumpet call, and they
will gather his elect from the
four winds, from one end of
the heavens to the other.

“Now learn this lesson 32
from the fig tree: As soon as
its twigs get tender and its
leaves come out, you know
that summer is near. Even 33
so, when you see all these
things, you know that it is
near, right at the door. I tell 34
you the truth, this gener-
ation will certainly not pass
away until all these things

29-31. **Soon after the trouble of those days.** This difficult passage must be understood according to *verse 34*—which puts it at the time of the siege. Then it must speak of a “spiritual coming” of Jesus, rather than the Second Coming. This can be tied in with what Peter says about judgment beginning with God’s own people (*1 Pet. 4:17-18*). A. B. Bruce, in the *Expositor’s Greek Testament* (Eerdmans) says this: “It seems to me that in true prophetic Oriental style the colossal imagery of the physical universe is used to describe the political and social consequences of the great Jewish catastrophe: national ruin, breaking up of religious institutions and social order. The physical stands for the social, the shaking of heaven for the shaking of earth (*Haggai 2:6*); or in the prophetic imagination the two are indissolubly blended: stars, thrones, city walls, temples, effete religions tumbling down into one vast mass of ruin.” [This may also be symbolic of the Second Coming.]

32-33. **Let the fig tree teach you a lesson.** When the fig tree sprouts leaves, it is a sign of summer coming. **When you see all these things.** The things Jesus had predicted. *But Jesus seems to say that no signs will show the end of the world near—see verse 44.*

34. **Before the people now living have all died.** In the actual lifetime of people who were then living when Jesus spoke these words. Compare *Matt. 16:28*. [Some think this means the Jewish people will still be living as an ethnic group when Jesus returns and the world ends.]

died. ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away; my words will never pass away."

No One Knows the Day and Hour

(Also Mark 13.32-37; Luke 17.26-30, 34-36)

³⁶"No one knows, however, when that day and hour will come—neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; the Father alone knows. ³⁷The coming of the Son of Man will be like what happened in the time of Noah. ³⁸Just as in the days before the Flood, people ate and drank, men and women married, up to the very day Noah went into the ark; ³⁹yet they did not know what was happening until the Flood came and swept them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes. ⁴⁰At that time two men will be working in the field: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind. ⁴¹Two women will be at the mill grinding meal: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind. ⁴²Watch out, then, because you do not know what day your Lord will come. ⁴³Remember this: if the man of the house knew the time when the thief would come, he would stay awake and not let the thief break into his house. ⁴⁴For this reason, then, you also must be always ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him."

have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The Day and Hour Unknown

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

35. **Heaven and earth will pass away.** Even though Creation will vanish, everything Christ says will still remain true.

36. **No one knows, however.** Anyone who sets a date for Christ to come, cannot be telling the truth! Even the Son does not know when this will be. [The time factor here is the End of the World.]

37. **The coming of the Son of Man.** The Second Coming and the end of the world.

38-39. **Just as in the days.** The Flood came as a surprise! [It had probably never rained before (*Gen. 2:6*.)] Just so, no one will be expecting Jesus when he comes (*verse 43*). Life will be going on as usual.

40-41. **Two men will be working.** It will be a time when good and bad are separated. See the Parable of the Weeds (*Matt. 13:24-30*).

42. **Watch out, then.** Be prepared! If the Lord should come tonight [or if you should die] be ready to meet him!

43-44. **If the man of the house knew.** The thief does not call you up and tell you when he is coming. [Some think this means there will be *no signs at all* to show the Second coming is near.] The idea of coming "like a thief in the night" is also mentioned in *1 Thess. 5:1-10; Rev. 3:3; 16:15*. The thought is not to "watch for Christ," but to "be sure you will be ready" when he comes!

The Faithful or the Unfaithful Servant

(Also Luke 12. 41-48)

⁴⁵“Who, then, is the faithful and wise servant? He is the one whom his master has placed in charge of the other servants, to give them their food at the proper time. ⁴⁶How happy is that servant if his master finds him doing this when he comes home! ⁴⁷Indeed, I tell you, the master will put that servant in charge of all his property. ⁴⁸But if he is a bad servant, he will tell himself, ‘My master will not come back for a long time,’ ⁴⁹and he will begin to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards. ⁵⁰Then that servant’s master will come back some day when he does not expect him and at a time he does not know. ⁵¹The master will cut him to pieces, and make him share the fate of the hypocrites. There he will cry and gnash his teeth.”

“Who then is the faithful 45
and wise servant, whom the
master has put in charge of
the servants in his house-
hold to give them their food 46
at the proper time? It will be
good for that servant whose
master finds him doing so
when he returns. I tell you 47
the truth, he will put him in
charge of all his possessions.
But suppose that servant is 48
wicked and says to himself,
‘My master is staying away a
long time,’ and he then be- 49
gins to beat his fellow ser-
vants and to eat and drink
with drunkards. The master 50
of that servant will come on
a day when he does not ex-
pect him and at an hour he
is not aware of. He will cut 51
him to pieces and assign him
a place with the hypocrites,
where there will be weeping
and grinding of teeth.”

The Parable of the Ten Girls

25 “On that day the Kingdom of heaven will be like ten girls who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and the other five were wise. ³The foolish ones took their lamps but did not

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish 2
and five were wise. The fool- 3
ish ones took their lamps
but did not take any oil with

45-51. **Who, then, is the faithful and wise servant?** This parable is also found in Luke [it may have been told many times by Jesus]. See also 2 Pet. 3:1-9. The central idea of this parable is that God’s people should not try to “boss” each other, thinking that Jesus has delayed so long that he will not come at all! Some think religion is a way to become rich, and they “begin to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards.” Will cut him to pieces. Severely punish! Teachers will be judged with greater strictness (James 3:1). It is very important to teach the Truth of God. Those who teach lies will lose their reward, but the faithful will live forever!

1. **The Kingdom of heaven will be like.** The third question the disciples asked in Matt. 24:3 was about the end of the world. Chapter 25 is an answer to this. The central idea of this chapter is the wise use of this life in order to be prepared for the coming of the Lord. **Ten girls.** No special meaning in the number 10, or the fact that they are girls. **Who took their oil lamps.** The symbolism is taken from Eastern marriage customs. The official “engagement” (see note on Matt. 22:2) was an agreement to marry. When the time came for the Wedding feast, the bridegroom came to the bride’s house and took her during the night to his own house. The bridesmaids waited at the bride’s house, and escorted the group to the marriage feast. Thus the oil lamps, since it would be at night.

2. **Foolish - wise.** Notice the difference in attitude. Compare Matt. 7:21-27.

3. **Did not take any extra oil.** These girls started out with full lamps, but no extra in reserve.

take any extra oil with them, 'while the wise ones took containers full of oil with their lamps. ⁵The bridegroom was late in coming, so the girls began to nod and fall asleep.

⁶"It was already midnight when the cry rang out, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come and meet him!' ⁷The ten girls woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸Then the foolish ones said to the wise ones, 'Let us have some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' ⁹'No, indeed,' the wise ones answered back, 'there is not enough for you and us. Go to the store and buy some for yourselves.' ¹⁰So the foolish girls went off to buy some oil, and while they were gone the bridegroom arrived. The five girls who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was closed.

¹¹"Later the other girls arrived. 'Sir, sir! Let us in!' they cried. ¹²'But I really don't know you,' the bridegroom answered."

¹³And Jesus concluded, "Watch out, then, because you do not know the day or hour."

them. The wise, however, ⁴ took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was late, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'" ⁶

"Then all the virgins ⁷ woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' ⁸

"No," they replied, 'there ⁹ may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on ¹⁰ their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with them to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

"Later the others also ¹¹ came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'"

"But he replied, 'I tell you ¹² the truth, I don't know you.'

"Therefore keep watch, ¹³

4. **While the wise ones took.** They were not going to be caught short. [Read *Heb. 6:1-3* and compare.]

5. **The bridegroom was late in coming.** Later than they had any reason to expect. **To nod and fall asleep.** The thought is that the bridegroom would come unexpectedly.

6. **It was already midnight.** The hour of quiet sleep. The coming is sudden, unexpected! (Compare *Matt. 24:27*.)

7. **Trimmed their lamps.** The Jewish lamp was a cup filled with oil, and a wick floating on it. After burning some time, the wick would need trimmed and the oil refilled.

8. **Our lamps are going out.** They had kept their lamps flickering up to now. Both death and Judgment will show things in their true light.

9. **No, indeed.** The wise girls had none to spare. No one can give surplus righteousness to another. [Except Jesus, of course.] **Go . . . buy.** Everyone must reach out to Christ with his own faith.

10. **While they were gone.** If they had started earlier, they would have had time. The door of the Kingdom is open wide now, but it must close one day.

11. **Sir, Sir! Let us in!** As Augustine says: "They came looking for mercy when it was time for judgment." Compare *Luke 13:25*.

12. **But I really don't know you.** Their right to come in had been forfeited!

13. **Watch out, then.** The whole parable illustrates this. **APPLICATION.** Some understand the parable in this way: The Bridegroom is Christ; the time of the wedding feast is the coming to Judgment; the delay in coming symbolizes the unknown period of time between Christ's first and second comings; the girls represent the waiting church [messianic community]; the wise girls—those who actively live their faith; the foolish girls—those who are indifferent; the midnight cry is death or Judgment; begging for oil is death-bed repentance; the closing of the door means the offer of salvation has been withdrawn. The moral is to act while you can!

The Parable of the Three Servants

(Also Luke 19.11-27)

¹⁴“It will be like a man who was about to leave home on a trip; he called his servants and put them in charge of his property. ¹⁵He gave to each one according to his ability: to one he gave five thousand dollars, to the other two thousand dollars, and to the other one thousand dollars. Then he left on his trip. ¹⁶The servant who had received five thousand dollars went at once and invested his money and earned another five thousand dollars. ¹⁷In the same way the servant who received two thousand dollars earned another two thousand dollars. ¹⁸But the servant who received one thousand dollars went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹“After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The servant who had received five thousand dollars came in and handed over the other five thousand dollars. ‘You gave me five thousand dollars, sir,’ he said, ‘Look! Here are another five thousand dollars that I have earned.’ ²¹“Well done, good and faithful servant!’ said his master. ‘You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!’

because you do not know the day or the hour.

The Parable of the Talents

“Again, it will be like a 14 man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five 15 talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man 16 who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the 17 one with the two talents gained two more. But the 18 man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

“After a long time the 19 master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who 20 had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’

“His master replied, ‘Ex- 21 cellent, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

14. **It will be like a man.** Christ returning to heaven (*Acts 1:9*). **Called his servants.** Symbolic of the obligation which Christ placed on his followers (*Matt. 28:19-20*).

15. **To each one according to his ability.** He gives them the amount of responsibility they can use, to carry out his work.

16. **The servant who had received five thousand dollars.** He doubled the investment by using his ability wisely.

17. **In the same way.** The servant who received two thousand dollars also did well.

18. **But the servant.** People commonly hid their money in the ground for safe keeping. This servant’s only thought is to preserve what he has. Note that what he does is not illegal, only unwise.

19. **After a long time.** This implies the Lord will be late in coming [to our way of thinking]. **And settled accounts.** At Judgment, our character, our life, and how we have used our opportunities, will all be examined. *Rev. 22:12*.

20. **The servant.** He had doubled what he had received, and hands it to the master.

21. **Well done.** Faithfulness in managing small amounts will bring new opportunities.

²²Then the servant who had been given two thousand dollars came in and said, 'You gave me two thousand dollars, sir. Look! Here are another two thousand dollars that I have earned.' ²³'Well done, good and faithful servant!' said his master. 'You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!' ²⁴Then the servant who had received one thousand dollars came in and said, 'Sir, I know you are a hard man; you reap harvest where you did not plant, and gather crops where you did not scatter seed. ²⁵I was afraid, so I went off and hid your money in the ground. Look! Here is what belongs to you.' ²⁶'You bad and lazy servant!' his master said. 'You knew, did you, that I reap harvest where I did not plant, and gather crops where I did not scatter seed? ²⁷Well, then, you should have deposited my money in the bank, and I would have received it all back with interest when I returned. ²⁸Now, take the money away from him and give it to the one who has ten thousand dollars. ²⁹For to every one who has, even more will be given, and he will have more than enough; but the one who has nothing, even the little he has will be taken away from

"The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

"Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

22. **Then the servant.** He also has doubled what he has received.

23. **Well done.** Exactly the same reward, even though he was not given the same responsibility. He used what he had well.

24. **Sir, I know you are a hard man.** This is an insult. Many will not work for Christ because they think following him imposes unreasonable demands on their time, talents, money, and life in general.

25. **I was afraid.** This is his motivation. Compare *1 John 4:18, Rev. 21:8*.

26. **You bad and lazy servant.** Not only unfaithful, but insulting. Compare *Jude 14-16*.

27. **You should have deposited.** If he had put the money in the bank, he would have at least made something. By hiding it, he even lost the interest the bank would have paid.

28. **Now, take the money away from him.** He has failed his trust. An opportunity which is not used, is taken away, and becomes a curse. **Give it to the one.** Because he has proved his faithfulness.

29. **For to everyone who has.** This is a general law of life. Every opportunity used, brings further opportunity. Every opportunity unused, is a step backwards. "Wealth protects the rich man; poverty destroys the poor" (*Prov. 10:15*).

him, ³⁰As for this useless servant—throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry and gnash his teeth.' ”

The Final Judgment

³¹“When the Son of Man comes as King, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his royal throne, ³²and all the earth’s people will be gathered before him. Then he will divide them into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats: ³³he will put the sheep at his right and the goats at his left. ³⁴Then the King will say to the people on his right, ‘You that are blessed by my Father: come! Come and receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. ³⁵I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, ³⁶naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and

And throw that worthless ³⁰servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.’

The Sheep and the Goats

“When the Son of Man ³¹comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be ³²gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep ³³on his right and the goats on his left.

“Then the King will say to ³⁴these on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was ³⁵hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you ³⁶clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

30. **Throw him outside in the darkness.** This implies total separation from God for those who refuse to love him and do his will (see *Matt. 7:21-23*).

31. **When the Son of Man.** (Compare *1 Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:11-15*.) The Second Coming at the end of the world is meant. **As King.** He is King now (*1 Cor. 15:25*) and has a Kingdom (*Col. 1:13*). But at his Second Coming, he will sit on the *great white throne* as the Judge (compare *Acts 17:31*).

32. **And all the earth’s people.** This is the final separation of the good from the bad.

33. **The sheep at his right.** The sheep symbolizes the Lord’s people. The “right side” is the place of honor (compare *Heb. 12:2*).

34. **Then the King will say.** Those who have chosen to follow Christ in this present world are called to share Eternity.

35-36. **I was hungry and you fed me.** The reason why those on the right receive the eternal kingdom is seen. They had demonstrated their faith by their actions (*James 2:14-26*). What they had done to fellow-men, they had done to Christ by proxy. These are things which everyone can do. A real, personal service is implied.

you visited me.' ³⁷The righteous will then answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothed you? ³⁹When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?' ⁴⁰The King will answer back, 'I tell you, indeed, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!'

⁴¹"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Away from me, you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels! ⁴²I was hungry but you would not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me drink; ⁴³I was a stranger but you would not welcome me in your homes, naked but you would not clothe me; I was sick and in prison but you would not take care of me.' ⁴⁴Then they will answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we would not help you?' ⁴⁵The King will answer them back, 'I tell you, indeed, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?

When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

"The King will reply, 'I ⁴⁰tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

"Then he will say to those ⁴¹on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I ⁴²was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and ⁴³you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

"They also will answer, ⁴⁴'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?"

"He will reply, 'I tell you ⁴⁵the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

37-39. **When, Lord, did we ever see you?** Christ has been gone from earth. They did not see him in person.

40. **I tell you, indeed.** Compare *Matt. 20:25-28*. These had acted out what the Lord said, in serving others in the name of Christ. But they had not known that Christ accepted this as personal service to himself. The righteous are: (1) those whose sins are forgiven; (2) those who have lived and acted in the name of Christ; (3) those who have been full of the love of Christ, and who have shared this with others. To love Christ is to love all mankind.

41. **Away from me!** The redeemed will be with the Lord forever (*1 Thess. 4:17*). Those who have turned their back to Christ, will be thrown out into the darkness forever! Jesus' makes a strong statement of Eternal Punishment for the wicked. Note this was not intended for humans.

42-43. **But you would not.** This is the story of their life. They are doomed, not for what they did, but for what they failed to do!

44. **When, Lord, did we ever see you?** If they had seen him in all his glory, they would have given him everything they had!

45. **Whenever you refused.** Christ came to them in many forms, but they turned him away and closed the door in his face.

⁴⁶These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment; the righteous will go to eternal life."

"Then they will go away ⁴⁶ to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

The Plot against Jesus

(Also Mark 14.1-2; Luke 22.1-2; John 11.45-53)

The Plot Against Jesus

26 When Jesus had finished teaching all these things, he said to his disciples, ²"In two days, as you know, it will be the Feast of Passover, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be nailed to the cross."

26 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, "As you know, the Passover is two days away— and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

³Then the chief priests and the Jewish elders met together in the palace of Caiaphas, the High Priest, ⁴and made plans to arrest Jesus secretly and put him to death. ⁵"We must not do it during the feast," they said, "or the people will riot."

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. "But not during the feast," they said, "or there may be a riot among the people."

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

(Also Mark 14.3-9; John 12.1-8)

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper,

⁶While Jesus was at the house of Simon the

46. Eternal punishment. Eternal life. A separation will take place. Both states will last the same length of time. The choices made in this present world determine which way each of us will be sent.

1. When Jesus had finished. The things taught in the last three chapters. The time is Tuesday night [as we count time; their new day began at 6 P.M.].

2. In two days. After Wednesday and Thursday. The day spoken of is Friday. **Feast of Passover.** See *Exod. 12:1-14*. This day celebrated their deliverance from captivity in Egypt. It was the high point of the year. The Passover Lamb was symbolic of Christ.

3. Met together. An official meeting of the Sanhedrin. This was the "supreme court" of the Jews. There were seventy-one members, with the high priest being the president of the group. It could sentence to death, but could not kill without Roman permission. Notice it was made up of the religious leaders who were the bitter enemies of Jesus. In the trial of Jesus, they conducted it in an illegal manner, even by their own law. **Caiaphas.** Son-in-law of Annas who had been high priest, but had been removed from office by the Romans. Both were Sadducees.

4. To arrest Jesus secretly. Public opinion was against them, and they were afraid of the people.

5. Or the people will riot. As Passover time, Jerusalem was crowded with some millions of people. Josephus says that at Passover in 65 A.D., there were three million people there. They were afraid popular support of Jesus would cause a riot, and the Romans would take severe measures.

6. While Jesus was at the house. Matthew makes a "flashback" to the Saturday before this, in order to show clearly what Judas did. **Simon the leper.** Probably healed by Jesus, and a relative to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

leper, in Bethany, ⁷a woman came to him with an alabaster jar filled with an expensive perfume, which she poured on Jesus' head as he was eating. ⁸The disciples saw this and became angry. "Why all this waste?" they asked. ⁹"This perfume could have been sold for a large amount and the money given to the poor!"

¹⁰Jesus knew what they were saying and said to them. "Why are you bothering this woman? It is a fine and beautiful thing that she has done for me. ¹¹You will always have poor people with you, but I will not be with you always. ¹²What she did was to pour this perfume on my body to get me ready for burial. ¹³Now, remember this! Wherever this gospel is preached, all over the world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

(Also Mark 14.10-11; Luke 22.3-6)

¹⁴Then one of the twelve disciples—the one named Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests

a woman came to him with ⁷
an alabaster jar of very ex-
pensive perfume, which she
poured on his head as he
was reclining at the table.

When the disciples saw ⁸
this, they were indignant.
"Why this waste?" they
asked. "This perfume could ⁹
have been sold at a high
price and the money given to
the poor."

Aware of this, Jesus said ¹⁰
to them, "Why are you
bothering this woman? She
has done a beautiful thing to
me. The poor you will al-
ways have with you, but you
will not always have me. ¹¹
When she poured this per-
fume on my body, she did it
to prepare me for burial. ¹²
I tell you the truth, wherever
this gospel is preached
throughout the world, what
she has done will also be
told, in memory of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

Then one of the Twelve— ¹⁴
the one called Judas Iscariot
went to the chief priests and

7. **A woman came to him.** Mary, the sister of Lazarus (*John 12:3*). An alabaster jar. This contained a whole pint of very expensive perfume made of Nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head (*Mark 14:3*).

8. **And became angry.** It was Judas who spoke (*John 12:4-5*). But the other disciples were also displeased by this "waste."

9. **Given to the poor.** Reasonable, yet the *poor* whom Judas had in mind was himself (*John 12:6*). But notice the next verse.

10. **Why are you bothering this woman?** They were actually scolding this woman for what she had done! She had honored Jesus by her act of love. Their priorities were mixed, and they had not "thought through" what they were saying.

11. **You will always have poor people.** The opportunity to help them is always present. But Christ [in his human form] would not be with them long.

12. **To get me ready for burial.** Mary did this to show her love. Jesus identifies it as an anointing for burial. [This was the custom. See *John 19:40*.]

13. **Wherever this gospel is preached.** The fame of Mary's act would be spread all over the world. [This is also a prediction that the gospel would be preached to everybody (*Compare Col. 1:23*).]

14. **Went to the chief priests.** His frustration about losing this chance to help himself to money, sends him to the priests. He must have thought that since Jesus was about to be killed, he would never be treasurer of the earthly kingdom he had expected, so he ought to get what he can.

¹⁵and said, "What will you give me if I hand Jesus over to you?" They counted out thirty silver coins and gave them to him. ¹⁶From then on Judas was looking for a good chance to betray Jesus.

Jesus Eats the Passover Meal with His Disciples

(Also Mark 14.12-21; Luke 22.7-14, 21-23; John 13.21-30)

¹⁷On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, "Where do you want us to get the Passover meal ready for you?"

¹⁸"Go to a certain man in the city," he said to them, "and tell him: 'The Teacher says, My hour has come; my disciples and I will celebrate the Passover at your house.'"

¹⁹The disciples did as Jesus had told them and prepared the Passover meal.

²⁰When it was evening Jesus and the twelve disciples sat down to eat. ²¹During the meal Jesus said, "I tell you, one of you will betray me."

asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

The Lord's Supper

On the first day of the 17 Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

He replied, "Go into the 18 city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'" So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

When evening came, 20 Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And 21 while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me."

15. **What will you give me?** He knew they wanted to seize Jesus, and he offers to lead them to him for a price. **Thirty silver coins.** This makes *Zech. 11:12* come true. [Silver shekels, each worth about \$26 in 1974 dollars.] Joseph was sold for twenty silver coins (*Gen. 37:28*).

16. **From then on.** He watched for an opportunity. No one knows for certain what day Judas made the arrangement with the priests to do this.

17. **On the first day.** The Feast of Unleavened Bread normally began on the day following Passover. Yet this is the day before Passover. Josephus seems to imply that sometimes the Feast lasted longer than the usual seven days. Since it was the custom to use only unleavened bread the day before Passover, this may have been considered the beginning of the Feast. Alford (Greek Testament), and many others, believe Jesus ate the Passover on Thursday (a day early), and died on Friday about the time the Passover lambs were killed. See note on *John 19:14*. **Where?** The lamb had to be killed in the temple; and roasted. Unleavened bread, wine, bitter herbs, etc., all had to be ready, also a room where they could eat this.

18-19. **Go to a certain man.** A "sign" would identify the man (*Mark 14:13*). McGarvey thinks it was done this way so that Judas would not know the location in time to tell the Sanhedrin. This Passover was very important to Jesus and his disciples.

20. **When it was evening.** The lamb was killed between three and five o'clock (*Exod. 12:6*), and the Passover meal followed after sunset.

21. **I tell you.** The meal began with a giving of thanks. Now Jesus interrupts with shocking words *One of you will betray me.*

²²The disciples were very upset and began to ask him, one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?"

²³Jesus answered, "One who dips his bread in the dish with me will betray me. ²⁴The Son of Man will die as the Scriptures say he will, but how terrible for that man who will betray the Son of Man! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born!"

²⁵Judas, the traitor, spoke up. "Surely you don't mean me, Teacher?" he asked.

Jesus answered, "So you say."

The Lord's Supper

(Also Mark 14.22-26; Luke 22.15-20; 1 Cor. 11.23-25)

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take and eat it," he said; "this is my body."

²⁷Then he took the cup, gave thanks to God, and gave it to them. "Drink it, all of you," he said; ²⁸"this is my blood, which seals God's covenant, my blood poured out for many for the

They were very sad and ²²began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?"

Jesus replied, "The one ²³who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man ²⁴will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

Then Judas, the one who ²⁵would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you."

While they were eating, ²⁶Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Then he took the cup, ²⁷gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my ²⁸blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for

22. **The disciples were very upset.** No one questions the truth of this prophecy. No one accuses someone else. Each asks: "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?"

23. **One who dips his bread.** This was spoken quietly to John alone (John 13:23-29). Judas and the others did not hear. [Meals were eaten from a common bowl, each dipping in to eat.]

24. **As the Scriptures say.** This was God's Plan coming true. Yet the betrayer must bear the guilt of his own action [WHICH HE DOES OF HIS OWN FREE WILL].

25. **So you say.** In other words, "you are the man." John adds that Jesus said: "Hurry and do what you must!" Judas "went out at once." It is probable that Judas left before the "Lord's Supper" was instituted.

26. **While they were eating.** This is at the conclusion of the Passover meal, while they are still seated. **Jesus took the bread.** Some of the Passover bread. **Gave a prayer of thanks.** EUCARISTOS means both a "giving of thanks" and a "blessing." **This is my body.** The Jews said of the Passover Lamb: "This is the body of the lamb which our fathers ate in Egypt."

27. **Then he took the cup.** One of those used in the Passover. *Drink it all of you.* That is, drink the "fruit of the grape" it contained.

28. **This is my blood.** Symbolic—since blood is forbidden to Christians (Acts 15:29). **God's covenant.** Heb. 8:8-13; 1 Cor. 15:3; Col. 1:20. **My blood poured out for many.** An unlimited sacrifice, which must be seized through faith. See Rom. 5:18.

forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in my Father's Kingdom."

³⁰Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also Mark 14.27-31; Luke 22.31-34; John 13.36-38)

³¹Then Jesus said to them, "This very night all of you will run away and leave me, because the scripture says, 'God will kill the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

³²But after I am raised to life I will go to Galilee ahead of you."

³³Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "I will never leave you, even though all the rest do!"

³⁴"Remember this!" Jesus said to Peter. "Before the rooster crows tonight you will say three times that you do not know me."

³⁵Peter answered, "I will never say I do not know you, even if I have to die with you!"

And all the disciples said the same thing.

the forgiveness of sins. I tell 29
you, I will not drink from
this fruit of the vine from
now on until that day when I
drink it anew with you in my
Father's kingdom."

When they had sung a 30
hymn, they went out to the
Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

Then Jesus told them, 31
"This very night you will all
fall away on account of me,
for it is written:

'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep of the
flock will be scattered.'

But after I have risen, I will 32
go ahead of you into Gal-
ilee."

Peter replied, "Even if all 33
fall away on account of you,
I never will"

"I tell you the truth," 34
Jesus answered, "this very
night, before the rooster
crows, you will disown me
three times."

But Peter declared, "Even 35
if I have to die with you, I
will never disown you." And
all the other disciples said
the same.

29. **Until the day.** The messianic community sees in this Holy Meal [Lord's Supper] both a memorial of the Cross and a prediction of the future. The "new wine" in the Father's Kingdom is symbolic of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb and his church (*Rev. 19:7-8*). Paul received a special revelation on the Lord's Supper (*1 Cor. 11:23*), and the Christians ate this Holy Meal every Sunday.

30. **Then they sang a hymn.** It was the custom to close Passover by singing Psalms 115 to 118. Singing was given a new place in the messianic community. **To the Mount of Olives.** To the garden of Gethsemane on the mountain side. It is the darkness of night. Only two or three hours pass from the time of the Lord's Supper until Jesus is betrayed and seized.

31. **All of you will run away.** *Zechariah 13:7* spoke of this. This would seem to be the end of all their hope.

32. **I will go to Galilee.** He promises that after raising from death, he will meet with them in Galilee (see *Matt. 28:16; 1 Cor. 15:6*).

33. **Peter spoke up.** Impulsive as usual, and overconfident of his strength.

34. **Remember this!** Peter would remember—after it was too late! Satan was going to test all of them (*Luke 22:31*). **Before the rooster crows.** Mark says "twice." The first crowing would be at midnight, the second at 3 A.M.

35. **Even if I have to die with you.** They meant what they were saying, but they did not know their own weakness.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

(Also Mark 14.32-42; Luke 22.39-46)

³⁶Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took with him Peter, and Zebedee's two sons. Grief and anguish came over him, ³⁸and he said to them. "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and watch with me."

³⁹He went a little farther on, threw himself face down to the ground, and prayed. "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup away from me! But not what I want, but what you want."

⁴⁰Then he returned to the three disciples and found them asleep; and he said to Peter, "How is it that you three were not able to watch with me for one hour? ⁴¹Keep watch, and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

⁴²Again a second time Jesus went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cup cannot be taken

Gethsemane

Then Jesus went with his 36 disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He 37 took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he 38 said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

Going a little farther, he 39 fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Then he returned to his 40 disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that 41 you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

He went away a second 42 time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it may your will be done."

36. **Gethsemane.** The name means "oil-press," a press for making oil from the olives that gave the Mount of Olives its name. **Sit here.** He speaks to the eight who would stay there. **While I go.** He reacted to this time of crisis by praying to his Father.

37. **Grief and anguish.** This is his human side (see *Heb. 5:7*). He dreaded the agony of death just as we would. But, he came to do the Father's will! Peter, James, and John were the three closest to him. They had been with him at the Transfiguration.

38. **The sorrow in my heart.** The weight of sorrow was literally crushing him! Perhaps the key to this is found in these words: "God made him share our sin" (*2 Cor. 5:21*). **Stay here.** He must be alone with his Father.

39. **If it is possible!** No "make believe" here! There was no other way to make salvation possible! **Take this cup away!** The agony of betrayal, the trial and mockery, and the agony of death on the cross. **But what you want.** Perfect faith. He is willing to do whatever the Father requires of him.

40. **Then he returned.** Peter, James, and John are sleeping. Luke says their great grief made them sleep. It is said that condemned men usually sleep soundly the night before their execution.

41. **Keep watch, and pray.** Not to avoid temptation, but so they will endure the temptation that must come to them. **But the flesh is weak.** *Rom. 7:21-25*.

42. **Again a second time.** Luke adds "more fervently," and "his sweat was like drops of blood."

away unless I drink it, your will be done.” ⁴³He returned once more and found the disciples asleep; they could not keep their eyes open.

⁴⁴Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

⁴⁵Then he returned to the disciples and said, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinful men. ⁴⁶Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!”

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also Mark 14. 43-50; Luke 22.47-53; John 18.3-12)

⁴⁷Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a large crowd carrying swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and the Jewish elders. ⁴⁸The traitor had given the crowd a signal: “The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him!”

⁴⁹When Judas arrived he went straight to Jesus and said, “Peace be with you, Teacher,” and kissed him.

⁵⁰Jesus answered, “Be quick about it, friend!” Then they came up, arrested Jesus, and held

When he came back, he ⁴³ again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and ⁴⁴ went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

Then he returned to the ⁴⁵ disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go! Here ⁴⁶ comes my betrayer!”

Jesus Arrested

While he was still speak- ⁴⁷ ing, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had ar- ⁴⁸ ranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.” Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.

Jesus replied, “Friend, do ⁵⁰ what you came for.”

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and

43. **And found the disciples asleep.** Our Savior was Man as well as God. He was “tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin” (Heb. 4:15). He wants human companionship in this time of crisis.

44. **And prayed the third time.** Praying the same prayer over again is not always ritual. Sometimes it shows intensity of feeling!

45. **Are you still sleeping and resting?** He scolds them. They had not watched as they should have. The time has passed and the soldiers are coming.

46. **Get up, let us go.** The traitor and the enemy are here. DID GOD ANSWER CHRIST’S PRAYER? Heb. 5:7 says he did! An angel came and strengthened him (Luke 22:43). A prayer to remove a crisis may be answered in two ways: (1) the crisis is taken away, and we remain the same; (2) we are made so strong that the crisis ceases to be such a problem.

47. **When Judas . . . arrived.** Judas knew where to look, since Jesus came here often. **A large crowd.** Roman soldiers, temple guards, priests, etc. (John 18:3,12). The Sanhedrin has sent them.

48-49. **Had given the crowd a signal.** A kiss of friendship is the kiss of death.

50. **Be quick about it, friend!** They seize Jesus and tie him up (John 18:12).

him tight. ⁵¹One of those who were with Jesus drew his sword and struck at the High Priest's slave, cutting off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place, because all who take the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Don't you know that I could call on my Father for help and at once he would send me more than twelve armies of angels? ⁵⁴But in that case, how could the Scriptures come true that say it must happen in this way?"

⁵⁵Then Jesus spoke to the crowd, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs to capture me, as though I were an outlaw? Every day I sat down and taught in the temple, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But all this has happened to make come true what the prophets wrote in the Scriptures."

Then all the disciples left him and ran away.

Jesus before the Council

(Also *Mark 14.53-65; Luke 22.54-55, 63-71; John 18.13-14, 19-24*)

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus took him to the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest, where the teachers of the Law and the elders had

arrested him. With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting of his ear.

"Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Before the Sanhedrin

Those who had arrested ⁵⁷Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the

51. Drew his sword. Peter (*John 18:10*). Cutting off his ear. John says the slaves' name was Machus. Jesus healed the man's ear (*Luke 22:51*).

52. All who take the sword will die by the sword. A general fact. The sword is not to be used to defend truth or to spread the Kingdom.

53-54. Don't you know? The Logos needs no human defenders. Twelve armies of angels. A Roman "army" was made up of more than 6,000 men. How could the Scriptures come true? God spoke through the prophets to tell about this. God's Plan was made before Creation.

55-56. As though I were an outlaw? Not a thief, but an outlaw like Barabbas (see *Mark 15:7*). This was the charge made against Christ (*Luke 23:2*). Then all the disciples. As soon as they capture Jesus, all the disciples run away into the darkness.

57. Took him to the house of Caiaphas. Annas, the former high priest, first questions Jesus (*John 18:13*). The Sanhedrin was gathered there, probably in the darkness of night.

gathered together. ⁵⁸Peter followed him from a distance, as far as the courtyard of the High Priest's house. He went into the courtyard and sat down with the guards, to see how it would all come out. ⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some false evidence against Jesus, to put him to death; ⁶⁰but they could not find any, even though many came up and told lies about him. Finally two men stepped forward ⁶¹and said, "This man said, 'I am able to tear down God's temple and three days later build it back up.'"

⁶²The High Priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Have you no answer to give to his accusation against you?" ⁶³But Jesus kept quiet. Again the High Priest spoke to him, "In the name of the living God, I now put you on oath: tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

⁶⁴Jesus answered him, "So you say. But I tell all of you: from this time on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of the Almighty, and coming on the clouds of heaven!"

elders had assembled. But ⁵⁸Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome.

The chief priests and the ⁵⁹whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. But they did ⁶⁰not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally two came forward and declared, "This fellow ⁶¹said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and reit in three days.'"

Then the high priest stood ⁶²up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer?" "you not going to answer?" What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent. ⁶³

The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

"Yes, it is as you say," ⁶⁴Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

58. Peter followed. At a distance, not wanting to be identified as a disciple.

59. Tried to find some false evidence. A charge that would "hold up" in court. No one could be condemned legally unless two witnesses testified to a charge punishable by death.

60. But they could not find any. Any charge which would pass the Roman ruler.

61. 'This man said.' They told a distorted version of what Christ had said (*John 2:19*). Mark says that not even they could make their stories agree (*Mark 14:59*).

62-63. Have you no answer? But Jesus said not a word. I now put you on oath. This puts Jesus under a vow to tell the truth [which he did anyway]. Tell us if you are the Messiah. The high priest is asking two questions: (1) *Are you the Messiah?* (2) *Are you the Son of God?* A "yes" to the second question would be blasphemy [unless Jesus really were the Son of God—WHICH HE WAS AND IS].

64. So you say. That is: "You have declared the Truth in what you said." At the greatest moment of crisis in his life, Jesus breaks his silence to declare himself the Son of God!—at the cost of his life. From this time on. What they were doing right then, would raise Jesus to glory on the Cross, bring the victory of the Resurrection, and seat him at the Right Side of God in heaven. Their places would shortly be reversed, with Jesus on the throne, and them standing to be judged by him.

⁶⁵At this the High Priest tore his clothes and said, "Blasphemy! We don't need any more witnesses! Right here you have heard his wicked words! ⁶⁶What do you think?"

They answered, "He is guilty, and must die."

⁶⁷Then they spat in his face and beat him; and those who slapped him ⁶⁸said, "Prophecy for us, Messiah! Guess who hit you!"

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also *Mark 14.66-72; Luke 22.56-62; John 18.15-18, 25-27*)

⁶⁹Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, when one of the High Priest's servant girls came to him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Galilee."

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of them all. "I don't know what you are talking about," he answered, ⁷¹and went on out to the entrance of the courtyard. Another servant girl saw him and said to the men there, "He was with Jesus of Nazareth."

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"

"He is worthy of death," they answered.

Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, "Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?"

Peter Disowns Jesus

Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said.

But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth."

65. **The High Priest tore his clothes.** Symbolic. Compare *Acts 14:14*. **Blasphemy!** It was, if he is not God; it was not, if he is God. Jesus could not be a "good man" and make the claims he did **UNLESS THEY WERE TRUE!**

66. **He is guilty, and must die.** This is the formal sentence of the Sanhedrin [the Jewish Supreme Court]. Blasphemy is the charge they enter on their records. But since the Roman law did not recognize blasphemy as bringing the death sentence, Jesus was charged before Pilate as an outlaw (*Luke 23:2; Mark 15:7*).

67. **Then they spat in his face.** Symbolic. This was the greatest insult a Jew could give (*Deut. 25:9*). Even to spit in front of anyone was thought to be a great sin by the people of the Middle-East.

68. **Prophecy for us, Messiah.** Mark says he was blindfolded. These Jewish leaders could not be too cruel to a condemned prisoner! There is also a taunt here: "If you really were God, you would *know* who hit you!"

69. **Peter was sitting outside.** He sat outside in the courtyard while the trial went on inside. This would be the Castle of Antonia. The courtyard was in the center, enclosed by rooms built around it. Doors and windows opened into the courtyard from the rooms [they had no "window glass"], so Peter and John could sit and witness the things which were happening inside. **Came to him and said.** John says she was the girl at the gate. Luke gives the most complete account (*Luke 22:54-62*). **You, too.** His "accent" identified him as a Galilean.

70. **But he denied it.** Just a few hours earlier, he had been ready to die with Jesus! His faith fails, as he sees his Lord seemingly helpless in the hands of his enemies. [*But notice Luke 22:31-32!*]

71. **And went on out to.** Fear drives him out. **Another servant girl saw him.** Accuses Peter of being a disciple (compare *verse 69*).

⁷²Again Peter denied it, and answered, "I swear that I don't know that man!"

⁷³After a little while the men standing there came to Peter. "Of course you are one of them," they said. "After all, the way you speak gives you away!"

⁷⁴Then Peter made a vow: "May God punish me if I am not telling the truth! I do not know that man!" Just then a rooster crowed, ⁷⁵and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him, "Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." He went out and wept bitterly.

He denied it again, with 72 an oath: "I don't know the man!"

After a little while, those 73 standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away."

Then he began to call 74 down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!"

Immediately a rooster 75 crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

72. **Again Peter denied it.** This time with stronger language. "Swear" means with a vow [oath]. See verse 74.

73. **After a little while.** Luke says *about an hour*. John says it was *a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off* who spoke. Each language has dialects, and Peter's clearly identified him as a Galilean. The man says this is proof that Peter is one of them [eleven of the Twelve were Galileans].

74. **Then Peter made a vow.** This time he makes it as strong as he can! [The TEV reconstructs the language of his "cursing and swearing."] "*May God punish me if I am not telling the truth!*" I do not know that man! Peter knew he was telling a lie as he said this. **Just then a rooster crowed.** And the words of Jesus come flooding back!

75. **And Peter remembered.** Luke says the *Lord turned around and looked straight at Peter. He went out and wept bitterly.* He had sinned greatly! His heart is broken! [Notice the difference between Peter and Judas. Peter's sorrow makes him turn from sin and turn back to Christ. Judas' sorrow makes him kill himself. Read 2 Cor. 7:10.]

THE ORDER OF EVENTS. After the arrest: (1) Jesus is taken before Annas, ex-high priest (see note on Luke 3:2), for a preliminary hearing (John 18:13). (2) Next to Caiaphas, Peter and John following along (John 18:15, 24). [Alford (Greek Testament) says both Annas and Caiaphas lived in the same *great building* (which must have been the Castle of Antonia—which was a city within a city).] (3) First stage of Jewish Trial before Caiaphas (John 18:19-24). (4) Alford (Greek Testament) thinks a second stage of Jewish Trial is implied (John 18:24). It is possible that Jesus was shuffled from room to room, since both Annas and Caiaphas lived in the same castle. The Jewish Trial was illegal by their own law, since it took place at night. (5) Peter's three denials during the Jewish Trial (Matt. 26:69-75). (6) After condemning Jesus to death, The Sanhedrin recesses until dawn. (7) It is implied that Jesus was cruelly treated during the recess (Mark 14:65). (8) The Sanhedrin reconvenes at dawn (Matt. 27:1). This would be the third stage of the Jewish Trial—to make it legal. (9) Jesus is again questioned and officially condemned to death (Luke 22:66-71). (10) Jesus is tied with chains and taken to Pilate (Mark 15:1).

THE ILLEGAL CONVICTION. *Lawyers and Judges have studied this.* During the entire trial, the rules of Jewish Law were flagrantly violated! The accused was deprived of his rights, and treated worse than a criminal. His arrest was at night [illegal]; he was tied-up as an outlaw; he was beaten before his arraignment before the court; and he was abused in open court during the trial. His trial was on a "feast-day" [illegal] and before sunrise [illegal]. He was forced to incriminate himself [illegal] and this under the solemn oath [charge] of the court. He was convicted, sentenced, and executed on the same day. All this was contrary to Jewish Law.

Jesus Taken to Pilate*(Also Mark 15.1; Luke 23.1-2; John 18.28-32)*

27 Early in the morning all the chief priests and the Jewish elders made their plan against Jesus to put him to death. ²They put him in chains, took him, and handed him over to Pilate, the Roman governor.

The Death of Judas*(Also Acts 1.18-19)*

³When Judas, the traitor, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he repented and took back the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned by betraying an innocent man to death!" he said.

"What do we care about that?" they answered. "That is your business!"

⁵Judas threw the money into the sanctuary and left them; then he went off and hanged himself.

⁶The chief priests picked up the money and said "This is blood money, and it is against our

Judas Hangs Himself

27 Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death. They bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate, the governor. 2

When Judas, who betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood." 3

"What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility." 4

So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. 5

The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is

1. **Early in the morning.** Jesus had already been sentenced to death, but another meeting of the Sanhedrin had to be held to make it legal, since the night trial had no legal standing. Mark says they met *hurriedly*. Luke gives more detail (*Luke 22:66-71*).

2. **And handed him over to Pilate.** The Sanhedrin could sentence to death, but not execute. The Romans reserved that right to themselves. Pilate was both the Roman governor and the commander of the army in that area. His home was at Caesarea, but he brought troops to Jerusalem during Passover, to keep order.

3. **When Judas . . . saw.** How sad! Some think the language implies Judas expected Jesus to use his "power" to escape at the last moment. **He repented.** METAMELETHEIS. Regret—worldly sadness (*2 Cor. 7:10*). Peter turned away from his sin and turned back to Jesus and was forgiven! Judas regretted his action and killed himself!

4. **I have sinned.** Perhaps Judas thought his confession of guilt would be "new evidence" that would free Jesus. **What do we care about that?** This is the attitude of the Jewish leaders. They had *used Judas* [but remember: he volunteered!], and cared not at all what became of him now.

5. **Judas threw the money into the sanctuary.** He spoke with the Jewish leaders in the Priest's Court, and threw the money into the Holy Place itself [the sanctuary]. **Hanged himself.** See *verse 3*. Luke gives some details in *Acts 1:18-19*.

6. **This is blood money.** Note they call it *blood money*. If Jesus had been a real criminal, it would have been *justice money*. Their Tradition allowed them to *pay* blood money, but not to take it back.

Law to put it in the temple treasury." After reaching an agreement about it, they used the money to buy Potter's Field, as a cemetery for foreigners. ⁸That is why that field is called "Field of Blood" to this very day.

⁹Then what the prophet Jeremiah had said came true, "They took the thirty silver coins, the amount the people of Israel had agreed to pay for him, ¹⁰and used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

Pilate Questions Jesus

(Also Mark 15.2-5; Luke 25.3-5; John 18.33-38)

¹¹Jesus stood before the Governor, who questioned him. "Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked.

"So you say," answered Jesus. ¹²He said nothing, however, to the accusations of the chief priests and elders.

¹³So Pilate said to him, "Don't you hear all these things they accuse you of?"

¹⁴But Jesus refused to answer a single word, so that the Governor was greatly surprised.

blood money." So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

Jesus Before Pilate

Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear how many things they are accusing you of?" But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

7. **They used the money to buy Potter's Field.** "Potter's Field," so named because clay was dug from it to make pottery. The priests bought this in Judas' name, so it was legally his (*Acts 1:18*).

8. **Field of Blood.** So named because it was bought with "Blood money," and because Judas fell to his death there (*Acts 1:18*).

9-10. **Then what the prophet Jeremiah.** This quotation may have come from Jewish Tradition. Scholars think it a paraphrase from *Zech. 11:12-13; Jer. 18:2-3; 32:6-15*. Thirty silver coins was the value of a slave (*Exod. 21:28-32*).

11. **Are you the king of the Jews?** [Pilate had come out of the Governor's palace to meet with the Jews (*John 18:28-29*).] At the Jewish Trial, they had charged Jesus with blasphemy. Pilate's question shows they have charged Jesus with "leading a revolt to make himself king of the Jews." **So you say.** Jesus admits to being king, but not in earthly terms (see *John 18:33-38*).

12. **He said nothing.** Jesus did not answer the accusation of the Jews. Note they accused him of "revolt" both before and after Pilate's question in *verse 11* (see *Luke 23:1-5*).

13. **So Pilate said.** A death sentence is no light matter, and Pilate tries to make Jesus answer their charges.

14. **But Jesus refused to answer.** He does not "dignify" the charges by giving an answer to them. Pilate is very much impressed by Jesus' silence. Later Pilate would try to set Jesus free (*John 19:12*).

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also *Mark 15.6-15; Luke 23.13-25; John 18.39—19.16*)

¹⁵At every Passover Feast the Governor was in the habit of setting free any prisoner the crowd asked for. ¹⁶At that time there was a well-known prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to set free for you? Jesus Barabbas or Jesus called the Christ?" ¹⁸He knew very well that they had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

¹⁹While Pilate was sitting in the judgment hall, his wife sent him a message: "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, because in a dream last night I suffered much on account of him."

²⁰The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask Pilate to set Barabbas free and

Now it was the governor's 15 custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. At that time they 16 had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. So when 17 the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew it was out of 18 envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

While Pilate was sitting 19 on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, because I have suffered a great deal today in a dream on account of him."

But the chief priests and 20 the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

15. **In the habit of setting free.** Pilate may suspect that Jesus is innocent, and that the Jewish leaders have brought him here out of jealousy. A custom gives him a chance to test this.

16. **A well known prisoner.** One who did lead a revolt (*Mark 15:7*). The two criminals who would be crucified with Jesus were fellow conspirators with this "Jesus Barabbas." ["Barabbas" may mean: "son of a father," or "son of a Rabbi."] Some have made him a "symbol" of the guilty human race which is set free from punishment by the substitution of the innocent Christ.

17. **So when the crowd gathered.** When Pilate found Jesus was a Galilean, he sent him to Herod, ruler of that region, who was in Jerusalem at this time. After trying to get Jesus to do a miracle, Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus, then sent him back to Pilate (*Luke 23:6-12*). It is after Jesus is sent back to Pilate, that this crowd gathers. **Which one?** Both Pilate and Herod have pronounced Jesus innocent of guilt (*Luke 23:15*). Pilate wanted to set Jesus free (*John 19:12*), so he gives them a choice between Jesus Barabbas (*who was guilty of revolt and murder*) and Jesus the Christ (*who was innocent of any crime*).

18. **He knew very well.** Pilate knew their motives, but he was afraid to do the right thing.

19. **His wife sent him a message.** On this sad day, only a Gentile woman spoke up to say a good word for Jesus. She called him "*that innocent man*." Procula (that is her name) must have been deeply interested in Jesus, and tradition says she became a follower of Christ after his resurrection. [Contrast Jesus' attitude toward women (*Luke 8:1-3*) with the Jews who said: "For better is the iniquity of a man, than a woman doing a good turn" (*Ecclesiasticus 42:14*).]

20. **Persuaded the crowds.** This crowd was assembled by the Jewish leaders at this early hour, and was probably "hand picked." It may be that those who welcomed him in the Triumphant Entry just a week before, did not even know of his arrest.

have Jesus put to death. ²¹But the Governor asked them, "Which one of these two do you want me to set free for you?"

"Barabbas!" they answered.

²²"What, then, shall I do with Jesus called the Christ?" Pilate asked them.

"Nail him to the cross!" they all answered.

²³But Pilate asked, "What crime has he committed?"

Then they started shouting at the top of their voices, "Nail him to the cross!"

²⁴When Pilate saw it was no use to go on, but that a riot might break out, he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am not responsible for the death of this man! This is your doing!"

²⁵The whole crowd answered back, "Let the punishment for his death fall on us and on our children!"

²⁶Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them; he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be nailed to the cross.

"Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor.

"Barabbas," they answered.

"What shall I do, then, ²²with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked.

They all answered, "Crucify him!"

"Why, what crime has he ²³committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

When Pilate saw that he ²⁴was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

All the people answered, ²⁵"Let his blood be on us and on our children!"

Then he released Barabbas ²⁶to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

21. **Barabbas! they answered.** Pilate asked them again, "Which one?", but their minds are made up. The Jewish leaders have rejected Jesus Christ and chosen a murderous revolutionary instead. [This choice was prophetic of their own doom! See note on *Matt. 24:21*.]

22. **Nail him to the cross!** This is the decision of the Jewish leaders and the people they represent. He will receive the punishment which Barabbas should have experienced for his crimes.

23. **What crime has he committed?** Pilate struggles between his sense of justice and his fear of the Jews. He repeats the question three times, and offers to have Jesus whipped and set free (*Luke 23:22*). But the situation is out of control, and he is too much the coward to take harsh measures to restore order.

24. **When Pilate saw it was no use to go on.** More than two million Jews were in Jerusalem for Passover, and probably not more than one thousand Roman soldiers were at his command. He could neither control a riot, nor explain it to his Roman superiors. **Washed his hands.** A symbolic act which said he was no longer responsible for what happened. **This is your doing.** Pilate is saying the guilt of this man's death is on the Jewish leaders and their people.

25. **The whole crowd answered back.** They understand what Pilate said, and they are willing for all this guilt to be placed upon both they and their children! But later they try to escape from what they have done (*Acts 5:28*). Jesus had prophesied: "*So the people of this time will be punished for the murder of all the prophets killed since the creation of the world*" (*Luke 11:50*). See also *Luke 23:27-31; Deut. 28:49-57*.

26. **He had Jesus whipped.** Condemned prisoners were whipped before being crucified. The whip was made of leather strips, and would cut the skin. It was done cruelly to drain the strength of the condemned man before nailing him to the cross.

The Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

(Also Mark 15:16-20; John 19:2-3)

²⁷Then Pilate's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's palace, and the whole company gathered around him. ²⁸They stripped off his clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. ²⁹Then they made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand; then they knelt before him and made fun of him. "Long live the King of the Jews!" they said. ³⁰They spat on him, and took the stick and hit him over the head. ³¹When they had finished making fun of him, they took the robe off 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 Mark 15:21-32; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:17-27)

³²As they were going out they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and they forced him to

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped 28 him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then wove a 29 crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit 30 on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they 31 had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

As they were going out, 32 they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the

27. **Took Jesus into the governor's palace.** Pilate stayed in Herod's palace when in Jerusalem (*see map*). The company of soldiers was probably a "maniple" of 200. These Gentile soldiers make fun of Jesus and cruelly abuse him (compare *Mark 15:16-20*).

28. **They stripped off his clothes.** They had put his clothes back on him after the whipping. Now they take them off again, and put a scarlet/purple robe on him [probably a worn-out robe thrown away by Herod]. Scarlet and purple were the "royal colors."

29. **A crown out of thorny branches.** Both to make fun of his claim to be the king of the Jews, and to cause him as much pain as possible.

30. **They spat on him.** The greatest insult! But these Gentile soldiers are no worse than the Jewish Sanhedrin (*Matt. 26:67*).

31. **When they had finished making fun of him.** Pilate tried once more to persuade the people to free Jesus (*John 19:5-16*). When he could not convince them, he placed Jesus in the custody of the high priests, and the soldiers took Jesus away to nail him to the cross.

32. **As they were going out.** Jesus died outside the city gate (*Heb. 13:12*). **A man from Cyrene.** Simon, father of two well known Christians (*Mark 15:21*). Cyrene was in North Africa, and had a large Jewish population. [Some think he was a black man.] **To carry Jesus' cross.** Prisoners carried their own crosses, but Jesus is too weak from all that has happened to him and fell while carrying his cross (*implied in John 19:17*). Simon is forced to carry it for him. [Some think *Luke 23:26* implies Simon only carried one end of the cross.]

carry Jesus' cross. ³³They came to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of the Skull."

³⁴There they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; after tasting it, however, he would not drink it.

³⁵They nailed him to the cross, and then divided his clothes among them by throwing dice. ³⁶After that they sat there and watched him. ³⁷Above his head they put the written notice of the accusation against him: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

³⁸Then they nailed two bandits to crosses with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left.

³⁹People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus: ⁴⁰"You were going to tear down the temple and build it back up in three days! Save yourself, if you are God's Son! Come on down from the cross!"

⁴¹In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and the elders made fun of him: ⁴²"He saved others but he cannot save himself! Isn't he the King of Israel? If he will come

cross. They came to a place ³³
called Golgotha (which
means The Place of the
Skull). There they offered ³⁴
him wine to drink, mixed
with gall; but after tasting
it, he refused to drink it.
When they had crucified ³⁵
him, they divided up his
clothes by casting lots. And ³⁶
sitting down, they kept
watch over him there. Above ³⁷
his head they placed the
written charge against him:
THIS IS JESUS, THE KING
OF THE JEWS. Two robbers ³⁸
were crucified with him,
one on his right and one
on his left. Those who ³⁹
passed by hurled insults at
him, shaking their heads
and saying, "You who are ⁴⁰
going to destroy the temple
and build it in three days,
save yourself! Come down
from the cross, if you are the
Son of God!"

In the same way the chief ⁴¹
priests, the teachers of the
law and the elders mocked
him. "He saved others," ⁴²
they said, "but he can't save

33. **Golgotha.** A Hebrew word which means "skull." The Latin word is *calvaria*, from which we get "Calvary." It may have been a place of execution. No one knows for sure just where it was located.

34. **Wine to drink, mixed with gall.** Mark says "myrrh," but perhaps both words refer to the same thing. This sour wine mixed with gall/myrrh was a drug to kill pain. ["Vinegar" in ancient times, was a sour wine made of grapes (*such as chianti*).] **After tasting it.** He understands their purpose.

35. **They nailed him to the cross.** This was the most hideously cruel death known to the ancient world. The victim suffered from fever and dehydration, but death did not usually come in less than 36 hours. Jews did not crucify Jews, nor Romans crucify Romans. Intense hate is shown by the Jewish leaders demanding that Jesus be crucified. **Then divided his clothes.** See *John 19:23-24*. This fulfilled *Psalms 22:18*.

36. **Watched him.** A guard was posted until the victim died.

37. **This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.** Luke says this was written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, so that everyone would be able to read it. The Jewish leaders objected to this, but Pilate said: "What I have written stays written" (*John 19:19-22*).

38. **Two bandits.** Fellow conspirators with Barabbas (*Mark 15:7*). They were being crucified for their part in leading a revolt against the Romans.

39. **Shook their heads.** A form of insult (see *2 Kings 19:21; Job 16:4; Psalm 109:25*). **Hurled insults.** They taunted him. [Remember that this is Passover, and many thousands of Jews have come to Jerusalem and some are camped on the hills around the place of execution.]

40. **You were going to tear down the temple.** What Jesus had prophesied was now taking place (*John 2:19-22*). **If you are God's Son.** That is: "What could God's Son be doing on a cross?"

41-42. **In the same way.** The Jewish leaders make fun of him. **But he cannot save himself.** A paradox! If he now saved himself, he would not be able to save others. **Isn't he the King of Israel?** Making fun of Jesus and the sign Pilate had put on the cross.

down off the cross now, we will believe in him!
⁴³He trusts in God and says he is God's Son. Well, then, let us see if God wants to save him now!"

⁴⁴Even the bandits who had been crucified with him insulted him in the same way.

The Death of Jesus

(Also Mark 15.33-41; Luke 23.44-49; John 19.28-30)

⁴⁵At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. ⁴⁶At about three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

⁴⁷Some of the people standing there heard him and said, "He is calling for Elijah!" ⁴⁸One of them ran up at once, took a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, put it on the end of a stick, and tried to make him drink it.

⁴⁹But the others said, "Wait, let us see if Elijah is coming to save him!"

himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' " In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

The Death of Jesus

From the sixth hour until ⁴⁵ the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ About the ninth hour Jesus 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 ⁴⁷ standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

Immediately one of them ⁴⁸ ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. But the ⁴⁹ rest said, "Leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

43. **And says he is God's Son.** The Sanhedrin had sentenced him to death because he said this. "*What could God's Son be doing on a cross?*"

44. **Even the bandits.** They were in great agony, but they insult him also! [But one changed his mind. See Luke 23:39-43.]

45. **Darkness, which lasted for three hours.** Over Judea, and some think the entire earth. This would not have been an eclipse, at the time of full moon. The darkness was the mighty act of God!

46. **At about three o'clock.** Jesus has been on the cross about six hours. **Jesus cried with a loud shout.** Some think that God had to briefly withdraw his "presence" from Christ, so he could experience death. Some think the fact that Jesus "shared our sin" (2 Cor. 5:21) caused God to briefly turn his back on Jesus as he held the world's sin on the cross. The words show that Jesus felt he hung on the cross *alone*, yet he calls: "My God, My God."

47. **He is calling for Elijah.** This is probably a deliberate misunderstanding. The Jews expected Elijah to come before the Messiah.

48. **Tried to make him drink it.** Jesus had said: "I am thirsty" (John 19:28). This was the sour wine the soldiers drank (see note on verse 34). This time Jesus drinks some, to moisten his dry throat (John 19:30).

49. **Wait.** This is spoken to the one giving Jesus the wine. They do not want to do anything that would prevent Elijah coming to save Jesus. [They are making fun of Jesus when they say this.]

⁵⁰Jesus again gave a loud cry, and breathed his last.

⁵¹Then the curtain hanging in the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split apart, ⁵²the graves broke open, and many of God's people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³They left the graves; and after Jesus rose from death they went into the Holy City, where many people saw them.

⁵⁴When the army officer and the soldiers with him who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and everything else that happened, they were terrified and said, "He really was the Son of God!"

⁵⁵There were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee and helped him. ⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

And when Jesus had cried 50
out again in a loud voice, he
gave up his spirit.

At that moment the cur- 51
tain of the temple was torn
in two from top to bottom.
The earth shook and the
rocks split. The tombs broke 52
open and the bodies of many
holy people who had died
were raised to life. They 53
came out of the tombs, and
after Jesus' resurrection they
went into the holy city and
appeared to many people.

When the centurion and 54
those with him who were
guarding Jesus saw the
earthquake and all that had
happened, they were terrifi-
ed, and exclaimed, "Surely
he was the Son of God!"

Many women were there, 55
watching from a distance.
They had followed Jesus
from Galilee to care for his
needs. Among them were 56
Mary Magdalene, Mary the

50. **Jesus again gave a loud cry.** "It is finished" (*John 19:30*). The "Church Fathers" believed this showed that Jesus died voluntarily. Dr. Stroud believes it shows Jesus died of a ruptured heart. Probably both are true. See *John 10:17-18*.

51. **The curtain . . . was torn in two.** This was the heavy curtain which divided the "Holy of Holies" from the "Holy Place" (see plan of Herod's Temple). "From top to bottom" shows this to be an act of God, and it is intended to be symbolic (see *Heb. 10:19-21*). **The earth shook.** Not an ordinary earthquake. This is a part of the supernatural and symbolic "signs" that accompany the Death of Jesus.

52. **The graves broke open.** This too is symbolic. **Were raised to life.** But not until Jesus himself was raised to life. This is implied in *Col. 1:18*.

53. **They left the graves.** Matthew states it this way to show that it was not Jesus who raised them from death; but that as Jesus came out of the grave, they also left their graves and went into Jerusalem. [We are not told whether they returned to their graves at a later time. Some think they ascended with Jesus, but we are not told this] **Where many people saw them.** Perhaps three million people crowded Jerusalem at this time (see note on *Matt. 26:5*). The crucifixion of Jesus and the "signs" which followed were seen by the whole Jewish people who were assembled here. **THIS WAS GOD'S ACT IN HISTORY!**

54. **He really was the Son of God!** The army officer meant this in the Jewish sense! He knew the charge against Jesus (*John 19:7*), and he would know Jewish customs well enough to be aware of the meaning of what he said.

55-56. **There were many women there.** These devoted women were still faithful, when the disciples had fled [They may have felt less threatened by the Jewish leaders, because they were women.] Of the apostles, we know only that John was near [he shows himself an eyewitness]. Alford (Greek Testament) thinks there was another group of disciples within sight, but at a distance. **Mary Magdalene.** Spoken of here in *Luke 8:2* (before the Resurrection). **Mary the mother of James and Joseph.** She was the wife of Clopas or Alphaeus (*Jesus 19:25*). See note on *Matt. 10:2-4*. **The mother of Zebedee's sons.** Salome, "his (Jesus') mother's sister" (*John 19:25*). See note on *Matt. 10:2-4*. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also at the cross, but Alford thinks she was led away by John (*John 19:27*).

The Burial of Jesus

(Also *Mark 15.42-47; Luke 23.50-56; John 19.38-42*)

⁵⁷When it was evening, a rich man from Arimathea arrived; his name was Joseph, and he also was a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went into the presence of Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate gave orders for the body to be given to Joseph. ⁵⁹So Joseph took it, wrapped it in a new linen sheet, ⁶⁰and placed it in his own grave, which he had just recently dug out of the rock. Then he rolled a large stone across the entrance to the grave and went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there, facing the grave.

The Guard at the Grave

⁶²On the next day—that is, the day following Friday—the chief priests and the Pharisees met with Pilate ⁶³and said, “Sir, we remember that while that liar was still alive he said, ‘I will be raised to life after three days.’ ⁶⁴Give orders, then, for the grave to be safely guarded until the third

mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

The Burial of Jesus

As evening approached, ⁵⁷ there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to ⁵⁸ Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹ Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new ⁶⁰ tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and ⁶¹ the other Mary were sitting there across from the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

The next day, the one ⁶² after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” ⁶³ they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that impostor said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the ⁶⁴ tomb to be made secure un-

57. **His name was Joseph.** A member of the Sanhedrin, and a rich man. He had not been a part of the murder of Jesus (*Luke 23:50-51; Mark 15:43*). **A disciple of Jesus.** A secret follower (*John 19:38*), but this action brings him out in the open. The death of Christ gave him courage.

58. **Asked for the body of Jesus.** Usually the body was left on the cross to decay. This Sabbath was a special day (*John 19:31*), so the bodies were removed. It probably made Pilate “feel better” about the whole thing, to give the body of Jesus to Joseph.

59. **So Joseph took it.** He took it down from the cross. **Wrapped it in a new linen sheet.** Nicodemus (also a member of the Sanhedrin) helped him embalm the body with spices (*John 19:39*), but they could only do a partial job, since time was short.

60. **And placed it in his own grave.** This made *Isaiah 53:9* come true. “Among the wicked they gave to him a tomb, among the rich after his death, although he did no injustice and deception was not in his mouth” (*Isa. 53:9* Zamenhof’s version). [It is important that Jesus was wrapped in a *new* linen sheet and placed in a *new* grave never before used. This made it impossible for any to say that the spirit of a dead man (*demon*) had come into the body and animated it (*zombie*).]

61. **The other Mary.** The mother of James and Joseph (Joses). See note on *Matt. 10:2-4*. These women saw where Jesus was buried and came back after the Sabbath was over, with spices (*Luke 24:1*), intending to finish embalming the body.

62. **On the next day.** On the Sabbath (Saturday).

63-64. **Sir, we remember.** These Jewish leaders remembered Jesus’ prediction. **Give orders, then.** They wanted a Roman guard posted. **Until the third day.** That is, until Sunday morning. Friday would be the first day. (See note on *Matt. 12:40*).

day, so that his disciples will not be able to go and steal him, and then tell the people, 'He was raised from death.' This last lie would be even worse than the first one."

⁶⁵"Take a guard." Pilate told them; "go and guard the grave as best you can."

⁶⁶So they left, and made the grave secure by putting a seal on the stone and leaving the guard on watch.

The Resurrection

(Also *Mark 16. 1-10; Luke 24. 1-12; John 20. 1-10*)

28 After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the grave. ²Suddenly there was a strong earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.

til the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

"Take a guard," Pilate ⁶⁵ answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and ⁶⁶ made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

The Resurrection

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

65. **Take a guard.** Pilate grants them a guard of Roman soldiers. Since Pilate does not expect Jesus to rise from death, there is no *irony* in what he says.

66. **And made the grave secure.** The grave was a cave dug in the rock, with a large stone rolled across the entrance to close it. A cord or string is stretched across the rock and sealed at each side with wax. Moving the stone would break the seal. The guard is posted, and everything humanly possible has

1. **After the Sabbath.** The Jewish Sabbath ended at 6 P.M. on the day we call Saturday. **As Sunday morning was dawning.** While it is still dark, just as the sun is about to rise (*John 20:1*). This is now the third day since Jesus was buried (compare note on *Matt. 12:40*). **Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.** (See note on *Matt. 27:61*.) Salome was also with them (*Mark 16:1*) and they were followed by other women.

2. **Suddenly there was a strong earthquake.** Just as the three women come up to the tomb. **Angel . . . rolled the stone away.** The earthquake happened at the same time the angel rolled the stone away. [There were at least two angels there, who appeared to the women (*Luke 24:4*).] Alford (Greek Testament) says: "It was not for Him to whom the stone was no hindrance (*John 20:19-20*), but for the women and disciples that it was rolled away."

3. **His appearance.** Brightness, brilliance! [Compare *Exod. 34:29; Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:14*.] Jesus' clothes became white as light at the Transfiguration; and the Redeemed wear white robes in Revelation. White symbolizes purity.

4. **The guards were so afraid.** These are hard-boiled Roman soldiers.

⁵The angel spoke to the women. "You must not be afraid," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to the cross. ⁶He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come here and see the place where he lay. ⁷Quickly, now, go and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!' Remember what I have told you."

⁸So they left the grave in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Peace be with you." They came up to him, took hold of

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." 5
6
7

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and 8
9

5. **I know you are looking for Jesus.** The angel recognizes them as friends of the now Risen Lord. He speaks to quiet their fear.

6. **Just as he said.** He has been raised from death! The women are told this fact! They have come to see a grave which is now empty! [Jesus had said this in *Matt. 16:21; 17:23; etc.*] **Come here and see the place.** This was the Lord of men and angels who had lain in this tomb, but was now raised from death. [Compare *Col. 1:20*]

7. **Go and tell his disciples.** The birth of Jesus was first announced to woman (*Luke 1:26-38*); women were the last to leave the cross; women were the first to see the empty grave. This is "poetic justice" (compare *1 Tim. 2:13-15; Gal. 3:28*). **He is going to Galilee.** Not that his only appearance would be there, since he would be seen at least eleven times. But the largest number of his followers lived in Galilee, and he would be seen by more than five hundred of them there (*1 Cor. 15:6*).

8. **Afraid and yet filled with joy.** Afraid, because of all that has just happened! Filled with joy because their Lord has risen from death! This is the Good News! [Scholars have tried to reconstruct the events of this day. Both Mark (*16:9*) and John (*20:11*) say that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene (1) The women go very early to the grave, with Mary Magdalene taking the lead. (2) She arrives at the grave while it was still dark, sees the stone taken away, and runs back to the city by a different route, to tell the apostles. (3) The other women arrive at the grave, see the angels, are told Jesus has risen, and run to tell the disciples. (4) Peter and John, followed by Mary Magdalene, run to the grave, and then return to the city. (5) Mary Magdalene remains, sees the angels and Jesus. (6) A few minutes after this, Jesus appears also to the other women before they reach the homes of the apostles. (The women had left the grave on their way to the city before Peter, John, and Mary Magdalene came to it.)]

9. **Suddenly Jesus met them.** This is his second appearance. (1) He was first seen by Mary Magdalene *Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18*. (2) This is the second time he was seen—by the women returning from the grave. (3) By Simon Peter alone (*Luke 24:34*). (4) By two disciples going to Emmaus (*Luke 24:13*). (5) By the apostles at Jerusalem, except Thomas (*John 20:19*). (6) By the apostles at Jerusalem, Thomas present (*John 20:26,29*). (7) At Lake Tiberius [Galilee] (*John 21:1*). (8) By eleven disciples, on a mountain in Galilee (*Matt. 28:16*). (9) By five hundred followers in Galilee (*1 Cor. 15:6*). [This and #8 might have been at the same time.] (10) By James only (*1 Cor. 15:7*). (11) By all the apostles on the Mount of Olives (*Luke 24:51*). (12) He was also seen by Paul (*Acts 9:3-6*) [to offer him a commission as an apostle]; and by John on Patmos (*Rev. 1:12-13*). **Took hold of his feet.** Jesus allowed himself to be touched and handled, and ate food (*Luke 24:39-43*) to show that he was not a ghost.

his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰“Do not be afraid,” Jesus said to them. “Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

The Report of the Guard

¹¹While the women went on their way, some of the soldiers guarding the grave went back to the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹²The chief priests met with the elders and made their plan; they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers ¹³and said, “You are to say that his disciples came during the night and stole his body while you were asleep. ¹⁴And if the Governor should hear of this, we will convince him and you will have nothing to worry about.”

¹⁵The guards took the money and did what they were told to do. To this very day that is the report spread around by the Jews.

worshiped him. Then Jesus ¹⁰said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

The Guards' Report

While the women were on ¹¹their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. When the chief ¹²priests had met with the elders, they devised a plan. They gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling ¹³them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ If this ¹⁴report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So the soldiers took the money and ¹⁵did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

10. **Do not be afraid.** Jesus met them while they were running to tell the others that he had raised from death! We are blessed by his presence as we run to tell others! **Go and tell my brothers.** Not disciples, but *brothers*. He speaks of his followers as *brothers* [and *sisters*].

11. **Some of the soldiers.** The time at which these men went back to the city is carefully identified. It was while the women continued on to tell the disciples about the Resurrection. These soldiers report directly to the priests (who wanted the grave guarded - *Matt. 27:65-66*).

12. **And made their plan.** They were in this too deep to stop now: They make up a story to try to cover up what has happened.

13. **And stole his body.** This story does not “stand up”. (1) The soldiers would not dare to sleep while on duty. It was death to do so! (2) If they had been asleep, how could they know what had happened? (3) The disciples did not expect Jesus to raise from death and would barely believe it when faced with the evidence. (4) The disciples had run away, and certainly would not have attempted to steal the body while the Roman soldiers were guarding it, (5) Even if the disciples would have tried to steal the body, and even if the guard were all asleep, this whole area was crowded with people who had come for Passover and who were “camping out” on the hillsides. Also, there was a full moon [Passover was keyed to a full moon].

14. **And if the Governor should hear of this.** Since he had “washed his hands” of the whole thing, and would shortly be returning to Caesarea, he probably would not hear of it at all.

15. **The report spread around by the Jews.** The Jewish leaders wanted to escape from guilt. Justin Martyr, writing in the second century at least a hundred years after Matthew wrote this Gospel, says this report was still being spread in the Jewish community.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

(Also Mark 16.14-18; Luke 24.36-49;
John 20.19-23; Acts 1.6-8)

¹⁶The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw him they worshiped him, even though some of them doubted. ¹⁸Jesus drew near and said to them, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy

The Great Commission

Then the eleven disciples ¹⁶went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they ¹⁷saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them ¹⁸and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore ¹⁹go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

16. **Went to the hill in Galilee.** The eleven stayed on in Jerusalem for over a week (*John 20:26*) after the Resurrection. This short account in Matthew gives the official meeting. John describes a meeting by the lake; and Paul speaks of a large group meeting Jesus (*1 Cor. 15:6*). **To the hill.** Jesus had told them where and when to meet him.

17. **They worshipped him.** As did the women in *verse 9*. **Even though some of them doubted.** Not Thomas or the other apostles (*John 20:26-29*). Probably those who had not been at Jerusalem, as they are at a distance or perhaps saw him from a distance, doubt it is the Risen Lord, until he comes closer. Like Thomas, they would doubt no more!

18. **Jesus drew near and said to them.** He speaks to the whole group (of more than five hundred *1 Cor. 15:6*). He had given the twelve a limited mission a few years before (*Matt. 10:1-15*) and later sent seventy-two more. (*Luke 10:1*). But these had been sent only to the Jews, and to announce a Kingdom still in the future. The "old era" ended at the Cross, and the "last days" have begun (compare Peter's use of Joel's prophecy - *Acts 2:16-21*). **I have been given all authority.** Given - by God the Father (compare *Phil. 2:6-11*) in fulfillment of the Eternal Covenant, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit. Alford (Greek Testament) says: "Now first is this covenant, in its fulness, proclaimed upon earth. The Resurrection was its last seal - the Ascension was the *taking possession* of the Inheritance. But the Inheritance is already won; and their Heir is only remaining on earth for a temporary purpose - the assuring His joint-heirs of the verity of his possession." On the basis of his authority as King, High Priest, and Judge - he authorizes them to "Go, to all peoples everywhere!" [A time is coming when he will give the Kingdom back to the Father (*1 Cor. 15:24, 28*).

19. **Go, then, to all peoples.** This officially revokes the "limited mission" to the Jews. From this time on, they are to go to *all peoples* (which includes the Jews). **And make them my disciples.** Their mission is to "MAKE DISCIPLES" for Christ (*which includes "salvation"*). They are to declare the facts about Jesus (*1 Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 17:18*), so that people will become followers of Jesus and use his principles to guide their lives. **Baptize them.** The rite by which followers of Jesus are to be "initiated" into Christ and "united" with him. See *Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21*. **In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.** Not "the names," but "THE NAME"—stressing the Triune nature of God. Alford says it speaks to an "objective admission into the covenant of Redemption." The initiation which Christ commands here is "of water and the Spirit" (*John 3:5*) and is the "washing by which the Holy Spirit gives us new birth and new life" (*Titus 3:4-5*). [This is no deficient initiation. It is as much the baptism of the Holy Spirit as it is the baptism of Christ as it is the baptism of the Father. There is *one* [Christian] baptism—of water and the Holy Spirit. Either one is a Spirit-filled Christian or he is not a Christian at all (*Roman 8:9*). The Triune God is indivisibly ONE.] In this rite of initiation, The Father welcomes the believer as a child; the Son welcomes the believer as a brother [sister]; by the Holy Spirit's power, we cry to God, "Father! my Father!" (*Rom. 8:15*).

Spirit, ²⁰and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember! I will be with you always, to the end of the age."

Spirit, and teaching them to 20 obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age."

20. And teach them. The first part of this mission is to "*make disciples*," and "*initiate*" them into Christ by "*baptizing them*." The second part is to *teach* and *instruct* these disciples. **To obey.** Christianity is a *way of life*. We honor God by living "*new lives*." **Everything I have commanded you.** Not dogma, not tradition, but those things which Jesus taught directly himself, and indirectly through his apostles. In other words, the *New Testament*. Listen to Paul speak to Timothy: "*Take the words that you heard me preach in the presence of many witnesses, and give them into the keeping of men you can trust, men who will be able to teach others also*" (2 Tim. 2:2). **And remember!** His power and authority will *back up* his people until this Christian age comes to a close with Christ's Second Coming and the Day of Judgment. He is placing a grave responsibility in the hands of the messianic community [his church]. But he is not leaving them as "orphans." He has promised to send them "*another Helper*" to stay with them forever (John 14:16).

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 Diety 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 fisher- 17 men. "Come, follow me," 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, ⁷"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 ¹⁵ dinner 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 ¹⁷ to 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 ¹⁸ the 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 ¹⁹ can 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 ²⁰ from them, and on that day they will fast.

"No one sews a patch of ²¹ unshrunk 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 ²² into 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, Simon the Zealot, and Judas ¹⁹ 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 ⁴³ astonished. He gave strict 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 ⁵miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he ⁶was amazed at their lack of faith.

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. ⁸Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will ⁹not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them." ¹⁰

They went out and ¹¹preached that people should repent. They drove out many ¹²demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. ¹³

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 ²⁸ head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. On

hearing of this, John's dis- ²⁹ ciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

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 shepherd. 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 countryside 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 among 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 number 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; ⁷ their teachings are but rules made by men.’

You have let go of the ⁸ commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”

And he said to them: “You ⁹ have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! For Moses said, ¹⁰ ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But ¹¹ 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 ¹² longer let him do anything for his father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of ¹³ God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

Again Jesus called the ¹⁴ crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing ¹⁵ 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 ¹⁷ and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. “Are you so ¹⁸ 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." 2 3

His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?" 4

"How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked. 5

"Seven," they replied. 6

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. 7 8 9 10

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. 11 12 13

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 a- round, foaming at the mouth.

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

"From childhood," he an- 22 swered. "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do any- thing, 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. ³³ When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" But they kept quiet ³⁴ because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

Sitting down, Jesus called ³⁵ the 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 ³⁶ had 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 ³⁹ said. "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." 41-45

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 ⁵ Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. When ⁶ they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people ⁷ spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread ⁸ 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.

¹¹This 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 another ⁴ servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent ⁵ still another, 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 ⁸ killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

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 capstone;

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

²"Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. ³"Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."

⁴As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple. Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁵"Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?"

⁶Jesus said to them: ⁷"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. ⁸There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

⁹"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 ¹⁰must 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. ¹³

"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 ¹⁸ distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. If the Lord had not ¹⁹ 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 ²⁰ 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 ⁶¹Jesus 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 ⁶²you 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 ⁶³clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard the ⁶⁴blasphemy. What do you think?"

They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then ⁶⁵some 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 ⁶⁶the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter ⁶⁷warming himself, she looked closely at him.

"You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus," she said.

But he denied it. "I don't ⁶⁸know or understand what you're talking about," he said, and went out into the entryway.

When the servant girl saw ⁶⁹him there, she said again to those standing around, "This fellow is one of them." Again he denied it. ⁷⁰

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," 3 Jesus replied.

The chief priests accused 3 him of many things. So a- 4 gain Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

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

urrectionists 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!"

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. 15

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 16 17 18

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. ²⁴ Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

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!" 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 2
 early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each 3
 other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?”
 But when they looked up, 4
 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.

“Don’t be alarmed,” he ⁶ 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.’”

⁸ Trembling 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

When Jesus rose early on ⁹ 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*.]

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE

Luke, "*our dear doctor*" (*Col. 4:14*), was a doctor of medicine and a historian. He was a close companion of Paul, and was with him during both the first and second imprisonments at Rome (*Col. 4:14; Philemon 24; 2 Tim. 4:11*). He was not a Jew. His name, his style of writing, and his pattern of thought, all point to Greek training. He may have been one of the first Gentile converts at the metropolitan city of Antioch (*Acts 11:20-21*), where the first Gentile church outside the borders of Palestine was planted.

Both Matthew and John were "eyewitnesses" of the life of Christ. Mark based his work on the "eyewitness account" of Peter. Luke draws on authentic material already in circulation, and carefully studies and compares it [*he says this in Luke 1:1-4*], probably consulting with Paul about it. In every case, these writers wrote under the guidance of God [INSPIRATION] and what they wrote was EXACTLY what God wanted them to write (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*).

Evidence points to Luke writing this Gospel while Paul was imprisoned at Caesarea (*Acts 23:33; 24:27*). Luke probably wrote the Acts during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, since he was there with him, and, because the Book of Acts terminates with Paul's first imprisonment and mentions nothing of the years between the release in 63-64 A.D. and the second imprisonment of 68 A.D. Luke's statement in *Acts 1:1* shows the Gospel of Luke already written when the Acts is begun. With the death of Jesus being in 30 A.D. [*by the corrected calendar*], this means both Luke and Acts were written within 34 years of the Cross. In fact, of all the New Testament writers, only John wrote later than this, toward the end of the First Century [*the Gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 John, Revelation*].

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Introduction

1 Dear Theophilus:
Many have done their best to write a report of the things that have taken place among us. ²They wrote what we have been told by those who saw these things from the beginning and proclaimed the message. ³And so, your Excellency, because I have carefully studied all these matters from their beginning, I thought it good to write an orderly account for you. ⁴I do this so that you will know the full truth of all those matters which you have been taught.

The Birth of John the Baptist Announced

⁵During the time when Herod was king of the land of Israel, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife's name was Elizabeth; she also

Introduction

1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. 2
3
4

The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

In the time of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant 5

1-2. **Dear Theophilus.** The name means "one who loves God." Acts is also addressed to him. We know nothing more about him. **Many have done their best.** It is human nature to write down important things and share them with others. Alford (Greek Testament) says: "I believe the only probable interpretation of the words to be, that many persons, in charge of Churches, or otherwise induced, drew up, here and there, statements (*narratives*, DIEGESIN) of the *testimony of eye-witnesses and ministers of the word*, so far as they themselves had been able to collect them." The "many" [*which does not include the other Gospels*] had done their best, but it is implied that their work was incomplete.

3-4. **Because I have carefully studied.** Luke had made a careful examination of all available material, and he had the assistance of the apostle Paul. **So that you will know the full truth.** Luke wants to make the full truth of the history of Christ *available* to Theophilus. Things put in writing are put in permanent form. **Which you have been taught.** Theophilus knew these facts about Jesus, but Luke's Gospel would be valuable to show the accuracy of these things.

5. **During the time when Herod was king.** Herod the Great (*see note on Matt. 2:1*). **A priest named Zechariah.** Not a "chief priest," one of the lower ranks. **Order of Abijah.** All the priests were grouped in twenty-four orders. The "Order of Abijah" was the eighth (*1 Chron. 24:10*). Each Order took charge of the temple worship in sequence, for a week at a time beginning on the Sabbath. The "heads" of these twenty-four Orders are the "chief priests." **His wife's name was Elizabeth.** She is also from a priestly family, so John the Baptist is of "priestly descent" on both sides of his family.

belonged to a priestly family. ⁶They both lived good lives in God's sight, and obeyed fully all the Lord's commandments and rules. ⁷They had no children because Elizabeth could not have any, and she and Zechariah were both very old.

⁸One day Zechariah was doing his work as a priest before God, taking his turn in the daily service. ⁹According to the custom followed by the priests, he was chosen by lot to burn the incense on the altar. So he went into the temple of the Lord, ¹⁰while the crowd of people outside prayed during the hour of burning the incense. ¹¹An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar where the incense was burned. ¹²When Zechariah saw him he was troubled and felt afraid. ¹³But the angel said to him. "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. You are to name him John. ¹⁴How glad and happy you will be, and how

of Aaron. Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.

Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving a priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshippers were praying outside.

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will

6. **They both lived good lives in God's sight.** Great men of God almost always come from parents who live holy lives. (*Compare 2 Tim. 1:5*).

8. **Was doing his work as a priest.** Zechariah came to Jerusalem once every twenty-four weeks, to serve his week in the temple with others of the Order of Abijah.

9. **He was chosen by lot.** In order to remove the "human element," specially marked stones were used to determine who was to do each separate part of the worship to God (*compare Prov. 16:33; Acts 1:26*). So he went into the temple of the Lord. Into the Holy Place. Philo mentions an Altar of Incense placed between the Seven-branched Lampstand and the [table which held] the Bread of the Presence. [*Hebrews 9:4* speaks of a "gold altar for the burning of incense" in the Most Holy Place (*Holy of Holies*) in the Tent (*the portable temple originally used in the Wilderness*).] Incense was burned on the altar in the Holy Place each morning and evening. This was such an honor, that no one was permitted to do this more than once. It brought the serving priest closer to the Divine Presence in the Most Holy Place than any other priestly service, and because of the special blessing connected with it, it was believed that all should have their time to share in it.

10. **While the crowd of people outside prayed.** People were in the Court of Israel and the Women's Court. Incense was symbolic of prayer (*Psalms 141:2; Rev. 5:8*). At the time the priest began to burn the incense, a bell signaled the people, who joined in prayer in deep silence.

11. **An angel of the Lord appeared.** Gabriel (*verse 19*).

13. **Don't be afraid, Zechariah.** The angel brings a message of hope! God has heard your prayer. They felt it was a disgrace to be childless, and had prayed continually for a child. You are to name him John. John means "God-given."

happy many others will be when he is born! ¹⁵He will be a great man in the Lord's sight. He must not drink any wine or strong drink. From his very birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷He will go ahead of him, strong and mighty like the prophet Elijah. He will bring fathers and children together again; he will turn the disobedient people back to the way of thinking of the righteous; he will get the Lord's people ready for him."

¹⁸Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know if this is so? I am an old man and my wife also is old."

¹⁹"I am Gabriel," the angel answered. "I stand in the presence of God, who sent me to speak to you and tell you this good news. ²⁰But you have not believed my message, which will come true at the right time. Because you have not believed you will be unable to speak; you will remain silent until the day my promise to you comes true."

²¹In the meantime the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering why he was spending such

be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."

Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

15. **He must not drink any wine or strong drink.** John was to be a *Nazarite* (see the law of *Nazarites*, *Numbers 6*). [Jesus was a *Nazarene*, something entirely different.]

16. **He will bring back.** See *Mark 1:1-5*.

17. **Strong and mighty like the prophet Elijah.** The way he looked, the way he dressed, and the way he lived, all reminds us of Elijah. See note on *Matt. 16:14*. **He will bring fathers and children together again.** The language of *Mal. 4:5-6*. The Law of Moses is about to be superseded by the Good News of Jesus Christ. **He will get the Lord's people ready for him.** He was the "advance man," getting things ready for Jesus to begin his *teaching tour* of Palestine, which could climax in the Cross. John began a "renewal movement" in Palestine. The common people loved both John and Jesus. The Jewish leaders rejected them both.

18. **How shall I know?** He wanted a miraculous sign.

19. **I am Gabriel.** The word of an angel was sign enough! **I stand in the presence of God.** See *Rev. 8:2*; *Dan. 8:15-18*; *Heb. 1:14*.

20. **You will remain silent.** He would not be able to utter a sound.

21. **The people were waiting for Zechariah.** Those who were praying in the courts waited until the priest who burned incense came out to dismiss them with a benediction. They wondered why he did not come out.

a long time in the temple. ²²When he came out he could not speak to them, and so they knew that he had seen a vision in the temple. Unable to say a word, he made signs to them with his hands.

²³When his period of service in the temple was over, Zechariah went back home. ²⁴Some time later his wife Elizabeth became pregnant, and did not leave the house for five months. ²⁵"Now at last the Lord has helped me in this way," she said. "He has taken away my public disgrace!"

The Birth of Jesus Announced

²⁶In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. ²⁷He had a message for a girl promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. The girl's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you, and has greatly blessed you!"

²⁹Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. ³⁰The angel said to her. "Don't be afraid, Mary, because God has been gracious to you.

When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

When his time of service was completed, he returned home. After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. "The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor

22. **He could not speak to them.** This was the sign. They knew he had seen a vision. But Gabriel was not a vision, he had been there in person.

23. **Zechariah went back home.** After he had completed his week of serving in the temple, he returned to his home in the hill country (*verse 39*). The town is not identified.

24. **And did not leave the house for five months.** Her age might be the reason for this, but more likely she stayed in the house to spend more time in worship to God.

25. **He has taken away my public disgrace.** To be childless in Israel was a public disgrace. Compare *Gen. 16:1-3; 30:1-2*.

26. **To a town in Galilee named Nazareth.** To the home of Mary. Matthew tells of a later visit of the angel to Joseph (*Matt. 1:20-25*), but does not tell the angel's name.

27. **He had a message for a girl.** This girl was a VIRGIN - "The Virgin" of *Isaiah 7:14* (see note on *Matt. 1:23*). **Promised in marriage.** Equivalent to being married. See note on *Matt. 1:19*. **Who was a descendant of King David.** Both Mary (the mother of Jesus) and Joseph (the LEGAL father of Jesus) were descendants of King David.

30-33. **Don't be afraid.** In the angel's words we have: (1) relief of anxiety, **Don't be afraid**; (2) a promise, **Give birth to a son**; (3) a command, **You will name him Jesus**; (4) a prophecy, **He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. His kingdom will never end!** Compare *Acts 15:15-18; Matt. 16:18-19*.

³¹You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, ³³and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!"

³⁴Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?"

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children; but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. ³⁷For there is not a thing that God cannot do."

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹Soon afterward Mary got ready and hurried off to the hill country, to a town in Judea. ⁴⁰She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby moved within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and spoke in a loud voice, "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord's

with God. You will be with 31
child and give birth to a son,
and you are to give him the
name Jesus. He will be great 32
and will be called the Son of
the Most High. The Lord
God will give him the throne
of his father David, and he 33
will reign over the house of
Jacob forever; his kingdom
will never end."

"How can this be," Mary 34
asked the angel, "since I am
a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The 35
Holy Spirit will come upon
you, and the power of the
Most High will overshadow
you. So the holy one to be
born will be called the Son of
God. Even Elizabeth your 36
relative is going to have a
child in her old age, and she
who was said to be barren is
in her sixth month. For 37
nothing is impossible with
God."

"I am the Lord's servant," 38
Mary answered. "May it be
to me as you have said."
Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

At that time Mary got 39
ready and hurried to a town
in the hill country of Judah,
where she entered Zechariah's
home and greeted Elizabeth.
When Elizabeth 41
heard Mary's greeting, the
baby leaped in her womb,
and Elizabeth was filled with
the Holy Spirit. In a loud 42
voice she exclaimed: "Bless-
ed are you among women,
and blessed is the child you
will bear! But why am I so 43
favored, that the mother of
my Lord should come to me?"

34-38. **Mary said to the angel.** Compare what the angel told Joseph in *Matt. 1:19-25* (see notes there), and see what Christ taught about divorce in *Matt. 19:1-9* (see notes there).

39. **Soon afterward.** Because of what the angel said to her. **Hurried off to the hill country.** The central plateau of Judea. Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron were all on this plateau. We are not told which town Elizabeth lived in.

41. **The baby moved within her.** Luke intends to imply something more than the natural movements of an unborn child. Note Elizabeth is in the sixth month of her pregnancy (*verse 26*).

42-45. Elizabeth speaks in the poetic imagery of the Middle East, and she speaks as a prophet. **My Lord's mother.** Mary was to be the mother of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. [Note the pre-existence of Jesus (*Col. 1:15-17*). Jesus was born of a human mother to take human form (*Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14*).]

mother comes to visit me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard your greeting, the baby within me jumped with gladness. ⁴⁵How happy are you to believe that the Lord's message to you will come true!"

Mary's Song of Praise

⁴⁶Mary said,

"My heart praises the Lord;

⁴⁷my soul is glad because of God my Savior,

⁴⁸because he has remembered me, his lowly servant!

From now on all people will call me happy, because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.

His name is holy;

⁵⁰he shows mercy to those who fear him, from one generation to another.

⁵¹He stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with all their plans.

⁵²He brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.

⁵³He filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away with empty hands.

⁵⁴He kept the promise he made to our ancestors, and came to the help of his servant Israel;

As soon as the sound of your ⁴⁴greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who ⁴⁵has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

Mary's Song

And Mary said: 46

"My soul praises the Lord and my spirit rejoices in ⁴⁷God my Savior, for he has been mindful of ⁴⁸the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has ⁴⁹done great things for me—

holy is his name.

His mercy extends to those ⁵⁰who fear him, from generation to generation.

He has performed mighty ⁵¹deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

He has brought down ⁵²rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry ⁵³with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant ⁵⁴Israel, remembering to be merciful

46-55. **Mary said.** Mary is also filled with the Holy Spirit. These two holy women are the first human prophets of the New Testament Age. Mary speaks the language of the Psalms. In *verses 46-49*, she praises God for his unusual gift of grace to her. In *verses 50-53*, she praises God because he brings down the proud, but lifts up the humble. In *verses 54-55*, she praises God because the ancient promise to Abraham is now being made to come true, and humble Israel will be lifted up by this. **God my Savior.** Mary includes herself among the lost. She herself would receive salvation through God's act in Jesus Christ (compare *Heb. 9:15*). **Will call me happy.** It was a great honor to be the human mother of the Messiah. We see Abraham called "happy," because he is the father of the faithful; Paul, because he is the apostle to the Gentiles; and Peter, because he was first to preach the Good News. **To show mercy to Abraham.** See *Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:5*. **And to all his descendants forever!** *Gal. 3:29* shows the promise fulfilled in Christ as *The Descendant*, and that everyone who is in Christ is a "descendant of Abraham."

⁵⁵he remembered to show mercy to Abraham
and to all his descendants forever!"

⁵⁶Mary stayed about three months with Elizabeth and then went back home.

to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers."

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

⁵⁷The time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard how wonderfully good the Lord had been to her, and they all rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹When the baby was a week old they came to circumcise him; they were going to name him Zechariah, his father's name. ⁶⁰But his mother said, "No! His name will be John."

⁶¹They said to her, "But you don't have any relative with that name!" ⁶²Then they made signs to his father, asking him what name he would like the boy to have.

⁶³Zechariah asked for a writing pad and wrote "His name is John." How surprised they all were!

⁶⁴At that moment Zechariah was able to speak again, and he started praising God. ⁶⁵The neighbors were all filled with fear, and the news about these things spread through all the hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶Everyone who heard of it thought about it and asked, "What is this child going to be?" It was plain that the Lord's power was with him.

The Birth of John the Baptist

When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, "No! He is to be called John."

They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who has that name."

Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak, praising God. The neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, "What then is this child going to be?" For the Lord's hand was with him.

59. When the baby was a week old. On the eighth day Jewish boy babies were circumcised and named (*Gen. 17:12*). [Circumcise: to cut off the foreskin of a Jewish baby boy as a sign of God's covenant with the people of Israel (*Gen. 17:9-14*).] They were going to name him Zechariah. This was the custom.

63. Asked for a writing pad and wrote. He still could not make a sound. His name is John. See verse 13.

65. The neighbors were all filled with fear. Because of the unusual things which had happened.

Zechariah's Prophecy

⁶⁷John's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he spoke God's message,
⁶⁸"Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel! He came to the help of his people and set them free.
⁶⁹He provided a mighty Savior for us, who is a descendant of his servant David.
⁷⁰Long ago by means of his holy prophets he said this:
⁷¹he promised to save us from our enemies, and from the power of all those who hate us.
⁷²He said he would show mercy to our ancestors, and remember his sacred covenant.
⁷³⁻⁷⁴He made a solemn promise to our ancestor Abraham, and vowed that he would rescue us from our enemies, and allow us to serve him without fear;
⁷⁵to be holy and righteous before him, all the days of our life.
⁷⁶"You my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God.
 You will go ahead of the Lord to prepare his road for him;

Zechariah's Song

His father Zechariah was ⁶⁷ filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:
 "Praise the Lord, the God ⁶⁸ of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.
 He has raised up a horn of ⁶⁹ salvation for us in the house of his servant David
 (as he said through his ⁷⁰ holy prophets of long ago),
 salvation from our ⁷¹ enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—
 to show mercy to our ⁷² fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the ⁷³ oath he swore to our father Abraham:
 to rescue us from the hand ⁷⁴ of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness ⁷⁵ and righteousness before him all our days.
 And you, my child, will be ⁷⁶ called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,

67. **And he spoke God's message.** Prophecy is speaking by the inspiration of God. As soon as Zechariah can speak again, he immediately begins to praise God, and to predict the future work of John.

68-75. **Let us praise the Lord.** Zechariah's prophecy is in Hebrew thought and idiom. This shows the influence that molded John's character as he grew up as Zechariah's son. **A mighty savior for us.** Compare *Phil. 2:6-11*. **By means of his holy prophets.** The symbolism and rituals of the Old Testament point to Jesus. He was the totality of all their predictions! Jesus was Abraham's promised *Descendant*; Moses' *Prophet*; Isaiah's *Emmanuel*; Ezekiel's *Shepherd*; Daniel's *Holy One*: all these and others, pointing to his Coming. **Vowed that he would rescue us.** Zechariah no doubt thinks of the Roman Occupation Troops as he says this. [God's vow is found in *Gen 22:16-17*. See *Heb. 6:13-18*. The promise was completely fulfilled in the First Coming of Jesus and the climax of the Cross and Resurrection.]

76-79. **You, my child.** Zechariah's prophecy points to John's future role. **A prophet of the Most High God.** John would be the greatest of the Old Testament prophets [not counting Jesus himself]. See what Jesus said about him in *Luke 7:28*. **By having their sins forgiven.** The next verses give a brief

⁷⁷to tell his people that they will be saved,
by having their sins forgiven.

⁷⁸Our God is merciful and tender.

He will cause the bright dawn of salva-
tion to rise on us,

⁷⁹and shine from heaven on all those
who live in the dark shadow of
death,

to guide our steps into the path of
peace.”

⁸⁰The child grew and developed in body and
spirit. He lived in the desert until the day when
he would appear publicly to the people of Israel.

The Birth of Jesus

(Also Matt. 1.18-25)

2 At that time Emperor Augustus sent out an
order for all the citizens of the Empire to
register themselves for the census. ²When his
first census took place, Quirinius was the gover-
nor of Syria. ³Everyone, then, went to register
himself, each to his own town.

⁴Joseph went from the town of Nazareth, in
Galilee, to Judea, to the town named Bethlehem,
where King David was born. Joseph went there

to give his people the
knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness
of their sins,
because of the tender ⁷⁸
mercy of our God, by
which rising sun will
come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in
darkness and in the ⁷⁹
shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the
path of peace.”

And the child grew and ⁸⁰
became strong in spirit; and
he lived in the desert until he
appeared publicly to Israel.

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days Caesar
Augustus issued a decree
that a census should be
taken of the entire Roman
world. (This was the first ²
census that took place while
Quirinius was governor of
Syria.) And everyone went ³
to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up ⁴
from the town of Nazareth in
Galilee to Judea, to Bethle-
hem the town of David, be-
cause he belonged to the

statement of the Good News. **Our God is merciful and tender.** Because he is merciful and tender, he is about to act in history to cause the **bright dawn of salvation to rise on us.** The Good News will tell that condemnation can be taken away, and men [and women] can be “put right with God.” See *Rom. 8:1-4; John 3:16-17; Eph. 2:4-10.*

80. He lived in the desert. The nature of John’s public life later, points to a childhood lived as a kind of “holy hermit.” This is similar to what the childhood of Elijah must have been, since that prophet grew up among the semi-nomadic people of the land of Gilead. *2 Kings 2:8.*

1. At that time Emperor Augustus. Augustus Caesar, nephew and heir of Julius Caesar, was now the ruler of the civilized world. Herod was king of Judea, but Augustus Caesar was over him. **To register themselves for the census.** The word “tax” formerly meant “to register for the census,” since in ancient times, the two things went together.

2. When this first census took place. This reference to Quirinius as the governor of Syria clearly identified the time this happened, and Theophilus would clearly understand it. Scholars pinpoint the birth of Jesus in 4 B.C. by our calendar [*which is in error, since it is supposed to date from the birth of Christ*].

3. Each to his own town. Jewish and Roman customs were mixed together. The Jews registered people by Tribes and Families. Joseph was of the Family of David, and would have to register in David’s town.

4. Joseph went from the town of Nazareth. There is no record of how long he had been living in Galilee. **To the town named Bethlehem.** This was David’s town, because he had been born there.

because he was a descendant of David. ⁵He went to register himself with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, ⁶and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have her baby. ⁷She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, ¹⁰but the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will

house and line of David. He ⁵went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While ⁶they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She ⁷wrapped him in strips of cloth and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

And there were shepherds ⁸living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of ⁹the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the ¹⁰angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be

5. **He went to register himself with Mary.** Women had to be registered too, and Mary was also of the Family of David. She would also be assessed the tax.

6. **The time came for her to have her baby.** The order from Emperor Augustus fulfilled scripture by bringing Mary and Joseph here, so Jesus would be born in Bethlehem (see *Micah 5:1-2*).

7. **She gave birth to her first son.** ΠΡΟΤΟΚΟΝ. The language implies that Mary would be the mother of other children. See note on *Matt. 1:25; John 2:12*. **Wrapped him in cloths.** New-born children were wrapped tightly in a long, narrow cloth. **And laid him in a manger.** In the animal's feeding trough. Tradition places the birth in a cave behind the inn. Justin Martyr mentions a prophecy in *Isa. 33:16* [Septuagint] which reads: "He shall dwell in a high cave of a strong rock: bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure." Caves are used to house animals in most rocky countries. The number of people who came to Bethlehem to register for the census crowded the inn, so there was no room for Mary and Joseph to stay. Also, the more private cave would be better for the birth to take place, and, when Jesus came as a human being, he stooped to its most humble circumstances. [Inn: built on the plan of an Eastern house, but much larger. Four rows of rooms, enclosing a large yard with a well at the center. The outer wall is usually of brick on a stone foundation. The rooms are entered from the yard, and the rooms themselves are built two or three feet above the surface of the yard. Below and behind the row of rooms was the stable, which could be a cave, or a long room or row of rooms. The floor of the guest rooms was often extended into the stable to form a shelf to hold the food for the animals.]

8. **There were some shepherds.** David guarded his flocks of sheep here. **Who were spending the night in the fields.** At this time of the year, they stayed out in the open, guarding their sheep from wild animals and thieves. This argues against a winter date for the birth.

9. **An angel of the Lord.** An angel announced the coming birth of Jesus; an army of angels praise God at Jesus' birth; an angel strengthens Jesus at the temptation; an angel strengthens Jesus in the garden; at his raising from death, an angel rolls the stone away from the grave; as he was taken up to heaven, angels go along with him; when he comes to judge the world, his holy angels will come with him.

10. **I am here with Good News for you.** The bright dawn of salvation was about to shine on the whole human race. **Which will bring great joy to all the people.** The barrier between Jew and Gentile was about to be broken down. God's Truth was to be made available to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

bring great joy to all the people. ¹¹This very day in David's town your Savior was born—Christ the Lord! ¹²What will prove it to you is this: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, that the Lord has told us."

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and saw the baby lying in the manger.

¹⁷When the shepherds saw him they told them what the angel had said about this child. ¹⁸All who heard it were filled with wonder at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. ²⁰The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.

for all the people. Today 11 in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company 13 of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the 14 highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left 15 them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and 16 found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they 17 had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard 18 it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But 19 Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her mind. The shepherds 20 returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

11. **In David's town.** Seven hundred years before this, the prophet had told about this day (*Micah 5:2*). See note on *Matt. 2:6*. David was born here. Now David's Son begins his earthly career in this town. **Christ the Lord.** The Anointed Lord—the Messiah—which the Nation eagerly awaited.

12. **What will prove it to you is this.** The prediction of what they will find is the sign. The proof will be the baby, the cloths, and the manger.

13. **Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels.** Compare *Rev. 5:11-12*.

14. **Glory to God.** The life of Jesus upon the earth was the fulfillment of their song of praise. Every thought, word, and action of that life was the translation of God's Love into visible forms which humans could see. Jesus brought glory to God and peace on earth. See note on *Phil. 4:7* for the true meaning of "peace on earth."

16. **So they hurried off.** Note how quickly they respond to the angel's message!

19. **Mary remembered all these things.** A mother remembers things connected with her children. Probably the reference here is to what the shepherds told that the angels had said.

Jesus Is Named

²¹A week later, when the time came for the baby to be circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name which the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

²²The time came for Joseph and Mary to do what the Law of Moses commanded and perform the ceremony of purification. So they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, ²³as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be dedicated to the Lord." ²⁴They also went to offer a sacrifice of a pair of doves or two young pigeons, as required by the law of the Lord.

²⁵Now there was a man living in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. He was a good and God-fearing man, and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him, ²⁶and he had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's

Jesus Presented in the Temple

On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "A pair of doves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

21. **When the time came for the baby to be circumcised.** See note on *Luke 1:59*. Jesus lived under the Jewish Law (*Gal. 4:4*). He obeyed it perfectly. He was circumcised on the "eighth day" [a week after birth], because it was God's Law at that time and was to be obeyed as long as it was in force. [There is no link between circumcision and baptism. Note that: (1) Circumcised Jews were baptized into Christ; (2) Circumcision only applied to males, while both sexes are baptized; (3) There is no Bible basis for saying that one takes the place of the other. Compare notes on *Col. 2:11-12*. **He was named Jesus.** According to Jewish custom, the baby was named at the time of circumcision. The angel had given the name. "Jesus" means *Savior*. The Hebrew form is "*Joshua*"—"Jehovah's Salvation."

22. **The ceremony of purification.** Thirty-three days after the birth of a male child (sixty-six days for a female child), he was to be presented at the temple with the proper ritual (*see Lev. 12*).

23. **Every firstborn male.** Compare *Num. 3:13*. All the first-born were to be presented to the Lord and redeemed with an offering (*Num. 18:15-16*).

24. **To offer a sacrifice.** The fact that they offer two birds shows they were poor. The Law (*Lev. 12:6-8*) required a lamb for a burnt offering and a pigeon or a dove for a sin offering, but allowed two birds to be substituted by those who could not afford the lamb. Note the Magi had not yet brought their gifts. (*see note on Matt. 2:11*).

25. **Whose name was Simeon.** He was the first prophet to declare that Christ *had* come. **Waiting for Israel to be saved.** That is, the Coming of the Messiah. **The Holy Spirit was with him.** To give him supernatural knowledge.

26. **And he had been assured by the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit had promised Simeon that he would live to see the Messiah in person.

promised Messiah. ²⁷Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the temple. When the parents brought the child Jesus into the temple to do for him what the Law required, ²⁸Simeon took the child in his arms, and gave thanks to God:

²⁹"Now, Lord, you have kept your promise, and you may let your servant go in peace.

³⁰With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:

³²A light to reveal your way to the Gentiles, and bring glory to your people Israel."

³³The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. ³⁴Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against, ³⁵and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart."

Moved by the Spirit, he went ²⁷ into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him as the custom of the Law required, Simeon took ²⁸ him in his arms and praised God, saying:

"Sovereign Lord, as you ²⁹ promised, now dismiss your servant in peace.

For my eyes have seen ³⁰ your salvation,

which you have prepared ³¹ in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to ³² the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel."

The child's father and ³³ mother marveled at what was said about him. Then ³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts ³⁵ of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

27. **Led by the Spirit.** The Holy Spirit directed him. Compare *Acts 8:29*. **What the Law required.** The ritual of the Law was strictly obeyed, because Jesus lived under the Law.

28. **And gave thanks to God.** The "prophetic speeches" of Elizabeth, Mary and Simeon form a chain. Mary sings of the Messiah [who will come through her]; Zechariah praises the salvation of Israel; and Simeon announces a light to the Gentiles. Note Simeon announces Jesus as a *suffering* Messiah (*verses 34-35*), who would both destroy and save.

32. **A light to reveal your way.** Simeon announces that God's plans include the Gentiles. James later quotes the prophet Amos in *Acts 15:15-18*. See also *Isa. 9:2; 49:6*.

33. **Were amazed.** That Simeon should know the child, and the things which he was predicting.

34. **For the destruction and salvation of many.** Christ destroyed the hopes of those who looked for a political Messiah. Unbelievers would "fall on him" and be broken to pieces (*see notes on Matt. 21:42-44*). Christ brought a universal Kingdom, prepared for all nations. Many would reach out in faith to seize his act of sacrifice and make themselves part of it. See what Paul said in *2 Cor. 2:16*.

35. **And sorrow, like a sharp sword.** Happiness and sorrow will both fill her heart. He would be a king, but he must go by way of the Cross. The preaching of Christ produces either hate or love.

³⁶There was a prophetess named Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was an old woman who had been married for seven years, ³⁷and then had been a widow for eighty-four years. She never left the temple; day and night she worshiped God, fasting and praying. ³⁸That very same hour she arrived and gave thanks to God, and spoke about the child to all who were waiting for God to redeem Jerusalem.

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow ³⁷until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming ³⁸up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

³⁹When they had finished doing all that was required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their home town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and God's blessings were with him.

When Joseph and Mary ³⁹had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew ⁴⁰and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

⁴¹Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. ⁴²When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to the feast as

The Boy Jesus at the Temple

Every year his parents ⁴¹went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When ⁴²he was twelve years old, they went up to the feast, accord-

36. A prophetess named Anna. One who spoke by inspiration. Daughter of Phanuel. Who must have been well known at that time. Of the tribe of Asher. One of the Twelve Tribes, occupying land on the sea coast between Sidon and Carmel.

37. A widow for eighty-four years. It was not unusual for a girl to marry at twelve years of age, so Anna must have been at least 103 years old at this time. Unusual, but still very possible. She evidently lived inside the temple walls, and probably was given living space because of her holy life.

38. And spoke about the child. She announced to all that he was the promised child. She knew this by inspiration.

39. They returned to Galilee. Luke does not mention the visit of the Magi, the escape into Egypt, and the return from there. Matthew tells about this in chapter 2. To their home town of Nazareth. A mountain village in southern Galilee. This will be the home of Jesus until he is 30 years old.

40. The child grew and became strong. He experienced human life to its fullest, by growing up in a normal childhood. He was full of wisdom. "The divine nature revealed its own wisdom in proportion to the measure of the bodily growth."—Cyril. See *1 Tim. 3:16*. One of the riddles of time, is that the God-man should become a baby, not only in body, but in mind and wisdom as well. (Compare *Phil. 2:6-11*.)

41. Went to Jerusalem. The Law required every male Jew to come to the temple at Jerusalem three times a year, for the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles [also called the Feast of Booths, and Succoth; similar to our Thanksgiving]. Women were not required to attend, but they often did, to worship God.

42. When Jesus was twelve years old. At age twelve, a Jewish boy became a legal adult. From this time on it would be Jesus' personal responsibility to obey the Law.

usual. ⁴³When the days of the feast were over, they started back home, but the boy Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know this; ⁴⁴they thought that he was with the group, so they traveled a whole day, and then started looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵They did not find him, so they went back to Jerusalem looking for him. ⁴⁶On the third day they found him in the temple, sitting with the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions. ⁴⁷All who heard him were amazed at his intelligent answers. ⁴⁸His parents were amazed when they saw him, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you."

⁴⁹He answered them, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I have to be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he said to them.

⁵¹So Jesus went back with them to Nazareth, where he was obedient to them. His mother

ing to the custom. After the ⁴³ feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he ⁴⁴ was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and ⁴⁵ friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found ⁴⁶ him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone ⁴⁷ who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents ⁴⁸ saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

"Why were you searching ⁴⁹ for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he meant.

Then he went down to Na- ⁵¹ zareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these

43. When the days of the feast were over. The seven days of the Passover week. Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. Because he was preoccupied in his talk with the Jewish teachers.

44. With the group. People traveled in large groups for protection against wild animals and bandits, as well as to have someone to talk to. Since Jesus had probably been there every year, it would be reasonable for them to think he was somewhere in the crowd of people. Therefore, they did not begin to search for him until the end of the first day's travel.

46. On the third day. That is, on the third day after they had last seen him. In the temple. There were porches and rooms in the Women's Court where the teachers of the Law taught classes regularly. Sitting with the Jewish teachers. Some of the greatest teachers in Jewish history lived about this time: Hillel, Simeon, and Gamaliel. Asking questions. This was the normal format for classes.

49. Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house? They should have come straight to the temple. These words first reveal his consciousness of his "super-normal" birth.

50. But they did not understand. They thought of him as "their son," and did not understand what he said about his Father's house.

51. So Jesus went back with them. His heart drew him to the Father's house, but duty called him back to Galilee. [Luke gives this isolated event from Jesus' childhood. There would have been more, if Luke had more to tell. Verses 41-52 are all we know of Jesus' early years.]

treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus grew, both in body and in wisdom, gaining favor with God and men.

The Preaching of John the Baptist

(Also *Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:1-8; John 1:19-28*)

3 It was the fifteenth year of the rule of Emperor Tiberius; Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the territory of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias was ruler of Abilene, ²and Annas and Caiaphas were high priests. It was at this time that the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the desert. ³So John went throughout the whole territory of the Jordan River. "Turn away from your sins and be baptized," he preached, "and God will forgive your sins." ⁴As the prophet Isaiah had written in his book,

"Someone is shouting in the desert:
'Get the Lord's road ready for him;
make a straight path for him to travel!

⁵All low places must be filled up,
all hills and mountains leveled off.
The winding roads must be made
straight,
and the rough paths made smooth.

things in her heart. And ⁵²Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—and during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

"A voice of one calling in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.
Every valley shall be filled in,
and every mountain and hill leveled off.
The crooked roads shall become straight,
and the rough ways smooth.

52. And Jesus grew. Jesus grew up in a remote province of the Roman Empire, a province conquered by occupation troops, in a little country village whose name was a "proverb" for futility, in poverty and manual labor in a carpenter shop. Perhaps this is God's "SENSE OF HUMOR" (compare *1 Cor. 1:27-28*). But Jesus had the supervision by Mary and Joseph, the Old Testament scriptures, the worship in the synagogue at Nazareth (*Luke 4:16*), the Feasts in the temple at Jerusalem (*Luke 2:41*), and the constant communion of his spirit with God, his heavenly Father. **Gaining favor.** Eighteen years of silence are covered in this verse. Some have questioned how Jesus could gain favor, if he was pure and sinless already. But since he shared our human nature (*Rom. 8:3*), he would be expected to grow and gain favor as humans do. Note that one of Jesus' favorite names for himself was "SON OF MAN."

1. It was the fifteenth year of the rule of Emperor Tiberius. Tiberius was the step-son of Emperor Augustus (*Luke 2:1*), and followed him as Emperor. Luke gives great detail to pinpoint the date of this. It would be 26 A.D. by our calendar.

2. Annas and Caiaphas were high priests. The Jews accepted only one high priest, who held that position for life. But Pilate, the Roman governor, had set aside Annas, and appointed Caiaphas, son-in-law of Annas, as high priest in his place. Both were called high priests at the same time. **The word of God came to John.** This is God's call for John to begin his work. John is 30 years old at this point, 6 months older than Jesus.

3. So John went throughout the whole territory. See notes on *Matt. 3:1-12*.

'All mankind will see God's salvation!'"

⁷Crowds of people came out to John to be baptized by him. "You snakes!" he said to them. "Who told you that you could escape from God's wrath that is about to come? ⁸Do the things that will show that you have turned from your sins. And don't start saying among yourselves, 'Abraham is our ancestor.' I tell you that God can take these rocks and make descendants for Abraham! ⁹The ax is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire."

¹⁰The people asked him, "What are we to do, then?"

¹¹He answered, "Whoever has two shirts must give one to the man who has none, and whoever has food must share it."

¹²Some tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what are we to do?"

¹³"Don't collect more than is legal," he told them.

¹⁴Some soldiers also asked him, "What about us? What are we to do?"

He said to them, "Don't take money from anyone by force or accuse anyone falsely. Be content with your pay."

¹⁵People's hopes began to rise, and they began to wonder about John, thinking that perhaps he might be the Messiah. ¹⁶So John said to all of them, "I baptize you with water, but one who is much greater than I is coming. I am not good enough even to untie his sandals. He will baptize

And all mankind shall see God's salvation."

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same."

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

"Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I

7. **You snakes!** John said this to the Pharisees (*Matt. 3:7*).

10-11. **What are we to do, then?** The baptized must be taught; and those who baptized them are required to teach them (*Matt. 28:19-20*). John's answer gives his moral code - which is more concerned with external conduct, while Jesus puts more stress on the inner motives that create the outward conduct. [John preached *renewal*; Jesus came to make possible a *new birth*. See notes on *Acts 19:1-7*.]

12-13. **Some tax collectors.** Jews who collected taxes for the Roman Occupatin Government.

14. **Some soldiers also asked him.** These were probably Jews or Gentiles converted to Judaism who were part of the Roman army.

you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷He has his winnowing shovel with him, to thresh out all the grain and gather the wheat into his barn; but he will burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out."

¹⁸In many different ways John urged the people as he preached the Good News to them. ¹⁹But John spoke against Governor Herod, because he had married Herodias, his brother's wife, and had done many other evil things. ²⁰Then Herod did an even worse thing by putting John in prison.

The Baptism of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 3.13-17; Mark 1.9-11*)

²¹After all the people had been baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear Son. I am well pleased with you."

The Genealogy of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 1.1-17*)

²³When Jesus began his work he was about thirty years old; he was the son, so people thought, of Joseph, who was the son of Heli, ²⁴the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, ²⁵the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,

am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His ¹⁷ winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them. ¹⁸

But when John rebuked ¹⁹ Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done. Herod ²⁰ added this to them all; He locked John up in prison.

The Baptism and Genealogy of Jesus

When all the people were ²¹ baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my ²² Son, whom I love; with you I am well-pleased."

Now Jesus himself was a- ²³ bout thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli, the ²⁴ son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, ²⁵ the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the

19-20. **But John spoke against Governor Herod.** See notes on *Matt. 14:1-12*.

21-22. **Jesus also was baptized.** See notes on *Matt. 3:13-17*. Luke alone points out that Jesus was praying when heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit came down like a dove. Luke shows Jesus praying at each crisis in his life.

23-38. **When Jesus began his work.** Luke gives the Genealogy of Jesus, and this is compared with Matthew's Genealogy in notes on *Matt. 1:1-17*. Luke evidently gives the family record of Mary, since *Heli* was *her* father. Joseph's father was Jacob. This was "standard practice" to state it as Luke does, and the Jews, who were very accurate about such things, did not dispute either set of "family records." **He was the son, so people thought, of Joseph.** Joseph was Jesus' LEGAL father, and perhaps only Mary and Joseph [at this time] knew the Miraculous Birth of Jesus. [See note on *Matt. 27:56* about the difficulty of tracing names at this time.]

²⁶the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, ²⁷the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, ³¹the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³²the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, ³³the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

The Temptation of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 4.1-11; Mark 1.12-13*)

4 Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the desert, ²where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing, so that he was hungry when it was over.

³The Devil said to him, "If you are God's Son, order this stone to turn into bread."

⁴Jesus answered, "The scripture says, 'Man cannot live on bread alone.'"

son of Naggai, the son of 26
Maath, the son of Mattathi-
as, the son of Semein, the son 27
Josech, the son of Joda, the
son of Joanan, the son of
Rhesa, the son of Zerubbab-
el, the son of Shealtiel, the 28
son of Neri, the son of Mel-
chi, the son of Addi, the son
of Cosam, the son of Elma-
dam, the son of Er, the son of 29
Joshua, the son of Eliezer,
the son of Jorim, the son of
Matthat, the son of Levi, the 30
son of Simeon, the son of
Judah, the son of Joseph, the
son of Jonam, the son of Elia-
kim, the son of Melea, the 31
son of Menna, the son of
Mattatha, the son of Na-
than, the son of David, the 32
son of Jesse, the son of Obed,
the son of Boaz, the son of
Salmon, the son of Nahshon,
the son of Amminadab, the 33
son of Ram, the son of Hez-
ron, the son of Perez, the son
of Judah, the son of Jacob, 34
the son of Isaac, the son of
Abraham, the son of Terah,
the son of Nahor, the son of
Serug, the son of Reu, the 35
son of Peleg, the son of Eber,
the son of Shelah, the son of
Cainan, the son of Arphax-
ad, the son of Shem, the son 36
of Noah, the son of Lamech,
the son of Methuselah, the 37
son of Enoch, the son of
Jared, the son of Mahalaleel,
the son of Cainan, the son of 38
Enos, the son of Seth, the son
of Adam, the son of God.

The Temptations of Jesus

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

⁴Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"

1. And was led by the Spirit into the desert. See notes on *Matt. 4:1-11*.

⁸Then the Devil took him up and showed him in a second all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶“I will give you all this power, and all the wealth,” the Devil told him. ⁷“It was all handed over to me and I can give it to anyone I choose. ⁸All this will be yours, then, if you kneel down before me.”

⁹Jesus answered, “The scripture says, ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!’”

¹⁰Then the Devil took him to Jerusalem and set him on the highest point of the temple, and said to him, ¹¹“If you are God’s Son, throw yourself down from here. ¹²For the scripture says, ‘God will order his angels to take good care of you.’ ¹³It also says, ‘They will hold you up with their hands so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones.’”

¹⁴Jesus answered him, “The scripture says, ‘You must not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

¹⁵When the Devil finished tempting Jesus in every way, he left him for a while.

Jesus Begins His Work in Galilee

(Also *Matt. 4.12-17; Mark 1.14-15*)

¹⁶Then Jesus returned to Galilee, and the power of the Holy Spirit was with him. The news about him spread throughout all that territory. ¹⁷He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all.

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours.”

Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. For it is written:

‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”

Jesus answered, “It says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

When the devil had finished all these temptations, he left him until an opportune time.

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

14. Then Jesus returned to Galilee. For the events before the return, see note on *Matt. 4:12*. And the power of the Holy Spirit was with him. He had conquered Satan in the Temptation. Conquering evil gives new strength.

15. He taught in their synagogues. See note on *Matt. 4:23*. Synagogue: the place where Jews met every Sabbath day for their public worship; it was also used as a social center and as a school for Jewish children during week days.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

(Also *Matt. 13.53-58; Mark 6.1-6*)

¹⁶Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went as usual to the synagogue. He stood up to read the Scriptures, ¹⁷and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written,

¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to preach the Good News to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed,

¹⁹ and announce the year when the Lord will save his people."

²⁰Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him. ²¹He began speaking to them, "This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read."

²²They were all well impressed with him, and marveled at the beautiful words that he spoke. They said, "Isn't he the son of Joseph?"

He went to Nazareth, ¹⁶ where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll ¹⁷ of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is ¹⁸ on me; therefore he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Then he rolled up the ²⁰ scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he said to them, "Today ²¹ this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

All spoke well of him and ²² were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

16. **He went as usual to the synagogue.** All religious Jews went to the Sabbath worship. This was a "ready made" opportunity for Jesus to teach. Compare *Matt. 13:53-58* and see notes there. Matthew probably gives a different visit, making at least two visits with similar events. **He stood up to read.** Anyone could read, and he did grow up here.

17. **The book of the prophet Isaiah.** There were regular readings for each Sabbath, and this one was partly in the book of Isaiah. [Scroll: a book made by gluing pages together to form long strips, which were rolled up for storage.] **And found the place.** He read from *Isaiah 61:1-3*. [The quotation agrees more closely with the Septuagint, with a few words from *Isa. 58:6*.] Note how accurately this describes his mission.

20. **Jesus rolled up the scroll.** After doing this, he gave it back to the *attendant* who was responsible for the building and its furniture. **and sat down.** It was the custom to stand while reading, and to sit while teaching. **Had their eyes fixed on him.** One who "grew up there" was about to teach them for the first time. Since the "news about him spread throughout all that territory," there would be unusual interest in what he was about to say. His mother, brothers, sisters, and perhaps Joseph [since the date of his death is not known] were probably all here at the synagogue.

21-22. **This passage of scripture has come true today.** By his reading of it, and by his mission. We are not told all he taught, but the people were well impressed with him. **Isn't he the son of Joseph?** A "sour note" creeps in. Compare *Matt. 13:54-58; John 6:42*. Joseph was his "FOSTER FATHER," but probably

²³He said to them, "I am sure that you will quote this proverb to me, 'Doctor, heal yourself.' You will also say to me, 'Do here in your own home town the same things we were told happened in Capernaum.'" ²⁴I tell you this," Jesus added. "A prophet is never welcomed in his own home town. ²⁵Listen to me: it is true that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah, when there was no rain for three and a half years and there was a great famine throughout the whole land. ²⁶Yet Elijah was not sent to a single one of them, but only to a widow of Zarephath, in the territory of Sidon. ²⁷And there were many lepers in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha; yet not one of them was made clean, but only Naaman the Syrian."

²⁸All the people in the synagogue were filled with anger when they heard this. ²⁹They rose up, dragged Jesus out of town, and took him to the top of the hill on which their town was built, to throw him over the cliff. ³⁰But he walked through the middle of the crowd and went his way.

A Man with an Evil Spirit

(Also Mark 1.21-28)

³¹Then Jesus went to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, where he taught the people on the

Jesus said to them, "Surely **23** you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your home town what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'" "

"I tell you the truth," he **24** continued, "no prophet is accepted in his home town. I **25** assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. **26** Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many **27** in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

All the people in the syna- **28** gogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, **29** and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he **30** walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit

Then he went down to **31** Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath be-

no one knew this but Mary and Joseph [and of course, Jesus himself]. They were both astonished and impressed by the words he spoke, and annoyed that one so "common" [he was a *local boy*] would teach them!

23-24. Doctor, heal yourself. He answers the whispers and the unspoken words in their minds. They had heard the news of his fame, but he is just a poor young man from a poor family to them. **A prophet is never welcomed in his own home town.** "*Familiarity breeds contempt.*"

25-27. Listen to me. He points out that Elijah saved a Sidonian widow in Zarephath; and Elisha healed Naaman, a Syrian leper. He points to the saving of the Gentiles.

28-30. Were filled with anger when they heard this. If the Gentiles could be saved, that meant they were as good as they were, and this filled them with rage! (*Compare Acts 22:22.*) **Dragged Jesus out of town.** In their anger, they are going to kill him. (*Compare notes on Matt. 5:21-22.*) **But he walked through the middle of the crowd.** He is calm, cool; they are wild with anger. This is not really a miracle. His *majesty* surprises and dazzles them.

31. Then Jesus went to Capernaum. Nazareth was in the hills; Capernaum was in the concavity of Lake Galilee.

Sabbath. ³²They were all amazed at the way he taught, because his words had authority. ³³There was a man in the synagogue who had the spirit of an evil demon in him; he screamed out in a loud voice, ³⁴"Ah! 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!"

³⁵Jesus commanded the spirit, "Be quiet, and come out of the man!" The demon threw the man down in front of them and went out of him without doing him any harm.

³⁶They were all amazed, and said to one another, "What kind of words are these? With authority and power this man gives orders to the evil spirits, and they come out!" ³⁷And the report about Jesus spread everywhere in that region.

Jesus Heals Many People

(Also *Matt. 8.14-17; Mark 1.29-34*)

³⁸Jesus left the synagogue and went to Simon's home. Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever, and they spoke to Jesus about her. ³⁹He went and stood at her bedside, and gave a command to the fever. The fever left her, and she got up at once and began to wait on them.

⁴⁰After sunset, all who had friends who were sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus; he placed his hands on every one of them and healed them all. ⁴¹Demons, also, went out from many people, screaming, "You are the Son of God!"

Jesus commanded them and would not let them speak, because they knew that he was the Messiah.

gan to teach the people. They ³² were amazed at his teaching, because his message had authority.

In the synagogue there was ³³ a man possessed by a demon, an evil spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, "Ha! What do you want with ³⁴ us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" Jesus said ³⁵ sternly. "Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.

All the people were a- ³⁶ mazed and said to each other, "What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!" And the news about him ³⁷ spread throughout the surrounding area.

Jesus Heals Many

Jesus left the synagogue ³⁸ and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. So he bent ³⁹ over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them.

When the sun was setting, ⁴⁰ the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. Moreover, demons ⁴¹ came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ.

33-37. There was a man in the synagogue. See notes on *Mark 1:21-27*. Matthew does not give this account.

38-39. Simon's mother-in-law was sick. See notes on *Matt. 8:14-17*.

Jesus Preaches in the Synagogues

(Also Mark 1.35-39)

⁴²At daybreak Jesus left the town and went off to a lonely place. The people started looking for him, and when they found him they tried to keep him from leaving. ⁴³But he said to them, "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns also, because that is what God sent me to do."

⁴⁴So he preached in the synagogues all over the country.

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

(Also Matt. 4.18-22; Mark 1.16-20)

5 One time Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret while the people pushed their way up to him to listen to the word of God. ²He saw two boats pulled up on the beach; the fishermen had left them and were washing the nets. ³Jesus got into one of the boats—it belonged to Simon—and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and taught the crowd.

⁴When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your partners let your nets down for a catch."

⁵"Master," Simon answered, "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you

At daybreak Jesus went ⁴² out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them. But ⁴³ he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent." And he kept on ⁴⁴ preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

The Calling of the First Disciples

5 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge ² two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into ³ one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

When he had finished ⁴ speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

Simon answered, "Mas- ⁵ ter, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

43. I must preach . . . in other towns also. See notes on Matt. 8:14-17.

1. While the people pushed their way up to him. When people have not been made prejudiced by false teachers, they are usually eager to hear the Word. Lake Gennesaret. Another name for Lake Galilee [also called Lake Tiberias].

2. He saw two boats. They belonged to Peter and Andrew; and James and John. See notes on Matt. 4:18-22.

3. It belonged to Simon. We know him better as Peter. And taught the crowd. He sat in the fishing boat to teach, so the crowd could not push against him.

4-5. Out further to the deep water. Where the fish are. Let your nets down for a catch. This is Jesus' promise that they will catch fish. But if you say so. They had worked hard all night without catching any fish, but if Christ says so, he will try again. Note that Simon Peter was already a disciple of Jesus (John 1:40-42).

say so, I will let down the nets." ⁶They let the nets down and caught such a large number of fish that the nets were about to break. ⁷So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full of fish that they were about to sink. ⁸When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!"

⁹He and the others with him were all amazed at the large number of fish they had caught. ¹⁰The same was true of Simon's partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

¹¹They pulled the boats on the beach, left everything, and followed Jesus.

Jesus Makes a Leper Clean

(Also *Matt. 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45*)

¹²Once Jesus was in a certain town where there was a man who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he threw himself down and begged him, "Sir, if you want to, you can make me clean!"

¹³Jesus reached out and touched him. "I do want to," he answered. "Be clean!" At once the leprosy left the man. ¹⁴Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell this to anyone, but go straight to the priest and let him examine you; then offer the sacrifice, as Moses ordered, to prove to everyone that you are now clean."

When they had done so, ⁶ they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ⁷

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James ⁸ and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. ⁹

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So ¹⁰ they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. ¹¹

The Man With Leprosy

While Jesus was in one of ¹² the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

Jesus reached out his hand ¹³ and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him.

Then Jesus ordered him, ¹⁴ "Don't tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."

6. **That the nets were about to break.** "The schools of fish in Lake Galilee are things of wonder, black masses hundreds of yards long, as thick as they could pack themselves together, with their black fins sticking up out of the water. Any net would strain to hold such a heavy load."

8. **He fell on his knees before Jesus.** Amazed and frightened by the miracle which brought the fish into their nets.

10. **Jesus said to Simon.** He speaks to Simon, but he intends this for the others also (*Matt 4:19*).

11. **Left everything, and followed Jesus.** They were already disciples (*John 1:40-42*), but had continued to go on fishing. Now they will follow Jesus personally. From now on they will be catching men for Jesus. Together they will "let the nets down" at Pentecost, and harvest a large number.

12-16. **A man who was covered with leprosy.** See notes on *Matt. 8:1-4*.

¹⁵But the news about Jesus spread all the more widely, and crowds of people came to hear him and be healed from their diseases. ¹⁶But he would go away to lonely places, where he prayed.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

(Also Matt. 9.1-8; Mark 2.1-12)

¹⁷One day when Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of the Law were sitting there who had come from every town in Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was present for Jesus to heal the sick. ¹⁸Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a bed, and they tried to take him into the house and lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹Because of the crowd, however, they could find no way to take him in. So they carried him up on the roof, made an opening in the tiles, and let him down on his bed into the middle of the group in front of Jesus. ²⁰When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the man, "Your sins are forgiven you, my friend."

²¹The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who speaks against God in this way? No man can forgive sins; God alone can!"

²²Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Why do you think such things? ²³Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, pick up your bed, and go home!"

²⁵At once the man got up before them all, took the bed he had been lying on, and went home, praising God. ²⁶They were all completely amazed! Full of fear, they praised God, saying, "What marvelous things we have seen today!"

Yet the news about him ¹⁵ spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus ¹⁶ often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

One day as he was teach- ¹⁷ ing, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick. Some men came ¹⁸ carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not ¹⁹ find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their ²⁰ faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

The Pharisees and the ²¹ teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Jesus knew what they were ²² thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is ²³ easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But that you may ²⁴ know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . ." He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go ²⁵ home." Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed ²⁶ and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Jesus Calls Levi

(Also *Matt. 9.9-13; Mark 2.13-17*)

²⁷After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.

²⁹Then Levi had a big feast in his house for Jesus, and there was a large number of tax collectors and other people at the table with them.

³⁰Some Pharisees and teachers of the Law who belonged to their group complained to Jesus' disciples. "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and outcasts?" they asked.

³¹Jesus answered them, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call the respectable people to repent, but the outcasts."

The Question about Fasting

(Also *Matt. 9.14-17; Mark 2.18-22*)

³³Some people said to Jesus, "The disciples of John fast frequently and offer up prayers, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same; but your disciples eat and drink."

³⁴Jesus answered, "Do you think you can make the guests at a wedding party go without food as long as the bridegroom is with them? Of course not! ³⁵But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and they will go without food in those days."

The Calling of Levi

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, ²⁸left everything and followed him. Then Levi held a great ²⁹banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But ³⁰the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

Jesus answered them, "It ³¹is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have ³²not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

They said to him, "John's ³³disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

Jesus answered, "Can you ³⁴make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? But the time will come ³⁵when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast."

27-39. And saw a tax collector named Levi. We know this man better as Matthew. See notes on *Matt. 9.9-17*. All the "inner circle" of disciples had been disciples of John the Baptist, who then left him to follow Christ (*Acts 1:20-21*). All had continued to work at their jobs until this official call from Jesus. Matthew Levi, too, leaves everything to follow Jesus. Then Levi had a big feast in his house. To have Jesus meet his fellow tax-collectors. (See note on *Matt. 9:10*.) The disciples of John fast frequently. [Fast: to go without food for a while as a religious duty.] But your disciples eat and drink. They said this to scold Jesus [and his disciples] for attending this feast. Jesus shows that "fasting" should not be an empty formality, but should be done with real meaning. But it is "out of place" at some times. And no one wants new wine after drinking old wine. This is the final answer to the question in verse 33. Only Luke tells this. The disciples of John drank the old wine of Jewish orthodoxy, and did not like the

³⁶Jesus told them this parable also, "No one tears a piece off a new coat to patch up an old coat. If he does, he will have torn the new coat, and the piece of new cloth will not match the old. ³⁷Nor does anyone pour new wine into used wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will pour out, and the skins will be ruined. ³⁸No! New wine should be poured into fresh skins! ³⁹And no one wants new wine after drinking old wine. 'The old is better,' he says."

The Question about the Sabbath

(Also *Matt. 12.1-8; Mark 2.23-28*)

6 Jesus was walking through some wheat fields on a Sabbath day. His disciples began to pick the heads of wheat, rub them in their hands, and eat the grain. ²Some Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what our Law says you cannot do on the Sabbath?"

³Jesus answered them, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his men were hungry? ⁴He went into the house of God, took the bread offered to God, ate it, and gave it also to his men. Yet it is against our Law for anyone to eat it except the priests."

⁵And Jesus concluded, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

The Man with a Crippled Hand

(Also *Matt. 12.9-14; Mark 3.1-6*)

⁶On another Sabbath Jesus went into a synagogue and taught. A man was there whose right

He told them this parable: **36**
 "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. **37**
 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. **38**
 No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.' **39**

Lord of the Sabbath

6 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain-fields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. **2**
 Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

Jesus answered them, **3**
 "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." **4**
 Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." **5**

On another Sabbath he **6**
 went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was

new wine of the grace and freedom of the Gospel. Note there is no comparison being made between the old and the new. The point is that the one who drinks the old will not even try the new because he thinks the old is better.

1-5. **Through some wheat fields on a Sabbath day.** For notes on the argument with the Pharisees, see *Matt. 12:1-14*. [Note: *corn* is wheat or barley in England; oats in Scotland.]

6-11. **On another Sabbath.** For notes about the healing of the crippled hand, see *Matt. 12:9-15*.

hand was crippled. ⁷Some teachers of the Law and Pharisees wanted some reason to accuse Jesus of doing wrong; so they watched him very closely to see if he would cure on the Sabbath. ⁸But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to the man with the crippled hand, "Stand up and come here to the front." The man got up and stood there. ⁹Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you: What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help or to harm? To save a man's life or destroy it?" ¹⁰He looked around at them all, then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand became well again.

¹¹But they were filled with rage and began to discuss among themselves what they could do to Jesus.

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles

(Also *Matt. 10.1-4; Mark 3.13-19*)

¹²At that time Jesus went up a hill to pray, and spent the whole night there praying to God. ¹³When day came he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he named apostles: ¹⁴Simon (whom he also named Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, ¹⁵Matthew and Thomas, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon (who was called the Patriot), ¹⁶Judas, the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became the traitor.

shriveled. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there.

Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?"

He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored. But they were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

The Twelve Apostles

One of those days Jesus went out into the hills to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

12. **Jesus went up a hill to pray.** Jesus prepared for each crisis or important event, by praying.

13. **He called his disciples to him.** Out of these, he chooses twelve and appoints them to a special work. The word "apostle" means messenger - one sent on a mission. It was not a technical term, but a work description. For notes on this and a comparison of the lists of apostles, see *Matt. 10:1-5*.

Jesus Teaches and Heals

(Also Matt. 4.23-25)

¹⁷Coming down from the hill with them, Jesus stood on a level place with a large number of his disciples. A great crowd of people was there from all over Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from the coast cities of Tyre and Sidon; ¹⁸they came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those who were troubled by evil spirits also came and were healed. ¹⁹All the people tried to touch him, for power was going out from him and healing them all.

Happiness and Sorrow

(Also Matt. 5.1-12)

²⁰Jesus looked at his disciples and said,

“Happy are you poor;
the Kingdom of God is yours!

²¹“Happy are you who are hungry now;
you will be filled!

“Happy are you who weep now;
you will laugh!

²²“Happy are you when men hate you, and reject you, and insult you, and say that you are evil, because of the Son of Man! ²³Be glad when that happens, and dance for joy, because a great reward is kept for you in heaven. For their ancestors did the very same things to the prophets.

²⁴“But how terrible for you who are rich
now;
you have had your easy life!

Blessings and Woes

He went down with them ¹⁷
and stood on a level place. A
large crowd of his disciples
was there and a great number
of people from all over
Judea, from Jerusalem, and
from the seacoast of Tyre and
Sidon, who had come to hear ¹⁸
him and to be healed of their
diseases. Those troubled by
evil spirits were cured, and
the people all tried to touch ¹⁹
him, because power was
coming from him and heal-
ing them all.

Looking at his disciples, ²⁰
he said:

“Blessed are you who are
poor,
for yours is the kingdom
of God.

Blessed are you who hun- ²¹
ger now,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep
now,
for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when men ²²
hate you,
when they exclude you
and insult you

and reject your name as
evil,
because of the Son of

Man.

“Rejoice in that day and ²³
leap for joy, because great is
your reward in heaven. For
that is how their fathers
treated the Prophets.

“But woe to you who are ²⁴
rich,
for you have already re-
ceived your comfort.

17-19. **Jesus stood on a level place.** This leads into Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount (which Matthew gives in much greater detail). Only Luke tells us the Sermon was preceded by healing the crowds of sick.

20-23. **Happy.** These beatitudes are given more fully by Matthew. See notes on Matt. 5:1-12. **Kingdom of God.** Luke uses this phrase, while Matthew uses *Kingdom of heaven*. This shows the two phrases are interchangeable and mean the same thing.

24-26. **But how terrible for you who are rich now.** Matthew does not give these. Jesus lists four “horrors” which are the exact opposite of the beatitudes he had just given, and the meaning will be found in the comparison. **Rich now.** Those who are so much “IN LOVE” with this present “world” that they

²⁵“How terrible for you who are full now;
you will go hungry!

“How terrible for you who laugh now;
you will mourn and weep!

²⁶How terrible when all men speak well of
you; because their ancestors said the very same
things to the false prophets.”

Love for Enemies

(Also Matt. 5:38-48; 7:12a)

²⁷“But I tell you who hear me: Love your
enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless
those who curse you, and pray for those who
mistreat you. ²⁹If anyone hits you on one cheek,
let him hit the other one too; if someone takes
your coat, let him have your shirt as well. ³⁰Give
to everyone who asks you for something, and
when someone takes what is yours, do not ask for
it back. ³¹Do for others just what you want them
to do for you.

³²“If you love only the people who love you,
why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners
love those who love them! ³³And if you do good
only to those who do good to you, why should
you receive a blessing? Even sinners do that!

³⁴And if you lend only to those from whom you
hope to get it back, why should you receive a
blessing? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get

Woe to you who are well
fed now,
for you will go hungry,
Woe to you who laugh
now,
for you will mourn and
weep.
Woe to you when all men ²⁶
speak well of you,
for that is how their
fathers treated the
false prophets.

Love for Enemies

“but I tell you who hear ²⁷
me: Love your enemies, do
good to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you, ²⁸
pray for those who mistreat
you. If someone strikes you ²⁹
on one cheek, turn to him the
other also. If someone takes
your cloak, do not stop him
from taking your tunic. Give ³⁰
to everyone who asks you,
and if anyone takes what be-
longs to you, do not demand
it back. Do to others as you ³¹
would have them do to you.

“If you love those who love ³²
you, what credit is that to
you? Even ‘sinners’ love
those who love them. And if ³³
you do good to those who are
good to you, what credit is
that to you? Even ‘sinners’
do that. And if you lend to ³⁴
those from whom you expect
repayment, what credit is
that to you? Even ‘sinners’
lend to ‘sinners,’ expecting

have become proud, arrogant, and unteachable. Such as these disqualify themselves for Christ's spiritual Kingdom. **Full now.** Those who are completely satisfied with material things. They have no deep sense of spiritual need, no desire to be “put right” with God. Because they have made this *world* their “god,” they will *go hungry* when all that is material is stripped away. **Laugh now.** Not ordinary laughter, but those who make their sin and rebellion against God a *hilarious frolic*. These will not laugh when Jesus Comes and the dead are raised! Compare Rev. 6:12-17. **When all men speak well of you.** This is said specifically to the disciples. It is the exact opposite of *verse 22*. Whoever structures his life to please God will meet people who will hate, reject, and insult him, [as they did to Christ]. To get all men to speak well of you, you must join the false prophets. [These four “horrors” can be understood as four types of people. (1) Those who *worship* riches. (2) Those delighted with this present life. (3) Those who live only for pleasure. (4) Those who live only to get praise and glory.]

27-36. **Love your enemies.** See notes on Matt. 5:38-48.

back the same amount! ³⁵No! Love your enemies and do good to them; lend and expect nothing back. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High God. For he is good to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

Judging Others

(Also *Matt. 7:1-5*)

³⁷"Do not judge others, and God will not judge you; do not condemn others, and God will not condemn you; forgive others, and God will forgive you. ³⁸Give to others, and God will give to you: you will receive a full measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands—all that you can hold. The measure you use for others is the one God will use for you."

³⁹And Jesus told them this parable, "One blind man cannot lead another one; if he does, both will fall into a ditch. ⁴⁰No pupil is greater than his teacher; but every pupil, when he has completed his training, will be like his teacher.

⁴¹"Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but pay no attention to the log in your own eye? ⁴²How can you say to your brother, 'Please, brother, let me take that speck out of your eye,' yet not even see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite! Take the log out of your own eye first, and then you will be able to see and take the speck out of your brother's eye."

to be repaid in full. But love ³⁵ your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as ³⁶ your Father is merciful.

Judging Others

"Do not judge, and you ³⁷ will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, ³⁸ and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A student ⁴⁰ is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

"Why do you look at the ⁴¹ speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. ⁴²

37-38. **Do not judge others.** See notes on *Matt. 7:1-2*.

39. **One blind man cannot lead another one.** See note on *Matt. 15:14*.

40. **No pupil is greater than his teacher.** See note on *Matt. 10:24*. This also must be understood in view of verse 37. Jesus did not come to "judge" (*John 12:47-48*), but to save. Every Christian must follow his example.

41-42. **Why do you look at the speck.** An example to show how stupid this "judging" really is! Many who want to reform the world, need first to reform and clean up their own lives. Note that Jesus uses "HUMOR."

A Tree and Its Fruit

(Also *Matt. 7.16-20; 12.33-35*)

⁴³“A healthy tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a poor tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴Every tree is known by the fruit it bears; you do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or gather grapes from bramble bushes. ⁴⁵A good man brings good out of the treasure of good things in his heart; a bad man brings bad out of his treasure of bad things. For a man’s mouth speaks what his heart is full of.”

The Two House Builders

(Also *Matt 7.24-27*)

⁴⁶“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and don’t do what I tell you? ⁴⁷Everyone who comes to me, and listens to my words, and obeys them—I will show you what he is like. ⁴⁸He is like a man who built a house: he dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. The river flooded over and hit that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹But the one who hears my words and does not obey them is like a man who built a house on the ground, without laying a foundation; when the flood hit that house it fell at once— what a terrible crash that was!”

A Tree and Its Fruit

“No good tree bears bad ⁴³ fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is ⁴⁴ recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings ⁴⁵ good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

The Wise and Foolish Builders

“Why do you call me, ⁴⁶ ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? I will show you ⁴⁷ what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He ⁴⁸ is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But ⁴⁹ the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

43-45. **A healthy tree does not bear bad fruit.** Whatever a man really is will show up in his actions. See notes on *Matt. 7:15-21*.

46-49. **Why do you call me, Lord, Lord?** Many fool themselves by being “all talk and no action” [even though they do things which they think are important]. See notes on *Matt. 7:21-27*. **Dug deep.** Luke adds that the one man *dug deep* and *laid the foundation* on the rock. The foolish man built his house on the ground, *without laying a foundation*. We must build on *The Rock* who is Christ our Lord. The declaration of *faith* (*Matt. 16:16*) must be *believed in our hearts* (*Rom. 10:9-10*) and *declared with our lips* for us to build on the Rock (*Matt. 16:18; Mark 16:16*) and be saved.

Jesus Heals a Roman Officer's Servant

(Also *Matt. 8:5-13*)

7 When Jesus had finished saying all these things to the people, he went to Capernaum. ²A Roman officer there had a servant who was very dear to him; the man was sick and about to die. ³When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent to him some Jewish elders to ask him to come and heal his servant. ⁴They came to Jesus and begged him earnestly, "This man really deserves your help. ⁵He loves our people and he himself built a synagogue for us."

⁶So Jesus went with them. He was not far from the house when the officer sent friends to tell him, "Sir, don't trouble yourself. I do not deserve to have you come into my house, ⁷neither do I consider myself worthy to come to you in person. Just give the order and my servant will get well. ⁸I, too, am a man placed under the authority of superior officers, and I have soldiers under me. I order this one, 'Go!' and he goes; I order that one, 'Come!' and he comes; and I order my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

⁹Jesus was surprised when he heard this; he turned around and said to the crowd following him, "I have never found such faith as this, I tell you, not even in Israel!"

¹⁰The messengers went back to the officer's house and found his servant well.

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

¹¹Soon afterward Jesus went to a town named Nain; his disciples and a large crowd went with

The Faith of the Centurion

7 When Jesus had finished saying all this in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." So Jesus went with them.

He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well.

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him.

1-10 A Roman officer there had a servant. For notes on the healing of this servant, see *Matt. 8:5-13*.
11. Soon afterward Jesus went to a town named Nain. Only Luke tells of this "raising from death." Nain was a town on the northwest slope of "Little Hermon," about twenty-five miles south of Capernaum.

him. ¹²Just as he arrived at the gate of the town, a funeral procession was coming out. The dead man was the only son of a woman who was a widow, and a large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her his heart was filled with pity for her and he said to her, "Don't cry." ¹⁴Then he walked over and touched the coffin, and the men carrying it stopped. Jesus said, "Young man! Get up, I tell you!" ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶Everyone was filled with fear, and they praised God, "A great prophet has appeared among us!" and, "God has come to save his people!"

¹⁷This news about Jesus went out through all the country and the surrounding territory.

The Messengers from John the Baptist

(Also *Matt. 11.2-19*)

¹⁸John's disciples told him about all these things. He called two of them to him ¹⁹and sent them to the Lord to ask him, "Are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

As he approached the town ¹² gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw ¹³ her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."

Then he went up and ¹⁴ touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man ¹⁵ sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

They were all filled with ¹⁶ awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people." This news about Jesus spread ¹⁷ throughout Judea and the surrounding country.

Jesus and John the Baptist

John's disciples told him ¹⁸ about all these things. Calling two of them, he sent them ¹⁹ to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

12. **Just as he arrived at the gate of the town.** Most towns in the Middle East had walls and a gate. He met the funeral procession coming out. The dead were always carried out of a Jewish town to be buried outside. **The dead man.** He was being carried in an open coffin, covered with a cloth. [SOROS = coffin; bier; urn; a stand on which a corpse is carried.] **The only son.** A bitter loss. Compare *Jer. 6:26; Amos 8:10*.

13. **His heart was filled with pity.** Jesus really loved people. He had pity toward those who were sad and in need. Compare *Matt. 14:14*.

14. **And touched the coffin.** This signaled them to stop. **Get up!** This is the first time he commanded the dead to "get up!" Compare the raising of Jairus' daughter (*Matt. 9:18-26*); and the raising of Lazarus (*John 11*). Imagine the amazement of the crowd, also of the disciples!

15. **The dead man sat up.** Jesus speaks and the miracle is done! Language cannot express the feelings of this moment.

16-17. **Everyone was filled with fear.** They are shocked and astonished to see the dead man get up. **A great prophet has appeared among us!** Even the Twelve had not yet declared his Messiahship. **Through all the country.** All Palestine. Even John the Baptist, in prison east of the Dead Sea, seems to have heard about this.

18-33. **And sent them to the Lord to ask him.** John the Baptist had already identified Jesus as the Messiah (*John 1:31-34*). But the Jews expected a political Messiah, and John wonders why Jesus does not overthrow Herod and the Romans, declare himself king, and release him from prison. See notes on *Matt. 11:2-19*.

²⁰When they came to Jesus they said, "John the Baptist sent us to ask, 'Are you the one he said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

²¹At that very time Jesus healed many people from their sicknesses, diseases, and evil spirits, and gave sight to many blind people. ²²He answered John's messengers, "Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind can see, the lame can walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf can hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor. ²³How happy is he who has no doubts about me!"

²⁴After John's messengers had left, Jesus began to speak about John to the crowds, "When you went out to John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A blade of grass bending in the wind? ²⁵What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in fancy clothes? Really, those who dress like that and live in luxury are found in palaces! ²⁶Tell me, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you—you saw much more than a prophet. ²⁷For John is the one of whom the scripture says, 'Here is my messenger, says God; I will send him ahead of you to open the way for you.' ²⁸I tell you," Jesus added, "John is greater than any man ever born; but he who is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he."

²⁹All the people and the tax collectors heard him; they were the ones who had obeyed God's righteous demands and had been baptized by John. ³⁰But the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law rejected God's purpose for themselves, and refused to be baptized by John.

When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

After John's messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John:

"What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one ²⁷about whom it is written:

I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

I tell you, among those ²⁸born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

(All the people, even the ²⁹tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. But ³⁰the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)

³¹“Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? What are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the market place. One group shouts to the other, ‘We played wedding music for you, but you would not dance! We sang funeral songs, but you would not cry!’ ³³John the Baptist came, and he fasted and drank no wine and you said, ‘He has a demon in him!’ ³⁴The Son of Man came, and he ate and drank, and you said, ‘Look at this man! He is a glutton and wine-drinker, a friend of tax collectors and outcasts!’ ³⁵God’s wisdom, however, is shown to be true by all who accept it.”

“To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other:

‘We played the flute for for you, and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge, and you did not cry.’

For John the Baptist came ³³ neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son ³⁴ of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and “sinners.”’ But wisdom is proved right ³⁵ by all her children.”

Jesus at the Home of Simon the Pharisee

³⁶A Pharisee invited Jesus to have dinner with him. Jesus went to his house and sat down to eat. ³⁷There was a woman in that town who lived a sinful life. She heard that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee’s house, so she brought an alabaster jar full of perfume ³⁸and stood behind Jesus, by his feet, crying and wetting his feet with her tears. Then she dried his feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured the perfume on them.

Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman

Now one of the Pharisees ³⁶ invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. When a ³⁷ woman who lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood ³⁸ behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she

36. A Pharisee invited Jesus. Only Luke gives this anointing, and it is not the same as the one in *Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8*, in which Mary was the woman. This event is early in the ministry of Jesus, before the gap between himself and the Pharisees became so severe they could not be friendly with each other. Jesus would eat with Pharisees and tax collectors alike. Pharisees are described in *Luke 18:9-14*. *Johnson* says: “We must imagine the guests arriving, Simon greeting each one with a hug and kiss [this was the custom], having slaves to wash their feet [it was dusty and they wore sandals], pouring olive oil over their heads to moisten the parched skin [which also was the custom]. But one guest is ignored. He is a poor man, not a Pharisee, invited as an act of snobbish pride. He gets no kiss of greeting, no hug; no slave washes his feet, but of course a poor man would not expect such things.”

37. A woman . . . sinful life. The language implies she was a prostitute in Capernaum. She heard that Jesus. The fame of Jesus was the talk of the town. She believed there was mercy, even for her. So she brought. The room where they were eating had no door, but the whole front of it was open, making it easy to slip in.

38. And stood behind Jesus. Rather than sitting up, these people lay on their side on a couch when they ate a feast. She stands behind him, at his feet [which stick out behind the couch]. Crying and

³⁹When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he said to himself, "If this man really were a prophet, he would know who this woman is who is touching him; he would know what kind of sinful life she leads!"

⁴⁰Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Yes, Teacher," he said, "tell me."

⁴¹"There were two men who owed money to a money-lender," Jesus began; "one owed him five hundred dollars and the other one fifty dollars.

⁴²Neither one could pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Which one, then, will love him more?"

⁴³"I suppose," answered Simon, "that it would be the one who was forgiven more."

"Your answer is correct," said Jesus. ⁴⁴Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your home, and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵You did not welcome me with a kiss, but she has not stopped kissing my feet

wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who ³⁹ had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

Jesus answered him, ⁴⁰ "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

"Two men owed money to ⁴¹ a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

Neither of them had the ⁴² money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon replied, "I suppose ⁴³ the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the ⁴⁴ woman and said to Simon,

"Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did ⁴⁵ did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped

wetting his feet. These are tears of repentance, with a deep sense of sin, and a strong hope of mercy and forgiveness. She dried his feet with her long hair, and poured the perfume on them.

39. When the Pharisee. He was surprised that Jesus would not drive her away. **He said to himself.** Simon decides in his own mind that Jesus: (1) either does not know what this woman is - which no true prophet could fail to know; (2) or he knows it and still lets her touch him - which defiles him, and no true prophet would allow this. Therefore, Simon decides Jesus is not a prophet at all.

40-43. Jesus spoke up. He answers the unspoken question of Simon. **Two men who owed money.** This is a parable - using common things to teach spiritual truth. **Neither could pay him back.** Both were helpless, as we all are before God. **So he canceled the debts.** This is GRACE: *an undeserved favor.* **Which one, then?** Grace brings love. Will one love him more than the other? **The one who was forgiven more.** This is Simon's evaluation. By it he judges himself.

44-46. I came into your home. Jesus shows the sharp contrast between Simon and the woman. Simon refused him water; she gave him her tears [which Augustine calls *the blood of her heart*]. Simon would not greet him with a kiss; she kissed his feet. Simon refused to provide oil for his head; she covered his feet with expensive perfume. Simon treated Jesus as a servant; she treated him as a king. [The water for the feet, the kiss, and the oil for the head were normal etiquette in that part of the world.]

since I came. ⁴⁶You provided no oil for my head, but she has covered my feet with perfume. ⁴⁷I tell you, then, the great love she has shown proves that her many sins have been forgiven. Whoever, has been forgiven little, however, shows only a little love."

⁴⁸Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven."

⁴⁹The others sitting at the table began to say to themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

⁵⁰But Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

kissing my feet. You did not ⁴⁶anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfume. Therefore, I ⁴⁷tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he loves little who has been forgiven little."

Then Jesus said to her, ⁴⁸"Your sins are forgiven."

The other guests began to ⁴⁹say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

Jesus said to the woman, ⁵⁰"Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

The Parable of the Sower

8 After this, Jesus traveled about from one city and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had come out;

Women Who Accompanied Jesus

8 Some time later Jesus traveled through towns and villages, preaching the Good News about the Kingdom of God. The twelve disciples went with him, ²and so did some women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (who was called Magdalene), from whom seven demons

47-50. I tell you, then. "Simon, if the one who was forgiven more will love more, this woman's great love proves she has been forgiven, because she had a lot to be forgiven for." [Simon thinks of the woman as very sinful and doubts her repentance; and thinks of himself as not a sinner at all.] **Your sins are forgiven.** Jesus rewards her faith and love by pronouncing her forgiven. **Who is this?** That is, what right does this man have to forgive sins? **But Jesus said to the woman.** Jesus ignores their questions. He tells her to go in peace. He has given her back her dignity. **LESSON FOR US:** (1) Some may feel more guilt, but all are equally unable to cancel the guilt of sin. (2) Christ can forgive. (3) "Decent" people may not recognize their deep need. (4). Not sin itself, but awareness of *sin forgiven* produces love. Gratitude is based on appreciation; and appreciation is based on a sense of need. Simon had no sense of need, did not ask to be forgiven, and received no forgiveness. The woman knew her need, came to Jesus, and was put right with God.

1. **Jesus traveled through towns and villages.** A tour of missions. Only Luke tells us about this.
2. **And so did some women.** The fact that these women were part of the group who went along with Jesus was contrary to Jewish custom. The teachers of the Law did not believe women should be taught spiritual matters. Jesus breaks down all barriers (Gal. 3:28). **Mary.** There is no reason at all to think that she was the woman at Simon's house (Luke 7:37). She was one of the most devoted friends of Christ, and was first to see him when he raised from death (John 20:16). The women named all must have had wealth and influence. [On demon possession, see note on Matt. 4:24; 8:28-29.]

had been driven out; ³Joanna, the wife of Chuza who was an officer in Herod's court; and Susanna, and many other women who used their own resources to help Jesus and his disciples.

The Parable of the Sower

(Also *Matt. 13.1-9; Mark 4.1-9*)

⁴People kept coming to Jesus from one town after another; and when a great crowd gathered, Jesus told this parable,

⁵"A man went out to sow his seed. As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it up. ⁶Some of it fell on rocky ground, and when the plants sprouted they dried up, because the soil had no moisture. ⁷Some of the seed fell among thorns, which grew up with the plants and choked them. ⁸And some seeds fell in good soil; the plants grew and bore grain, one hundred grains each."

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

The Purpose of the Parables

(Also *Matt. 13.10-17; Mark 4.10-12*)

⁹His disciples asked Jesus what this parable meant. ¹⁰Jesus answered, "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you; but to the rest it comes by means of parables, so that they may look but not see, and listen but not understand."

Joanna the wife of Chuza, ³ the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁴

"A farmer went out to sow ⁵ his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on rock, ⁶ and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed ⁷ fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed ⁸ fell on good soil. It came up yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

His disciples asked him ⁹ what this parable meant. He ¹⁰ said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others, I speak in parables, so that,

'though seeing, they may not see;
though hearing, they may not understand.'

3. **Joanna.** Nothing more is known of her. Note that her husband was an officer in Herod's court, which shows her social standing. [Herod Antipas. See note on *Matt. 2:1.*] **Susanna.** Mentioned only here. **Who used their own resources.** Note that they financed this tour of missions. What they were doing was unusual, but the customs of Palestine permitted them to do this [*without scandal*] to show their gratitude and devotion.

4-15. **A man went out to sow his seed.** For notes on this parable, see *Matt. 13:1-23*.

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

(Also *Matt. 13.18-23; Mark 4.13-20*)

¹¹“This is what the parable means: the seed is the word of God. ¹²The seed that fell along the path stands for those who hear; but the Devil comes and takes the message away from their hearts to keep them from believing and being saved. ¹³The seed that fell on rocky ground stands for those who hear the message and receive it gladly. But it does not sink deep into them; they believe only for a while, and fall away when the time of testing comes. ¹⁴The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear; but the worries and riches and pleasures of this life crowd in and choke them, and their fruit never ripens. ¹⁵The seed that fell in good soil stands for those who hear the message and retain it in a good and obedient heart, and persist until they bear fruit.”

A Lamp under a Bowl

(Also *Mark 4.21-25*)

¹⁶“No one lights a lamp and covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on the lampstand, so that people will see the light as they come in. ¹⁷ Whatever is hidden away will be brought out into the open, and whatever is covered up will be found and brought to light.

¹⁸“Be careful then, how you listen; because whoever has something will be given more, but whoever has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he thinks he has.”

“This is the meaning of 11
the parable: The seed is the
word of God. Those along 12
the path are the ones who
hear, and then the devil
comes and takes away the
word from their hearts, so
that they cannot believe and
be saved. Those on the rock 13
are the ones who receive the
word with joy when they hear
it, but they have no root.
They believe for a while, but
in the time of testing they fall
away. The seed that fell 14
among thorns stands for
those who hear, but as they
go on their way they are
choked by life’s worries,
riches and pleasures, and
they do not mature. But the 15
seed on good soil stands for
those with a noble and good
heart, who hear the word,
retain it, and by persevering
produce a crop.

A Lamp on a Stand

“No one lights a lamp and 16
hides it in a jar or puts it
under a bed. Instead, he puts
it on a stand, so that those
who come in can see the light. 17
For there is nothing hidden
that will not be disclosed,
and nothing concealed that
will not be known or brought
out into the open. Therefore
consider carefully how you
listen. 18
Whoever has will be
given more; whoever does
not have, even what he
thinks he has will be taken
from him.”

16-18. No one lights a lamp and covers it. See notes on *Matt. 5:15; Mark 4:21-25*. Mark says: “Pay attention to what you hear.” Luke says: “Be careful, then, how you listen.” What we hear depends upon how we listen.

Jesus' Mother and Brothers*(Also Matt. 12.46-50; Mark 3.31-35)*

¹⁹Jesus' mother and brothers came to him, but were unable to join him because of the crowd.

²⁰Someone said to Jesus, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to see you."

²¹Jesus said to them all, "My mother and brothers are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

Jesus Calms a Storm*(Also Matt. 8.23-27; Mark 4.35-41)*

²²One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples and said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they started out. ²³As they were sailing, Jesus went to sleep. A strong wind blew down on the lake, and the boat began to fill with water, putting them all in great danger. ²⁴The disciples came to Jesus and woke him up, saying, "Master, Master! We are about to die!"

Jesus got up and gave a command to the wind and to the stormy water; they quieted down and there was a great calm. ²⁵Then he said to the disciples, "Where is your faith?"

But they were amazed and afraid, and said to one another, "Who is this man? He gives orders to the winds and waves, and they obey him!"

Jesus Heals a Man with Demons*(Also Matt. 8.28-34; Mark 5.1-20)*

²⁶They sailed on over to the territory of the Gergesenes, which is across the lake from

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. Someone told him, ²⁰"Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."

He replied, ²¹"My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."

Jesus Calms the Storm

One day Jesus said to his ²²disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. ²³

The disciples went and ²⁴woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!"

He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters: the storm subsided, and all was calm. ²⁵"Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples.

In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

The Healing of a Demon-possessed Man

They sailed to the region ²⁶of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee.

19-21. Jesus' mother and brothers came to him. See notes on *Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:21.*

22-25. One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples. For notes on the Calming of the Storm, see *Matt. 8:23-27.*

26-39. A man from town who had demons in him. See notes on *Matt. 8:28-34.* The incident with the pigs proves the demons were not "make-believe." [Some scholars believe such demon possession disappeared after 70 A.D. when Jerusalem was destroyed.]

Galilee. ²⁷As Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a man from the town who had demons in him. He had gone for a long time without clothes, and would not stay at home, but spent his time in the burial caves. ²⁸When he saw Jesus he gave a loud cry, fell down before him, and said in a loud voice, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? I beg you, don't punish me!" ²⁹He said this because Jesus had ordered the evil spirit to go out of him. Many times it had seized him, and even though he was kept a prisoner, his hands and feet tied with chains, he would break the chains and be driven by the demon out into the desert.

³⁰Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is 'Mob,' " he answered—because many demons had gone into him. ³¹The demons begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss.

³²A large herd of pigs was near by, feeding on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he let them. ³³So the demons went out of the man and into the pigs; the whole herd rushed down the side of the cliff into the lake and were drowned.

³⁴The men who were taking care of the pigs saw what happened, so they ran off and spread the news in the town and among the farms.

³⁵People went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind; and they were all afraid. ³⁶Those who had seen it told the people how the man had been cured. ³⁷Then all the people from the territory of the Gergesenes asked Jesus to go away, because they were terribly afraid. So Jesus got into the boat and left. ³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone out begged Jesus, "Let me go with you."

But Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Go back home and tell what God has done for you."

When Jesus stepped ashore, ²⁷ he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. When he ²⁸ saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" For Jesus had commanded ²⁹ the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

Jesus asked him, "What is ³⁰ your name?"

"Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they ³¹ begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss.

A herd of many pigs was ³² feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. When the demons came out ³³ of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

When those tending the ³⁴ pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out ³⁵ to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told ³⁶ the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. Then all the people ³⁷ of the region of the Gergesenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were

The man went through the whole town telling what Jesus had done for him.

Jairus' Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus' Cloak

(Also *Matt. 9.18-26; Mark 5.21-43*)

⁴⁰When Jesus returned to the other side of the lake the crowd welcomed him, because they had all been waiting for him. ⁴¹Then a man named Jairus arrived, an official in the local synagogue. He threw himself down at Jesus' feet and begged him to go to his home, ⁴²because his only daughter, twelve years old, was dying.

As Jesus went along, the people were crowding him from every side. ⁴³A certain woman was there who had suffered from severe bleeding for twelve years; she had spent all she had on doctors, but no one had been able to cure her. ⁴⁴She came up in the crowd behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak, and her bleeding stopped at once. ⁴⁵Jesus asked, "Who touched me?"

Everyone denied it, and Peter said, "Master, the people are all around you and crowding in on you."

⁴⁶But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I knew it when power went out of me." ⁴⁷The woman saw that she had been found out, so she came, trembling, and threw herself at Jesus' feet. There, in front of everybody, she told him why she had touched him and how she had been healed at once. ⁴⁸Jesus said to her, "My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left.

The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Just then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."

But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

40-56. Then a man named Jairus arrived. This was the second time Jesus raised a person from death. [The first is in *Luke 7:1-17*.] For notes on Jairus' daughter and the woman who touched Jesus' cloak, see *Matt. 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43*.

⁴⁹While Jesus was saying this, a messenger came from the official's house. "Your daughter has died," he told Jairus; "don't bother the Teacher any longer."

⁵⁰But Jesus heard it and said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; only believe, and she will be well."

⁵¹When he arrived at the house he would not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother. ⁵²Everyone there was crying and mourning for the child. Jesus said, "Don't cry; the child is not dead—she is only sleeping!"

⁵³They all made fun of him, because they knew that she was dead. ⁵⁴But Jesus took her by the hand and called out, "Get up, child!" ⁵⁵Her life returned and she got up at once; and Jesus ordered them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶Her parents were astounded, but Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Disciples
(Also Matt. 10.5-15; Mark 6.7-13)

9 Jesus called the twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases. ²Then he sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³He said to them, "Take nothing with you for the trip: no walking stick, no beggar's bag, no food, no money, not even an extra shirt. ⁴Wherever you are welcomed, stay in the same house until you leave that town; ⁵wherever people don't welcome you, leave that town and shake the dust off your feet as a warning to them."

⁶The disciples left and traveled through all the villages, preaching the Good News and healing people everywhere.

While Jesus was still ⁴⁹ speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher any more."

Hearing this, Jesus said ⁵⁰ to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."

When he arrived at the ⁵¹ house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother. Meanwhile, all the ⁵² people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep."

They laughed at him, ⁵³ knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand ⁵⁴ and said, "My child, get up!" Her spirit returned, ⁵⁵ and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give ⁵⁶ her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

9 When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He told them: ² "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them." So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere. ³ ⁴ ⁵ ⁶

1-6. Jesus called the twelve disciples together. The "sending out" of the Twelve is given in the greatest detail by Matthew. See notes on Matt. 10:1-15.

Herod's Confusion

(Also *Matt. 14.1-12; Mark 6.14-29*)

⁷Herod, the ruler of Galilee, heard about all the things that were happening; he was very confused about it because some people were saying, "John the Baptist has come back to life!" ⁸Others said that Elijah had appeared, while others said that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. ⁹Herod said, "I had John's head cut off; but who is this man I hear these things about?" And he kept trying to see Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also *Matt. 14.13-21; Mark 6.30-44; John 6.1-14*)

¹⁰The apostles came back and told Jesus everything they had done. He took them with him and they went off by themselves to a town named Bethsaida. ¹¹When the crowds heard about it they followed him. He welcomed them, spoke to them about the Kingdom of God, and healed those who needed it.

¹²When the sun had begun to set, the twelve disciples came to him and said, "Send the people away so they can go to the villages and farms around here and find food and lodging, because this is a lonely place."

¹³But Jesus said to them, "You yourselves give them something to eat."

They answered, "All we have is five loaves and two fish. Do you want us to go and buy food for this whole crowd?" ¹⁴(There were about five thousand men there.)

Jesus said to his disciples, "Make the people sit down in groups of about fifty each."

Now Herod the tetrarch ⁷ heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed, because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, others ⁸ that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. But Herod ⁹ said, "I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?" And he tried to see him.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, but the crowds ¹¹ learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

Late in the afternoon the ¹² twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here."

He replied, "You give ¹³ them something to eat."

They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish—unless we go and buy food for all this crowd." (About five thousand men ¹⁴ were there.)

But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."

7-9. **Herod, the ruler of Galilee.** [Herod Antipas. See note on *Matt. 2:1.*] For notes on Herod's confusion, see *Matt. 14:1-12.*

10-17. **They went off by themselves.** See notes on *Matt. 14:13-27* about the Feeding of the Five Thousand. **Bethsaida.** This is Bethsaida-Julias, at the top of Lake Galilee, near where the Jordan flows into it. [The other Bethsaida was on the western shore of the lake, near Capernaum.] Matthew tells us they were in a *lonely place*, which was probably the narrow plain of *El-Batihah* on the eastern shore.

¹⁵The disciples did so and made them all sit down. ¹⁶Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, thanked God for them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. ¹⁷They all ate and had enough; and the disciples took up twelve baskets of what the people left over.

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

(Also *Matt. 16.13-19; Mark 8.27-29*)

¹⁸One time when Jesus was praying alone, the disciples came to him. "Who do the crowds say I am?" he asked them.

¹⁹"Some say that you are John the Baptist," they answered. "Others say that you are Elijah, while others say that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

²⁰"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are God's Messiah."

Jesus Speaks about His Suffering and Death

(Also *Matt. 16.20-28; Mark 8.30-9.*)

²¹Then Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell this to anyone, ²²and added, "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 be raised to life on the third day."

²³And he said to all, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself, take up his cross every day, and follow me. ²⁴For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever

The disciples did so, and ¹⁵everybody sat down. Taking ¹⁶the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and ¹⁷the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

Peter's Confession of Christ

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"

They replied, "Some say ¹⁹John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

"But what about you?" ²⁰he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

Jesus strictly warned them ²¹not to tell this to anyone. And he said, "The Son of ²²Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

Then he said to them all: ²³"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever ²⁴wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life

18-21. One time when Jesus was praying alone. Only Luke mentions that he was praying alone when the disciples came to him and he asked them this question. **Who do the crowds say I am?** He does not ask this for information, but to "draw out" a declaration of their own faith. See notes on *Matt. 16:13-20*. **You are God's Messiah.** Peter says what they all believe. This fact that Jesus is God's Messiah is the *foundation stone* upon which the church of Christ is built.

22-27. **The Son of Man must suffer much.** [Son of Man: see *Luke 22:69-70*.] This is his first announcement that he must suffer and die. See notes on *Matt. 16:20-28*.

loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵Will a man gain anything if he wins the whole world but is himself lost or defeated? Of course not! ²⁶If a man is ashamed of me and of my teaching, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷Remember this! There are some here, I tell you, who will not die until they have seen the Kingdom of God."

The Transfiguration

(Also Matt. 17.1-8; Mark 9.2-8)

²⁸About a week after he had said these things, Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up a hill to pray. ²⁹While he was praying, his face changed its appearance and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰Suddenly two men were there talking with him. They were Moses and Elijah, ³¹who appeared in heavenly glory and talked with Jesus about how he would soon fulfill God's purpose by dying in Jerusalem. ³²Peter and his companions were sound asleep, but they awoke and saw Jesus' glory and the two men who were standing with him. ³³As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is a good thing that we are here. We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (He really did not know what he was saying.)

³⁴While he was still speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow; and the disciples were afraid as the cloud came

for me will save it. What ²⁵ good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If any- ²⁶ one is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. I tell you ²⁷ the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

About eight days after ²⁸ Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As he was pray- ²⁹ ing, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Two men, ³⁰ Moses and Elijah, appeared ³¹ in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. Peter ³² and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As ³³ the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, 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 he was say- ³⁴ ing.)

While he was speaking, a ³⁴ cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the

28-36. **About a week after he had said these things.** [A week ends as the eighth day begins.] Luke tells us that Jesus went up a hill to pray, and that *while he was praying* the Transfiguration took place. See notes on *Matt. 17:1-9*. ³¹ **How he would soon fulfill God's purpose.** Not by setting up an earthly kingdom (compare *John 6:15*), but by dying in Jerusalem (compare *John 10:17-18*). God's purpose was to make peace through his Son's death (*Col. 1:20*). All men take part in Christ's death (*2 Cor 5:14*), and what mankind *unconditionally* lost in Adam, mankind *unconditionally* receives in Christ (*Rom. 5:18-19*), so that all who believe can become **new** in Christ (*2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6*). Jesus said: "If you *obey my teaching you are really my disciples; you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free*" (*John 8:31-32*).

over them. ³⁵A voice said from the cloud, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen—listen to him!"

³⁶When the voice stopped, there was Jesus all alone. The disciples kept quiet about all this, and told no one at that time anything they had seen.

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Evil Spirit

(Also Matt. 17.14-18; Mark 9.14-27)

³⁷The next day they went down from the hill, and a large crowd met Jesus. ³⁸A man shouted from the crowd, "Teacher! Look, I beg you, at my son—my only son! ³⁹A spirit attacks him with a sudden shout and throws him into a fit, so that he foams at the mouth; it keeps on hurting him and will hardly let him go! ⁴⁰I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn't."

⁴¹Jesus answered, "How unbelieving and wrong you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you?" Then he said to the man, "Bring your son here."

⁴²As the boy was coming, the demon knocked him to the ground and threw him into a fit. Jesus gave a command to the evil spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. ⁴³All the people were amazed at the mighty power of God.

Jesus Speaks Again about His Death

(Also Matt. 17.22-23; Mark 9.30-32)

The people were still marveling at everything Jesus was doing, when he said to his disciples, ⁴⁴"Don't forget what I am about to tell you! The Son of Man is going to be handed over to the power of men." ⁴⁵But they did not know what this meant. It had been hidden from them so that they could not understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about the matter.

cloud. A voice came from the ³⁵ cloud, saying, "This is my Son whom I have chosen; listen to him." When the ³⁶ voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves, and told no one at that time what they had seen.

The Healing of a Boy With an Evil Spirit

The next day, when they ³⁷ came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. A man in the crowd called ³⁸ out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. A spirit seizes him ³⁹ and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. I begged your disciples ⁴⁰ to drive it out, but they could not."

"O unbelieving and per- ⁴¹ verse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."

Even while the boy was ⁴² coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father. And they were all ⁴³ amazed at the greatness of God.

While everyone was mar- ⁴⁴ veling at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, "Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men." But ⁴⁵ they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it.

37-42. Teacher! Look, I beg you, at my son. For the healing of this boy with an evil spirit, see notes on Matt. 17:14-21.

43-45. Don't forget what I am about to tell you. For this second announcement of his death, see notes on Matt 17:22-23.

Who Is the Greatest?

(Also *Matt. 18.1-5; Mark 9.33-37*)

⁴⁶An argument came up among the disciples as to which one of them was the greatest. ⁴⁷Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he took a child, stood him by his side, ⁴⁸and said to them, "Whoever in my name welcomes this child, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, also welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the greatest."

Who Is not against You Is for You

(Also *Mark 9.38-40*)

⁴⁹John spoke up, "Master, we saw a man driving out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he doesn't belong to our group."

⁵⁰"Do not try to stop him," Jesus said to him and to the other disciples, "because whoever is not against you is for you."

A Samaritan Village Refuses to Receive Jesus

⁵¹As the days drew near when Jesus would be taken up to heaven, he made up his mind and set out on his way to Jerusalem. ⁵²He sent messengers ahead of him, who left and went into a Samaritan village to get everything ready for him. ⁵³But the people there would not receive him, because it was plain that he was going to

Who Will Be the Greatest?

An argument started ⁴⁶ among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing ⁴⁷ their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Then he said to ⁴⁸ them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest."

"Master," said John, "we ⁴⁹ saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."

"Do not stop him," Jesus ⁵⁰ said, "for whoever is not against you is for you."

Samaritan Opposition

As the time approached ⁵¹ for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem, and he ⁵² sent messengers on ahead. They went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him, but the people there ⁵³ did not welcome him, because he was headed for

46-50. **As to which one of them was the greatest.** See notes on *Matt. 18:1-6*. **John spoke up.** See notes on John's statement in *Mark 9:38-40*.

51-52. **As the days drew near.** The time when he must suffer and die. **Set out on his way to Jerusalem.** He knew what he must face there, but he has made up his mind, and will do as God wants him to do. It is impossible to know the exact time frame here. This seems to be still early in Jesus' public ministry. Luke must intend to show that Jesus was aware of the Cross long before he came to it, and that this Cross fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. Compare *Luke 24:25-26*. **He sent messengers ahead of him.** To find a place to stay for the night. **Went into a Samaritan village.** Josephus says the Galileans usually went through Samaria on their way to Jerusalem for the Feasts. The Samaritans and the Jews hated each other.

53-54. **Would not receive him.** The reason given for this is that it was plain he was going to Jerusalem. Perhaps if he had planned to stay there and teach and heal, they would have received him. **Lord, do you want us to call fire down?** To refuse to receive a religious teacher was considered the same as

Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven and destroy them?"

⁵⁵Jesus turned and rebuked them; ⁵⁶and they went on to another village.

The Would-Be Followers of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 8.19-22*)

⁵⁷As they went on their way, a certain man said to Jesus, "I will follow you wherever you go."

⁵⁸Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lie down and rest." ⁵⁹He said to another man, "Follow me."

But that man said, "Sir, first let me go back and bury my father."

⁶⁰Jesus answered, "Let the dead bury their own dead. You go and preach the Kingdom of God."

⁶¹Another man said, "I will follow you, sir; but first let me go and say good-bye to my family."

⁶²Jesus said to him, "Anyone who starts to plow and then keeps looking back is of no use for the Kingdom of God."

Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they 56 went to another village.

The Cost of Following Jesus

As they were walking 57 along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied, "Foxes have 58 holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

He said to another man, 59 "Follow me."

But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

Jesus said to him, "Let the 60 dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Still another said, "I will 61 follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family."

Jesus replied, "No one 62 who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

rejecting his teaching. The two "Men of Thunder" (*Mark 3:17*) are ready to destroy the whole village. Religious *enthusiasm* has caused people to sin by persecuting others. [But compare *Elijah, 2 Kings 2:9-12.*]

55. **Jesus turned and rebuked them.** He had not come to destroy, but to save! [A few manuscripts add: "*You don't know what kind of Spirit you belong to; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.*"]

57-62. **A certain man said to Jesus.** This must have happened many times. See notes on *Matt. 8:18-22*. Matthew identifies this man as a teacher of the Law. **I will follow you.** That is, become a disciple and travel with Jesus. **But the Son of Man.** The Messiah (see note on *Matt. 10:23*). Jesus tests this man's sincerity by pointing out the hardships. Jesus had no permanent home, and often spent the night out in the open. **He said to another man.** A disciple. See note on *Matt. 8:21*. **Let the dead bury their own dead.** This disciple may have been an apostle who wanted to stay with his father until his father's death. Preaching the Kingdom of God has the very highest priority. Let the world take care of its own duties. **And then keeps looking back.** This was not just "saying good-bye" to his family. This man feels he cannot leave his family. A believer, ready to be buried with Christ in baptism, who goes home to talk it over with unbelieving relatives, has a good chance of being talked out of doing it. See *Matt. 10:34-39* and notes there.

Jesus Send Out the Seventy-two

10 After this the Lord chose another seventy-two men and sent them out, two by two, to go ahead of him to every town and place where he himself was about to go. ²He said to them, "There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. ³Go! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. ⁴Don't take a purse, or a beggar's bag, or shoes; don't stop to greet anyone on the road. ⁵Whenever you go into a house, first say, 'Peace be with this house.' If a peace-loving man lives there, let your greeting of peace remain on him; if not, take back your greeting of peace. ⁷Stay in that same house, eating and drinking what they offer you, because a worker should be given his pay. Don't move around from one house to another. ⁸Whenever you go into a town and are made welcome, eat what is set before you, ⁹heal the sick in that town, and say to the people there, 'The Kingdom of God has come near you.' ¹⁰But whenever you go into a town and are not welcomed there, go out in the streets and say, ¹¹'Even the dust from your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you; but remember this,

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-two

10 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. ⁵"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. ⁸"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The king-

1. **The Lord chose another seventy-two men.** [A few manuscripts say seventy.] Only Luke tells this. It must have taken place *after* the events already given. Seventy-two may have been a symbolic number, and Grotius, et. al., connect it with the seventy-two members of the Sanhedrin. Since Jesus had already sent out the Twelve (*Luke 9:1*), it proves the deep influence of his teaching that he could find seventy-two more capable of being sent out. **Two by two.** So each could give the other "moral support." Also, at least two witnesses were required to establish truth under the Law. **To every town and place.** It was perhaps six months before his death. He wants to go to every town in person, and he sends these ahead as "advance-men" to prepare the people for his message.

2. **There is a large harvest.** See note on *Matt. 9:37*, where he said this at a different time.

3-12. **Go!** He gives them roughly the same instructions as the twelve. See notes on *Matt. 10*. Matthew gives the most detail, but Luke adds: "*Don't stop to greet anyone on the road.*" The Jews had a ritual for greeting people, and it took a lot of time [sometimes as much as three hours!]. They cannot spare the time to do this, because there is work to be done. **Peace be with this house.** They are to greet people with this blessing. [It was the custom for a guest to do this.] **If a peace-loving man.** The one who deserves this blessing accepts these messengers as guests in his home [he is receptive].

the Kingdom of God has come near you!' ¹²I tell you that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to Sodom than to that town!"

The Unbelieving Towns

(Also Matt. 11.20-24)

¹³"How terrible it will be for you, Chorazin! How terrible for you too, Bethsaida! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, long ago the people there would have sat down, put on sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes on themselves to show that they had turned from their sins! ¹⁴God will show more mercy on the Judgment Day to Tyre and Sidon than to you. ¹⁵And as for you, Capernaum! You wanted to lift yourself up to heaven? You will be thrown down to hell!"

¹⁶Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever listens to you, listens to me; whoever rejects you, rejects me; and whoever rejects me, rejects the one who sent me."

The Return of the Seventy-two

¹⁷The seventy-two men came back in great joy. "Lord," they said, "even the demons obeyed us when we commanded them in your name!"

dom of God is near.' I tell 12 you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

"Woe to you, Chorazin! 13 Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it 14 will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, 15 Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

"He who listens to you lis- 16 tens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

The seventy-two returned 17 with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

13-15. **How terrible it will be for you.** See notes on Matt. 11:20-24. He seems to be repeating what he had said at a different time, to point out the sin of rejecting the Lord's messengers.

16. **Whoever listens to you, listens to me.** The Lord works by proxy through his people. See note on Matt. 10:40.

17-20. **The seventy-two men came back in great joy.** Luke seems to emphasize the work of these seventy-two. How long they had been out on their mission is not known. **Even the demons obeyed us.** Jesus gave a promise to the Twelve (Matt. 10:8), and must have repeated it to the seventy-two. They used the power of Christ's name. See note on Mark 9:38-40. **I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.** It may be that Christ refers to the original fall of Satan. But it may also be prophetic, speaking of the fall of Satan which will take place in the victory of the Cross. See 1 John 3:8; Rev. 20:1-3. **So that you can walk on snakes and scorpions.** This sounds a lot like the language of Mark 16:17-18. It is a promise of victory. **And over all the power of the Enemy.** This shows the snakes and scorpions are symbolic. **But don't be glad.** Pride causes Satan's original fall. **Because your names are written in heaven.** The most important reason to be glad is that we are God's people!

¹⁸Jesus answered them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹Listen! I have given you authority, so that you can walk on snakes and scorpions; and over all the power of the Enemy, and nothing will hurt you. ²⁰But don't be glad because the evil spirits obey you; rather be glad because your names are written in heaven."

Jesus Rejoices

(Also *Matt. 11.25-27; 13.16-17*)

²¹At that time Jesus was filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, and said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. Yes, Father, this was done by your own choice and pleasure.

²²"My Father has given me all things. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son wants to reveal him."

²³Then Jesus turned to the disciples and said to them privately, "How fortunate you are, to see the things you see! ²⁴Many prophets and kings, I tell you, wanted to see what you see, but they could not, and to hear what you hear, but they did not."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵A certain teacher of the Law came up and tried to trap Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to receive eternal life?"

He replied, "I saw Satan 18 fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you 19 authority to trample on snakes and scorpions, and to overcome all the power of enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice 20 that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

At that time Jesus, full of 21 joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. . .

"All things have been 22 committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Then he turned to his dis- 23 ciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell 24 you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

On one occasion an expert 25 in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

21-22. **Father . . . I thank you.** He said this more than once. See notes on *Matt. 11:25-27*.

23-24. **How fortunate you are.** See notes on *Matt. 13:16-17*. He probably said this more than once.

25-29. **A certain teacher of the Law.** Only Luke tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the Lost Son, and the Rich Man and Lazarus. **Tried to trap Jesus.** His motive was not right. **What must I do?** Jesus told people to turn from sin. This man did not think he had any sin. **What do the Scriptures say?** This is the place to find God's answers. **You must love the Lord your God.** This teacher knew the Scriptures and gave the correct answer. **Do this and you will live.** True worship to God includes "practicing what you preach." Jesus said: "Whoever loves me will obey my message" (*John 14:23*). **Wanted to put himself in the right.** He had a "guilty conscience." He does not love his fellow man, so, he asks: **Who is my fellow man?** Jesus gives a parable in answer.

²⁶Jesus answered him, "What do the Scriptures say? How do you interpret them?"

²⁷The man answered, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind'; and, 'You must love your fellow-man as yourself.'"

²⁸"Your answer is correct," replied Jesus; "do this and you will live."

²⁹But the teacher of the Law wanted to put himself in the right, so he asked Jesus, "Who is my fellow-man?"

³⁰Jesus answered, "There was a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when robbers attacked him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half dead. ³¹It so happened that a priest was going down that road; when he saw the man he walked on by, on the other side. ³²In the same way a Levite also came there, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by, on the other side. ³³But a certain Samaritan who was traveling that way came upon him, and when he saw the man his heart was filled with pity. ³⁴He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he told the innkeeper, 'and when I come back this way I will pay you back whatever you spend on him.'"

"What is written in the 26 Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered: "'Love the 27 Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"You have answered cor- 28 rectly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify 29 himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: 30

"A man was going down 31 from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened 32 to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, 33 when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took 34 pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

30-37. **There was a man.** A Jew, from Jerusalem. **Who was going down.** The road from Jerusalem to Jericho descends over 3,000 feet in eighteen miles. **When robbers attacked him.** This road was dangerous to travel, for just that reason. **Stripped him, and beat him up.** They took everything he had, and left him in serious condition from the beating. **That a priest was going down.** Jericho was a city of priests. A priest ought to be a holy man, and the Law commanded mercy and help. **In the same way a Levite.** A Levite served in the temple as an assistant to the priests. He even goes over and looks at the wounded man, before going on his way. **But a certain Samaritan.** To get the full impact of this, you must remember that Jews and Samaritans *hated* each other! "*Jews will not use the same dishes that Samaritans use*" (John 4:9). If anyone had an excuse to pass this man by, it was the Samaritan. **His heart was filled with pity.** Note the contrast between the Samaritan and the others. His "pity" makes

³⁶And Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a fellow-man toward the man attacked by the robbers?"

³⁷The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him."

Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same."

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

At the Home of Martha and Mary

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

³⁸As Jesus and his disciples went on their way he came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him in her home.

³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and listened to his teaching.

⁴⁰Martha was upset over all the work she had to do; so she came and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come and help me!"

⁴¹The Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha! You are worried and troubled over so many things, ⁴²but just one is needed. Mary has chosen the right thing, and it will not be taken away from her."

him go out of his way to help this man. He gives him "first aid," puts him on his own animal [and perhaps has to walk himself], takes him to an inn, stays the night with him, and pays the bill out of his own pocket. [Inns are described in note on Luke 2:7.] **Two silver coins.** This was two day's pay at this time. And he promised to pay more. **Which one of these three.** Clearly, the one who was kind. The teacher of the Law cannot escape this. **You go, then, and do the same.** The teacher of the Law must show this same spirit of help to everyone! All who need help are our "fellow man." Christianity must submit to no barriers of race or sect or political ideology.

38. He came to a certain village. This is Bethany, home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. We do not know the exact time this happened. It might have been on his last trip to Jerusalem.

39. Who sat down at the feet of the Lord. We see Martha "rushing around," preparing the meal; while Mary sits at his feet, listening to his teaching. But there is not as much difference between the two women as seems to be.

40. Lord, don't you care? Martha thinks she has a problem, and she "lets this grow" until she speaks sharply to Jesus. Sometimes we can bear the heaviest sorrows, and then stumble over some little thing. Martha was a good woman.

41-42. You are worried and troubled over so many things. The Africans have a proverb: "Don't sell your elephant to buy medicine for your cat." **But just one is needed.** The important thing was the "bread of life." **Mary has chosen the right thing.** Jesus can be with them only a short time, and it is not too important whether he gets a feast or a piece of bread. But his teaching will stay with them all their lives, and so it has the greatest importance! We must learn to classify things according to their importance. If something must go undone, it ought to be of less importance.

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer*(Also Matt. 6.9-13; 7.7-1)*

11 One time Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

²Jesus said to them, "This is what you should pray:

'Father:

May your holy name be honored;
may your Kingdom come.

³ Give us day by day the food we need.

⁴ Forgive us our sins,
because we forgive everyone who
does us wrong.

And do not bring us to hard testing.' "

⁵And Jesus said to his disciples, "Suppose one of you should go to a friend's house at midnight and tell him, 'Friend, let me borrow three loaves of bread. ⁶A friend of mine who is on a trip has just come to my house and I don't have any food for him!' ⁷And suppose your friend should answer from inside, 'Don't bother me! The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up to give you anything.' ⁸Well, what then? I tell you, even if he will not get up and give you the bread because he is your friend, yet he will get up and give you everything you need because you are not ashamed to keep on asking. ⁹And so I say to you: Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

11 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When 2
you pray, say:

'Father,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily 3
bread.
Forgive us our sins, 4
for we also forgive every-
one who sins
against us.
And lead us not into tempt-
ation.' "

Then he said to them, 5
"Suppose one of you has a
friend, and he goes to him at
midnight and says, 'Friend,
lend me three loaves of
bread, because a friend of 6
mine on a journey has come
to me, and I have nothing to
set before him.'

"Then the one inside an- 7
swers, 'Don't bother me.
The door is already locked,
and my children are with me
in bed. I can't get up and
give you anything.' I tell 8
you, though he will not get
up and give the bread be-
cause he is his friend, yet be-
cause of the man's persis-
tence he will get up and give
him as much as he needs.

"So I say to you: Ask and 9
it will be given to you; seek
and you will find; knock and
the door will be opened to

1. One time Jesus was praying in a certain place. Luke does not tell where or when this happened. But it seems to tie in with the Sermon on the Mount. Lord, teach us to pray. Matthew gives this "model prayer" in *Matt. 6:9-13*. See notes there.

5-8. Friend, let me borrow three loaves of bread. Jesus gave this parable to teach that we should not be ashamed to keep on asking God for what we need. Compare *Matt. 7:7-11*; also the parable of the Widow and the Judge, *Luke 18:1-8*. My children and I are in bed. He cannot get up without waking them up. Because you are not ashamed to keep on asking. How much more we ought to EXPECT from our Father in heaven!

9-13. Ask, and you will receive. See note on *Matt. 7:7-11*. Luke does not give a "chronological history," and these events are "out of sequence." Will give the Holy Spirit. Matthew says: "good things." The Holy Spirit is the best possible gift. Compare *John 3:5; 7:37-39; Acts 2:38*.

door will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks will receive, and he who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks.

¹¹Would any of you who are fathers give your son a snake when he asks for fish? ¹²Or would you give him a scorpion when he asks for an egg?

¹³As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, the Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Jesus and Beelzebub

(Also *Matt. 12.22-30; Mark 3.20-27*)

¹⁴Jesus was driving out a demon that could not talk; when the demon went out, the man began to talk. The crowds were amazed, ¹⁵but some of the people said, "It is Beelzebub, the chief of the demons, who gives him the power to drive them out."

¹⁶Others wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle to show God's approval.

¹⁷But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Any country that divides itself into groups that fight each other will not last very long; a family divided against itself falls apart. ¹⁸So if Satan's kingdom has groups fighting each other, how can it last? You say that I drive out demons because Beelzebub gives me the power to do so.

¹⁹If this is how I drive them out, how do your followers drive them out? Your own followers prove that you are wrong! ²⁰No, it is rather by means of God's power that I drive out demons, which proves that the Kingdom of God has already come to you.

²¹"When a strong man, with all his weapons ready, guards his own house, all his belongings

you. For everyone who asks ¹⁰ receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

"Which of you fathers, if ¹¹ your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will ¹² give him a scorpion? If you ¹³ then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Jesus and Beelzebub

Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been dumb spoke, and the crowd was amazed. But ¹⁵ some of them said, "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." Others tested him by asking ¹⁶ for a sign from heaven.

Jesus knew their thoughts ¹⁷ and said to them: "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub. Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, ¹⁹ they will be your judges. But ²⁰ if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

"When a strong man, ²¹ fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are

14-26. It is Beelzebub . . . who gives him the power. See notes on *Matt. 12:22-29, 43-45*. This conversation took place in Galilee.

are safe. ²²But when a stronger man attacks him and defeats him, he carries away all the weapons the owner was depending on and divides up what he stole.

²³"Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering."

The Return of the Evil Spirit

(Also Matt. 12.43-45)

²⁴"When an evil spirit goes out of a man, it travels over dry country looking for a place to rest. If it can't find one, it says to itself, 'I will go back to my house which I left.' ²⁵So it goes back and finds the house clean and all fixed up. ²⁶Then it goes out and brings seven other spirits even worse than itself, and they come and live there. So that man is in worse shape, when it is all over, than he was at the beginning."

True Happiness

²⁷When Jesus had said this, a woman spoke up from the crowd and said to him, "How happy is the woman who bore you and nursed you!"

²⁸But Jesus answered, "Rather, how happy are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"

The Demand for a Miracle

(Also Matt. 12.38-42)

²⁹As the people crowded around Jesus he went on to say, "How evil are the people of this day! They ask for a miracle, but none will be given them except the miracle of Jonah. ³⁰In the same way that the prophet Jonah was a sign for the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be a

safe. But when someone ²² stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.

"He who is not with me is ²³ against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.

"When an evil spirit ²⁴ comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it ar- ²⁵ rives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes ²⁶ seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first."

As Jesus was saying these ²⁷ things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you."

He replied, "Blessed ²⁸ rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

The Sign of Jonah

As the crowds increased, ²⁹ Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was a ³⁰ sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to

27-28. **How happy is the woman.** This woman who speaks, comes closer to the worship of the human mother of Christ, than anyone else in the New Testament. Jesus rebukes her, and points out that it is not his human mother, but rather those who hear the word of God and obey it, who are HAPPY. [On the meaning of "happy," see note on Matt. 5:3.]

29-32. **They ask for a miracle.** See notes on Matt. 12:38-42.

sign for the people of this day. ³¹On the Judgment Day the Queen from the South will stand up and accuse the people of today, because she traveled halfway around the world to listen to Solomon's wise teaching; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Solomon. ³²On the Judgment Day the people of Nineveh will stand up and accuse you, because they turned from their sins when they heard Jonah preach; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Jonah!"

The Light of the Body

(Also *Matt. 5.15; 6.22-23*)

³³"No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under a bowl; instead, he puts it on the lampstand, so that people may see the light as they come in. ³⁴Your eyes are like a lamp for the body. When your eyes are clear your whole body is full of light; but when your eyes are bad your whole body will be in darkness. ³⁵Be careful, then, that the light in you is not darkness. ³⁶If, then, your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be bright all over, as when a lamp shines on you with its brightness."

Jesus Accuses the Pharisees and the Teachers of the Law

(Also *Matt. 23.1-36; Mark 12.38-40*)

³⁷When Jesus finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and sat down to eat. ³⁸The Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus had not washed

this generation. The Queen ³¹of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here. The men of ³²Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.

The Lamp of the Body

"No one lights a lamp and ³³puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your ³⁴body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, ³⁵then, that the light within you is not darkness. There- ³⁶fore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you."

Six Woes

When Jesus had finished ³⁷speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee, ³⁸noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised.

33-36. **And then hides it.** See notes on *Matt. 5:15; 6:22-23*. **If, then, your whole body is full of light.** Symbolic of the Christian's influence. See *Matt. 5:16*. Also symbolic of eternal glory (*Matt. 13:43*). 37-38. **A Pharisee invited him to eat with him.** Jesus did not hesitate to mix with all classes of people. **Was surprised when he noticed.** The Jews had a special ritual for washing their hands. Jesus had not followed this ritual before eating. See notes on *Matt. 15:2; Mark 7:2-5*.

before eating. ³⁹So the Lord said to him, "Now, then, you Pharisees clean the cup and plate on the outside, but inside you are full of violence and evil. ⁴⁰Fools! Did not God, who made the outside, also make the inside? ⁴¹But give what is in your cups and plates to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

⁴²"How terrible for you, Pharisees! You give to God one tenth of the seasoning herbs, such as mint and rue and all the other herbs, but you neglect justice and love for God. These you should practice, without neglecting the others.

⁴³"How terrible for you, Pharisees! You love the reserved seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect in the market places. ⁴⁴How terrible for you! You are like unmarked graves which people walk on without knowing it."

⁴⁵One of the teachers of the Law said to him, "Teacher, when you say this you insult us too!"

⁴⁶Jesus answered, "How terrible for you, too, teachers of the Law! You put loads on men's backs which are hard to carry, but you yourselves will not stretch out a finger to help them carry those loads. ⁴⁷How terrible for you! You make fine tombs for the prophets—the very prophets your ancestors murdered. ⁴⁸You yourselves admit, then, that you approve of what your ancestors did; because they murdered the prophets, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹For this reason the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and messengers; they will kill

Then the Lord said to ³⁹ him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! ⁴⁰ Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But give what is inside ⁴¹ to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

"Woe to you Pharisees, ⁴² because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

"Woe to you Pharisees, ⁴³ because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.

"Woe to you, because you ⁴⁴ are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it."

One of the experts in the ⁴⁵ law answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also."

Jesus replied, "And you ⁴⁶ experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them.

"Woe to you, because you ⁴⁷ build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them. So you ⁴⁸ testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some

39-52. So the Lord said to him. Jesus may have said this more than once. See notes on a similar lesson in *Matt. 23:1-36*. Verse 41 is only given by Luke. The Jewish leaders hated everybody who was not a part of their own group, especially the poor. Compare what Jesus taught in *Matt. 25:31-46*. **You are like unmarked graves.** Touching a grave made a person "ritually unclean," so graves were *whitewashed* just before Feast Days, so they could be clearly seen. **You make fine tombs.** See note on *Matt. 23:29-30*. **You have kept the key.** They did this by teaching lies which prevent people from believing in Christ. Compare *Matt. 23:13* and note there; also *1 Thess. 2:15-16*.

some of them and persecute others.' ⁵⁰So the people of this time will be punished for the murder of all the prophets killed since the creation of the world, ⁵¹from the murder of Abel to the murder of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the holy place. Yes, I tell you, the people of this time will be punished for them all!

⁵²"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law! You have kept the key that opens the door to the house of knowledge; you yourselves will not go in, and you stop those who are trying to go in!"

⁵³When Jesus left that place the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees began to criticize him bitterly and ask him questions about many things, ⁵⁴trying to lay traps for him and catch him in something wrong he might say.

A Warning against Hypocrisy

(Also Matt. 10.26-27)

12 As thousands of people crowded together, so that they were stepping on each other, Jesus said first to his disciples, "Be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees—I mean their hypocrisy. ²Whatever is covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known. ³So then, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in broad daylight, and whatever you have whispered in men's ears in a closed room will be shouted from the housetops."

of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.' Therefore this generation ⁵⁰ will be held responsible for blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to ⁵¹ the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all.

"Woe to you experts in the ⁵² law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering."

When Jesus left there, the ⁵³ Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to ⁵⁴ catch him in something he might say.

Warnings and Encouragements

12 Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying: "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. ² There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ³ What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear behind closed doors will be proclaimed from the housetops.

53-54. **Trying to lay traps for him.** Compare Matt. 22; John 8 & 10, for details of how they tried to trap Jesus.

1-5. **As thousands of people crowded together.** This is one of the statements which show the great influence of Christ on the people. [See also Mark 1:33; 2:2; 3:9; 6:31; etc.] This sermon is almost identical to the one in Matthew. **Be on guard against the yeast.** Symbolic of the *spirit* of the Pharisees. Religion can easily become only *ritual and hypocrisy*. See note on Matt. 16:6. **Whatever is covered up.** For notes on verses 2-5, see Matt. 10:26-28. The houses had flat roofs which made a "stage" for someone to speak and attract attention.

Whom to Fear*(Also Matt. 10.28-31)*

⁴“I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot afterward do anything worse. ⁵I will show you whom to fear: fear God who, after killing, has the authority to throw into hell. Yes, I tell you, be afraid of him!

⁶“Aren’t five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not a single one of them is forgotten by God. ⁷Even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. So do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!”

Confessing and Denying Christ*(Also Matt. 10.32-33; 12.32; 10.19-20)*

⁸“I tell you: whoever declares publicly that he belongs to me, the Son of Man will do the same for him before the angels of God; ⁹but whoever denies publicly that he belongs to me, the Son of Man will also deny him before the angels of God.

¹⁰“Anyone who says a word against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but the one who says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹“When they bring you to be tried in the synagogues, or before governors or rulers, do not be worried about how you will defend yourself or what you will say. ¹²For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

“I tell you my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear. Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

“I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

“When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

6-9. **Aren't five sparrows sold for two pennies?** Sparrows were the cheapest birds sold. See notes on *Matt. 10:29-33*.

10. **Will not be forgiven.** For notes on the “unforgiveable sin,” see *Matt. 12:31-32*.

11-12. **When they bring you to be tried in the synagogues.** A promise of supernatural help. See notes on *Matt. 10:19-20*.

The Parable of the Rich Fool

¹³A man in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide with me the property our father left us."

¹⁴Jesus answered him, "Man, who gave me the right to judge, or to divide the property between you two?" ¹⁵And he went on to say to them all, "Watch out, and guard yourselves from all kinds of greed; because a man's true life is not made up of the things he owns, no matter how rich he may be."

¹⁶Then Jesus told them this parable, "A rich man had land which bore good crops. ¹⁷He began to think to himself, 'I don't have a place to keep all my crops. What can I do?' ¹⁸This is what I will do,' he told himself; 'I will tear my barns down and build bigger ones, where I will store the grain and all my other goods. ¹⁹Then I will say to myself, Lucky man! You have all the good things you need for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself!' ²⁰But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night you will have to give up your life; then who will get all these things you have kept for yourself?'"

The Parable of the Rich Fool

Someone in the crowd ¹³said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

Jesus replied, "Man, who ¹⁴appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then ¹⁵he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

And he told them this ¹⁶parable:

"The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, ¹⁷'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

"Then he said, 'This is ¹⁸what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You ¹⁹have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

"But God said to him, ²⁰'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'"

13-14. **A man in the crowd said to him.** Only Luke gives this parable of the Rich Fool. **Tell my brother.** Whether this man's brother had been unfair or not, isn't told. But the parable shows that the one who said this was motivated by *greed*. He wants Jesus *on his side* to be able to *force* the brother to *give in* to his demands. **Man, who gave me the right?** The Lord's business was not to help secure land and money for others. His mission was to save. [There were legal authorities to handle such things. But note what Paul says in *1 Cor. 6:1-6*.]

15. **Guard yourselves from all kinds of greed.** Money is not the problem, but the *love* of money (*1 Tim. 6:10*). **A man's true life.** Comfort, happiness, and especially *eternal things* do not depend upon how much we have of material wealth. Many have sacrificed health to gain wealth, only to be forced to sacrifice wealth to attempt to regain health.

16-19. **Then Jesus told them this parable.** To show that riches are no protection. **A rich man had land.** No hint that this man was dishonest. He worked hard for what he had. **What can I do?** His riches were in the form of perishable foodstuffs. **Where I will store the grain and all my other goods.** Notice his intention to *hoard* his surplus, instead of using it for the good of others. Selfishness is the beginning of his foolishness. **You have all the good things you need for many years.** His second serious mistake is to forget that we are all *transients* in this life. **Take life easy.** His third error is ignore his spiritual needs. It is not his wealth which is wrong, but his *attitude* toward it, and what it symbolizes to him.

20-21. **You fool!** His fellow men may have thought he was *wise*, but he is a *fool* in God's view. **This very night you will have to give up your life.** He thought he had long years ahead of him, but instead his life is terminated! He thought he was secure, but he dies *unprepared*. [Note that the same Greek word is

²¹And Jesus concluded, "This is how it is with those who pile up riches for themselves but are not rich in God's sight."

Trust in God

(Also Matt. 6.25-34)

²²Then Jesus said to the disciples, "This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food you need to stay alive, or about the clothes you need for your body. ²³Life is much more important than food, and body much more important than clothes. ²⁴Look at the crows: they don't plant seeds or gather a harvest; they don't have storage rooms or barns; God feeds them! You are worth so much more than birds! ²⁵Which one of you can live a few more years by worrying about it? ²⁶If you can't manage even such a small thing, why worry about the other things? ²⁷Look how the wild flowers grow: they don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even Solomon, as rich as he was, had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. ²⁸It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today, gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? How little faith you have! ²⁹So don't be all upset, always concerned about what you will eat and drink. ³⁰(For the heathen of this world are always concerned about all these things.) Your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹Instead, be concerned with his Kingdom, and he will provide you with these things."

"This is how it will be with ²¹ anyone who stores things up for himself but is not rich toward God."

Do Not Worry

Then Jesus said to his ²² disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than ²³ food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ²⁴ ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who ²⁵ of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since ²⁶ you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"

"Consider how the lilies ²⁷ grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes ²⁸ the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on ²⁹ what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For ³⁰ the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, ³¹ and these things will be given to you as well.

translated *life* or *soul* by its meaning in a sentence.] **This is how it is.** Every man is a fool, who worships riches as an *idol*, and neglects the One True God. See note on Matt. 6:24.

22-31. **Do not be worried.** These verses about Trust in God are almost identical to those in Matt. 6:25-34. See notes there.

Riches in Heaven

(Also *Matt. 6.19-21*)

³²“Do not be afraid, little flock; because your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom. ³³Sell all your belongings and give the money to the poor. Provide for yourselves purses that don’t wear out, and save your riches in heaven, where they will never decrease, because no thief can get to them, no moth can destroy them. ³⁴For your heart will always be where your riches are.”

Watchful Servants

³⁵“Be ready for whatever comes, with your clothes fastened tight at the waist and your lamps lit, ³⁶like servants who are waiting for their master to come back from a wedding feast. When he comes and knocks, they will open the door for him at once. ³⁷How happy are those servants whose master finds them awake and ready when he returns! I tell you, he will fasten his belt, have them sit down, and wait on them. ³⁸How happy are they if he finds them ready, even if he should come as late as midnight or even later! ³⁹And remember this! If the man of the house knew the time when the thief would come, he would not let the thief break into his

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Watchfulness

“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his

32. **Do not be afraid, little flock.** The flock of sheep is safe only because of the Shepherd’s protection. Jesus is the True Shepherd (*John 10:1-16*). **Your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom.** This is both the Kingdom/church now (*Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:13*), and the *promise* of “new heavens and a new earth” (*2 Pet. 3:13*).

33. **Sell all your belongings.** The Lord does not intend to say that everyone should take a “vow of poverty.” He shows that the only way to *store up wealth* is to *use it* for good. Compare *Acts 2:45*. See notes on *Matt. 6:19-21*.

35-46. **Be ready for whatever comes.** People in the East wore long robes, which had to be tucked under their belts to get ready to travel. See notes on *Matt. 24:42-44*. **And your lamps lit.** See notes on *Matt. 25:3-8*. **They will open the door for him at once.** The master returning from a wedding feast would be expecting his servants to “wait up on him.” If they were asleep, or unprepared, it would take them a long time to answer. **Knew the time when the thief would come.** See notes on *Matt. 24:43-44*. **Peter said.** Peter sometimes did not know just how far Jesus intended his parables to apply. Compare notes on *Matt. 18:21-22*. **Who, then, is the faithful and wise servant?** See notes on *Matt. 24:45-51*.

house. ⁴⁰And you, too, be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him."

The Faithful or the Unfaithful Servant

(Also Matt. 24.45-51)

⁴¹Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or do you mean it for everyone?"

⁴²The Lord answered, "Who, then, is the faithful and wise servant? He is the one whom his master will put in charge, to run the household and give the other servants their share of the food at the proper time. ⁴³How happy is that servant if his master finds him doing this when he comes home! ⁴⁴Indeed, I tell you, the master will put that servant in charge of all his property. ⁴⁵But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time to come back,' and begins to beat the other servants, both the men and the women, and eats and drinks and gets drunk, ⁴⁶then the master will come back some day when the servant does not expect him and at a time he does not know. The master will cut him to pieces, and make him share the fate of the disobedient.

⁴⁷"The servant who knows what his master wants him to do, but does not get himself ready and do what his master wants, will be punished with a heavy whipping; ⁴⁸but the servant who does not know what his master wants, and does something for which he deserves a whipping,

house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

Peter asked, "Lord, are 41 you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?"

The Lord answered, 42 "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that 43 servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he 44 will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose 45 the servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to beat the men and women servants and to eat 46 and drink and get drunk. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

"That servant who knows 47 his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But 48 the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

47-48. **The servant who knows.** This servant deliberately sins. **But the servant who does not know.** This servant sins through ignorance. This parable points especially to those who listen to Jesus and were pleased with what he said, but made no attempt to learn its meaning or apply it to their lives. The greatest work is to believe in Christ (*John 6:29*). The greatest sin is to reject Christ (*Matt. 12:31-32*). Degrees of reward and punishment become meaningless when compared with Eternal Joy or Eternal Punishment.

will be punished with a light whipping. The man to whom much is given, of him much is required; the man to whom more is given, of him much more is required."

Jesus the Cause of Division

(Also *Matt. 10.34-36*)

⁴⁹"I came to set the earth on fire; how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰I have a baptism to receive; how distressed I am until it is over! ⁵¹Do you suppose that I came to bring peace to the world? Not peace, I tell you, but division. ⁵²From now on a family of five will be divided, three against two, two against three. ⁵³Fathers will be against their sons, and sons against their fathers; mothers will be against their daughters, and daughters against their mothers; mothers-in-law will be against their daughters-in-law, and daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law."

Understanding the Time

(Also *Matt. 16.2-3*)

⁵⁴Jesus said also to the people, "When you see a cloud coming up in the west, at once you say, 'It is going to rain,' and it does. ⁵⁵And when you feel the south wind blowing, you say, 'It is going to get hot,' and it does. ⁵⁶Hypocrites! You can look at the earth and the sky and tell what it means; why, then, don't you know the meaning of this present time?"

Not Peace but Division

"I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But ⁵⁰I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! Do you ⁵¹think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

Interpreting the Times

He said to the crowd: ⁵⁴"When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. Hypocrites! You know ⁵⁶how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this time?"

49. I came to set the earth on fire. Conflict and persecution would be the effect of preaching the Good News. When Truth is put into the hands of a man, he must decide what to do with it! See notes on *Matt. 10:34-37*. How I wish it were already kindled. Some see in this the opposition of the Jewish leaders which leads to the Cross. But Jesus seems to point beyond to the beginning of his church on Pentecost. Compare *Heb. 2:9-10*.

50. I have a baptism to receive. This is symbolic of the events presented in the act of the Cross. How distressed I am. He anticipated the heavy load of the Crucifixion. Compare *Heb. 5:7-10*.

51-53. Not peace, I tell you, but division. Following Jesus sometimes "tears us loose" from both people and things we love. See note on *Matt. 10:34*.

54-56. When you see a cloud coming up. The Jewish Age was about to close. See notes on *Matt. 16:2-3*.

Settle with Your Opponent

(Also Matt. 5:25-26)

⁵⁷“Why do you not judge for yourselves the right thing to do? ⁵⁸If a man brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, do your best to settle the matter with him while you are on the way, so that he won’t drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the police, and the police put you in jail. ⁵⁹You will not come out of there, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine.”

Turn from Your Sins or Die

13 At that time some people were there who told Jesus about the Galileans whom Pilate had killed while they were offering sacrifices to God. ²Jesus answered them, “Because these Galileans were killed in that way, do you think it proves that they were worse sinners than all the other Galileans? ³No! I tell you that if you do not turn from your sins, you will die as they did. ⁴What about those eighteen in Siloam who were killed when the tower fell on them? Do you suppose this proves that they were worse than all the other people living in Jerusalem? ⁵No! I tell you that if you do not turn from your sins, you will all die as they did.”

“Why don’t you judge for yourselves what is right? As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled to him on the way, or he may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”

Repent or Perish

13 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

57-59. **Why do you not judge for yourselves.** They had enough information, and they could see all that was taking place. **If a man brings a lawsuit against you.** This is another example of doing everything you can to be prepared—while you can do it! See notes on Matt. 5:25-26. **Until you pay the last penny.** This was true of material things. The spiritual lesson is that when you stand before the Judge, it will be too late to solve your problem. Compare Heb. 4:6-7.

1. **Who told Jesus about the Galileans.** Jesus teaches in these verses that calamities which happen to God’s people are not to be thought of as “special acts of judgment for hidden sin.” Compare James 1:2-4 and also Rev. 6. Only Luke tells of this happening to the Galileans. Fights at the temple and severe reprisals by the Roman soldiers were common. Those who told Jesus about this evidently thought it a judgment.

3. **No! Jesus does not deny that these people were sinners, but he does say with emphasis, that they were no worse than other people. You will all die as they did.** He says this to teach them with strong words that only turning from sin [repentance] will save them! (Compare Acts 2:38 and notes.)

4-5. **What about those eighteen in Siloam?** Only Luke tells of this. The lesson is the same as before. They were not killed because they were worse sinners. All must turn from sin, or perish! [Siloam was a suburb of Jerusalem, south of the city.]

The Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree

⁶Then Jesus told them this parable, "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. He went looking for figs on it but found none. ⁷So he said to his gardener, 'Look, for three years I have been coming here looking for figs on this fig tree and I haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it go on using up the soil?' ⁸But the gardener answered, 'Leave it alone, sir, just this one year; I will dig a trench around it and fill it up with fertilizer. ⁹Then if the tree bears figs next year, so much the better; if not, then you will have it cut down.'"

Then he told this parable:
 "A man had a fig tree,
 planted in his vineyard, and
 he went to look for fruit on
 it, but did not find any. So
 he said to the man who took
 care of the vineyard, 'For
 three years now I've been
 coming to look for fruit on
 this fig tree and haven't
 found any. Cut it down!
 Why should it use up the
 soil?"

"'Sir,' the man replied,
 'leave it alone for one more
 year, and I'll dig around it
 and fertilize it. If it bears
 fruit next year, fine! If not,
 then cut it down.'"

Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath

¹⁰One Sabbath day Jesus was teaching in a synagogue. ¹¹A woman was there who had an evil spirit in her that had kept her sick for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not straighten up at all. ¹²When Jesus saw her he called out to her, "Woman, you are free from your sickness!" ¹³He placed his hands on her and at once she straightened herself up and praised God.

¹⁴The official of the synagogue was angry that Jesus was healed on the Sabbath; so he spoke up and said to the people, "There are six days in which we should work; so come during those days and be healed, but not on the Sabbath!"

A Crippled Woman Healed on the Sabbath

On a Sabbath Jesus was
 teaching in one of the syna-
 gogues, and a woman was
 there who had been crippled
 by a spirit for eighteen
 years. She was bent over and
 could not straighten up at
 all. When Jesus saw her, he
 called her forward and said
 to her, "Woman, you are set
 free from your infirmity."
 Then he put his hands on
 her, and immediately she
 straightened up and praised
 God.

Indignant because Jesus
 had healed on the Sabbath,
 the synagogue ruler said to
 the people, "There are six
 days for work. So come and
 be healed on those days, not
 on the Sabbath."

6-9. A man had a fig tree. A common fruit. It symbolizes the entire Jewish nation here. But found none. They did not honor God with their lives! Look, for three years. This is how long Jesus had been teaching and preaching. The people should have listened and honored God. Cut it down! There is no hope of it beginning to bear fruit. Just this one year. Give it one last chance to be fruitful. The last months of Christ's ministry would end in his rejection and crucifixion. Then the doom of the nation was finalized!

10-17. A woman was there. Only Luke tells this healing of the Crippled Woman. A similar healing on the Sabbath is given in *Matt. 12:10-13; Mark 3:1-5*. That had kept her sick for eighteen years. A demon was the cause of her trouble (see *verse 16*). When Jesus saw her. She had no thought of being healed. But when Jesus sees her need, he at once heals her. The official of the synagogue. One of the synagogue elders, who called together the congregation, preserved order, and who invited the readers and

¹⁵The Lord answered him by saying, "You hypocrites! Any one of you would untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and take it out to give it water on the Sabbath. ¹⁶Now here is this descendant of Abraham whom Satan has kept in bonds for eighteen years; should she not be freed from her bonds on the Sabbath?" ¹⁷His answer made all his enemies ashamed of themselves, while all the people rejoiced over every wonderful thing that he did.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Also *Matt. 13.31-32; Mark 4.30-32*)

¹⁸Jesus asked, "What is the Kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with? ¹⁹It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field; the plant grew and became a tree, and the birds made their nests in its branches."

The Parable of the Yeast

(Also *Matt. 13.33*)

²⁰Again Jesus asked, "What shall I compare the Kingdom of God with? ²¹It is like the yeast which a woman takes and mixes in a bushel of flour, until the whole batch of dough rises."

The Narrow Door

(Also *Matt. 7.13-14, 21-23*)

²²Jesus went through towns and villages, teaching and making his way toward Jerusalem.

The Lord answered him, ¹⁵"You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should ¹⁶not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?"

When he said this, all his ¹⁷opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and Yeast

Then Jesus asked, "What ¹⁸is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, ¹⁹which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew, became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches."

Again he asked, "What ²⁰shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast ²¹that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

The Narrow Door

Then Jesus went through ²²the cities and villages, teaching as he made his way to

speakers. Jairus was one (*Matt. 9:18*). **Was angry.** He thought Jesus had "broken" the Sabbath. The Law did not say it was wrong to heal on the Sabbath, but Jewish Tradition did say so. **And said to the people.** He did not want to scold Jesus, so he scolds the people, expecting Jesus to understand he is really scolding him. **There are six days.** He is saying the woman should have been healed on a week day. **You hypocrites!** They would take care of their animals on the Sabbath, but refuse to help a human being. **Whom Satan has kept in bonds.** Satan brought sin, and sin brought disease into the world. All disease, then, is indirectly from Satan. But this woman's disease was due to an evil spirit. [Demons: see note on *Matt. 4:24*.]

18-21. **What shall I compare it with?** For notes on the parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast, see *Matt. 13:31-33*.

22. **Jesus went through the towns and villages.** Probably in the area called Perea, east of the Jordan river. People often went this way from Galilee to Jerusalem, to detour around Samaria.

²³Someone asked him, "Sir, will just a few people be saved?"

Jesus answered them, ²⁴"Do your best to go in through the narrow door; because many people, I tell you, will try to go in but will not be able.

²⁵The master of the house will get up and close the door; then when you stand outside and begin to knock on the door and say, 'Open the door for us, sir!' he will answer you, 'I don't know where you come from!' ²⁶Then you will answer back, 'We ate and drank with you; you taught in our town!' ²⁷He will say again, 'I don't know where you come from. Get away from me, all you evildoers!' ²⁸What crying and gnashing of teeth there will be when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, while you are thrown out! ²⁹People will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit at the table in the Kingdom of God. ³⁰Then those who are now last will be first, and those who are now first will be last."

Jesus' Love for Jerusalem

(Also *Matt. 23.37-39*)

³¹At that same time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "You must get out of

Jerusalem. Someone asked 23 him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, "Make 24 every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house 25 gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.'

"But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

"Then you will say, 'We 26 ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'

"But he will reply, 'I don't 27 know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'

"There will be weeping 28 and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east 29 and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed 30 there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

Jesus' Sorrow for Jerusalem

At that time some Phari- 31 sees came to Jesus and said

23. **Sir, will just a few people be saved?** This question is often asked. Jesus never answers it, but tells each one to make sure of his own salvation. [See the Redeemed in Eternity pictured in *Rev. 7:9*.]

24. **Do your best.** This implies a maximum amount of effort. [And yet the cause of our salvation is God's Act in Christ.] **Through the narrow door.** See note on *Matt. 7:13-14*. The door of the Kingdom is so narrow that we must leave our many sins and idols behind, to be able to enter.

25. **And close the door.** The time of opportunity will expire. If we continue to say "no" to God, we may find the door shut when we decide to enter.

26-27. **We ate and drank with you; you taught in our town!** "They heard! Doesn't this merit God's approval???" But *faith is obediential* (see notes on *Matt. 7:22-23*).

28-29. **When you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.** The "fathers" believed and obeyed. See notes on *Matt. 8:11-12*.

30. **Then those who are now last will be first.** The Gentiles had not shared in the Law. The Jew thought the Gentile had no hope, while he himself was sure of salvation. See note on *Matt. 20:16*.

31. **Some Pharisees came to Jesus.** They intended to scare Jesus into hiding, where he could not teach people. Herod Antipas (see note on *Matt. 2:1*) had already killed John the Baptist.

here and go somewhere else, because Herod wants to kill you."

³²Jesus answered them, "Go tell that fox: 'I am driving out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I shall finish my work.'³³ Yet I must be on my way today, tomorrow, and the next day; it is not right for a prophet to be killed anywhere except in Jerusalem.

³⁴"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets, you stone the messengers God has sent you! How many times I wanted to put my arms around all your people, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not let me!³⁵ Now your home will be completely forsaken. You will not see me, I tell you, until the time comes when you say, 'God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus Heals a Sick Man

14 One Sabbath day Jesus went to eat a meal at the home of one of the leading Pharisees; and people were watching Jesus closely.

to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you."

He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!"

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 34 you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, 35 your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus at a Pharisee's House

14 One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being care-

32. **Go tell that fox.** A fox is symbolic of sly cunning. This described the character of Herod. It may be that Herod himself sent the Pharisees to try to scare Jesus. He could not kill Jesus because of his popularity. **On the third day.** Some think Jesus meant he would be moving on in three days' time. But it is more likely he meant this symbolically, speaking of his teaching mission ending in the glory of the Cross and Resurrection.

33. **To be killed anywhere except in Jerusalem.** [John the Baptist was the exception to this, dying in the Machaerus prison in Perea.] Jerusalem (the earthly city) was symbolic of the forces of evil which fight against God (see *Rev. 11:8*). Jesus would die there, and his church would begin there!

34-35. **Jerusalem, Jerusalem!** Jesus may have said this more than once. See notes on *Matt. 23:37-39*. **Now your home will be completely forsaken.** God would depart the temple, even though the ritual would continue to go on. The temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., and the ritual ceased.

1. **One Sabbath day, Jesus went to eat a meal.** The Pharisees had rigid ideas about working on the Sabbath, but they made it a day of feasting. They would say: "Greet the Sabbath with a good appetite; fill your table with fish, meat, and plenty of wine." **And people were watching.** Jesus is a guest, but they watch closely, hoping to trap him.

²A man whose legs and arms were swollen came to Jesus, ³and Jesus spoke up and asked the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees. “Does our Law allow healing on the Sabbath, or not?”

⁴But they would not say a thing. Jesus took the man, healed him, and sent him away. ⁵Then he said to them, “If any one of you had a son or an ox that happened to fall in well on a Sabbath, would you not pull him out at once on the Sabbath itself?”

⁶But they were not able to answer him about this.

Humility and Hospitality

⁷Jesus noticed how some of the guests were choosing the best places, so he told this parable to all of them, ⁸“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place. It could happen that someone more important than you had been invited, ⁹and your host, who invited both of you, would come and say to you, ‘Let him have this place.’ Then you would be ashamed and have to sit in the lowest place. ¹⁰Instead, when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that your host will come to you and say, ‘Come on up, my friend, to a better place.’ This will bring you honor in the presence of all the other guests. ¹¹Because everyone who makes himself great will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be made great.”

fully watched. There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?” But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away.

Then he asked them, “If one of you has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull him out?” And they had nothing to say.

When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable:

“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this man your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all your fellow guests. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

2-6. **A man whose legs and arms were swollen.** Jesus knows they are watching to see if he will heal this man on the Sabbath. **Does our Law allow?** The Law of Moses did allow it, but their Tradition said it was wrong. **But they would not say a thing.** They knew they did not follow what the Law said. **Then he said to them.** Jesus very plainly points out the fact that they say one thing and do another. See notes on *Matt. 12:10-11*.

7-11. **So he told this parable.** A parable uses common things to teach a spiritual lesson. **Do not sit down in the best place.** Protocol gave special honor to certain places. Some of the guests were trying to get one of the *best places* and the honor that went with it. **It could happen that someone.** If you were “moved down” to a lower place, you would “lose face” [be dis-honored]. **Come on up.** If you are moved up to a higher seat, you “gain points” [be honored] by this action. **Because everyone who makes himself.** This is a general law. *Why* you do something is often more important than *what* you do. [“It is surprising what you can do, when you don’t care who gets the credit for it.”] Many fail because they want all the glory and will not cooperate with others.

¹²Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or your rich neighbors—because they will invite you back and in this way you will be paid for what you did. ¹³When you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed; because they are not able to pay you back. You will be paid by God when the good people rise from death."

The Parable of the Great Feast

(Also Matt. 22.1-10)

¹⁵One of the men sitting at the table heard this and said to Jesus, "How happy are those who will sit at the table in the Kingdom of God!"

¹⁶Jesus said to him, "There was a man who was giving a great feast, to which he invited many people. ¹⁷At the time for the feast he sent his servant to tell his guests, 'Come, everything is ready!' ¹⁸But they all began, one after another, to make excuses. The first one told the servant, 'I bought a field, and have to go and look at it; please accept my apologies.' ¹⁹Another one said, 'I bought five pairs of oxen and am on my way to try them out; please accept my apologies.' ²⁰Another one said, 'I have just gotten married,

Then Jesus said to his ¹² host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be ¹³ blessed. Although they can not repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The Parable of the Great Banquet

When one of those at the ¹⁵ table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

Jesus replied: ¹⁶

"A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the ¹⁷ time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

"But they all alike began ¹⁸ to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.'

"Another said, 'I have ¹⁹ just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.'

"Still another said, 'I just ²⁰ got married, so I can't come.'

12-14. **When you give a lunch or a dinner.** There is no honor in giving with the thought of being paid back. Helping those who could not possibly pay you back pleases God. "When you give to the poor it is like lending to the Lord, because the Lord will pay you back" (Prov. 19:17).

15-24. **How happy are those.** This is the happiness which God gives. It is a great honor to be "rescued from the power of darkness and brought safe into the Kingdom of Christ" (see Col. 1:13). *But many are not ready and willing for this!* Matthew gives a similar parable in Matt. 22:1-14. **Come, everything is ready.** It was the custom to give the second invitation just as the feast was to begin. John the Baptist gave the first invitation to the Jewish people. Jesus is giving the second. The feast began on Pentecost. The Good News of Christ continues to say: "Come, everything is ready." **To make excuses.** The excuses show they really didn't want to be guests. **The first one told the servant.** The excuses are silly! The first claims to have bought a field *sight unseen!* The second claims to have bought five pairs [yoke = pair]

and for this reason I cannot come.' ²¹The servant went back and told all this to his master. The master of the house was furious and said to his servant, 'Hurry out of the streets and alleys of the town, and bring back the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' ²²Soon the servant said, 'Your order has been carried out, sir, but there is room for more.' ²³So the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the country roads and lanes, and make people come in, so that my house will be full. ²⁴I tell you all that none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner!'"

The Cost of Being a Disciple

(Also Matt. 10.37-38)

²⁵Great crowds of people were going along with Jesus. He turned and said to them, ²⁶"Whoever comes to me cannot be my disciple unless he hates his father and his mother, his wife and his children, his brothers and his sisters, and himself as well. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸If one of you is planning to build a tower, he sits down first and figures out what it will cost, to see if he has enough money to finish the job. ²⁹If he doesn't, he will not be able to finish the tower after laying the foundation; and all who see what

"The servant came back ²¹ and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

" 'Sir,' the servant said, ²² 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.'

"Then the master told his ²³ servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, ²⁴ not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

The Cost of Being a Disciple

Large crowds were travel- ²⁵ ing with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone ²⁶ comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone ²⁷ who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

"Suppose one of you ²⁸ wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the ²⁹ foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees

of oxen *without testing them out!* The third has just gotten married and claims his wife doesn't want to attend! **Hurry out to the streets and alleys.** The Jewish leaders had "turned down" the invitation. Now another class of people are called. **The poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.** The outcasts of society. There were many of them in that part of the world, *as there are everywhere.* **Go out to the country roads and lanes.** To the Gentile nations! **Make people come in.** By using the *power* of the Good News (Rom 1:16-17). **I tell you that none of those.** Those who refuse to come, shut themselves out by their own act.

26-27. **Whoever comes to me.** See notes on Matt. 10-37-38. **Unless he hates his father.** This is not "hate" in the sense of "despise, be hostile toward." Jesus says his disciples must hate "*himself as well,*" yet each disciple is told to "*love your fellow man as yourself.*" The meaning is this: we must choose Christ no matter what it costs us to do so!

28-33. **He sits down first and figures out what it will cost.** This is just good sense. Before anyone follows Christ, they must learn what it will cost them, because everything that stands between them and Christ must be pushed into the background! But also look at the rewards!!!

happened will make fun of him. ³⁰“This man began to build but can’t finish the job!” they will say. ³¹If a king goes out with ten thousand men to fight another king, who comes against him with twenty thousand men, he will sit down first and decide if he is strong enough to face that other king. ³²If he isn’t, he will send messengers to meet the other king, while he is still a long way off, to ask for terms of peace. ³³In the same way,” concluded Jesus, “none of you can be my disciple unless he gives us everything he has.”

Worthless Salt

(Also *Matt. 5.13; Mark 9.50*)

³⁴“Salt is good, but if it loses its taste there is no way to make it salty again. ³⁵It is no good for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown away. Listen, then, if you have ears!”

The Lost Sheep

(Also *Matt. 18.12-14*)

15 One time many tax collectors and outcasts came to listen to Jesus. ²The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling, “This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!” ³So Jesus told them this parable,

it will ridicule him, saying, ³⁰“This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.”

“Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

15 Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Then Jesus told them this parable:

34-35. **Salt is good.** See notes on *Matt. 5:13; Mark 9:50*. The Christian is the salt of the earth. The *taste* is the spirit of love, good will, and self-sacrifice. One who does not have this *spirit* is worthless to Christ.

1. **One time many tax collectors and outcasts.** These people came to Jesus in great numbers. **Tax collector.** They worked for the Roman Occupation Army, and were thought of as traitors to their fellow Jews. Most had been dishonest and made themselves rich. **Outcasts.** People who had been “suspended” and no longer allowed to be part of the synagogue.

2. **The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law.** The *Pharisees* were the orthodox religious leaders. The *teachers of the Law* were the *theologians*. **And even eats with them!** No strict Jew could eat with Gentiles, and these people were classed in with the Gentiles. The Pharisees felt they could not *close their eyes* to this.

3-6. **Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep.** Jesus gives three parables in this chapter to show God’s love for his creation. A shepherd who lost one sheep would go out looking for it, even though the ninety-nine were safe. **He puts it on his shoulders.** A common custom. **I am so happy!** This is God’s attitude when a “lost one” is found! Every servant of Christ should share this *happiness* when a sinner turns to God.

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them—what does he do? He leaves the other ninety-nine sheep in the pasture and goes looking for the one that got lost until he finds it. ⁵When he finds it, he is so happy that he puts it on his shoulders, ⁶and carries it back home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together, and says to them, ‘I am happy I found my lost sheep, Let us celebrate!’ ⁷In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent.”

The Lost Coin

⁸“Or suppose a woman who has ten silver coins loses one of them—what does she do? She lights a lamp, sweeps her house, and looks carefully everywhere until she finds it. ⁹When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, and says to them, ‘I am so happy I found the coin I lost. Let us celebrate!’ ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, the angels of God rejoice over one sinner who repents.”

The Lost Son

¹¹Jesus went on to say, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger one said to him, ‘Father, give me now my share of the property.’ So the man divided the property between his two

4
hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And
5
when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and
6
goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in
7
the same way there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

8
“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

The Parable of the Lost Son

11
Jesus continued:
12
“There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

7. **There will be more joy in heaven.** The Father, the Son, and all the angels! **Over one sinner who repents.** One who makes up his mind to *turn from sin* and give his life as a *living sacrifice*. **Than over ninety-nine respectable people.** God does not love the ones who are “*safe in the pasture*” ANY LESS, but the *finding* of the *lost* is cause for special joy!

8-10. **Or suppose a woman who has ten silver coins.** It is the custom in the East to have a string of coins for a bracelet, necklace, etc. The *happiness* of finding the lost coin shows the *happiness* of God and his angels when a lost *sinner* is found!

11-13. **There was a man who had two sons.** The parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin symbolize Christ searching for the lost sinner. This parable of the Lost Son shows the lost sinner *bringing himself* back to the Father’s house. All three show the happiness over the sinner who turns from sin. The story of this man and his two sons touches hearts all the way around the world! In the symbolism, the

sons. ¹³After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. ¹⁴He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing. ¹⁵So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. ¹⁶He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. ¹⁷At last he came to his senses and said, 'All my father's hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am, about to starve! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against God and against you. ¹⁹I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers.'" ²⁰So he got up and started back to his father.

"He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and

"Not long after that, the 13
younger son got together all
he had, set off for a distant
country and there squandered
his wealth in wild living.
After he had spent every- 14
thing, there was a severe
famine in that whole coun-
try, and he began to be in
need. So he went and hired 15
himself out to a citizen of
that country, who sent him
to his fields to feed pigs. 16
He longed to fill his stomach
with the pods that the pigs
were eating, but no one gave
him anything.

"When he came to his 17
senses, he said, 'How many
of my father's hired men
have food to spare, and here
I am starving to death! I will 18
set out and go back to my
father and say to him,
'Father, I have sinned a-
gainst heaven and against
you. I am no longer worthy 19
to be called your son; make
me like one of your hired
men.' So he got up and went 20
to his father.

"But while he was still a
long way off, his father saw
him and was filled with com-
passion for him. He ran to
his son, threw his arms a-
round him and kissed him.

father is God; the older brother is those who are sanctimonious (sure of their own goodness and who despise everybody else); the younger son is the sinful. [As Jesus tells this, the Pharisees and teachers of the Law are the "older brother," and the tax collectors and the outcasts are the "younger son."] **Give me now.** A selfish demand. The whole human race has done this! **So the man divided the property.** By Jewish custom, the older son would get two shares, the younger only one (*Deut. 21:17*). **He went to a country far away.** Among strangers who help him spend his money. **Where he wasted his money.** The sinful life is a wasteful life. It is much worse when we waste our spiritual opportunities.

14-16. **Then a severe famine.** The world cannot meet the deep spiritual needs of mankind. **To take care of the pigs.** This was just about as *low* as a Jew could get—**FEEDING PIGS!** [They were religiously *unclean animals*.] **With the bean pods.** [The pods of the carob tree.] *The bean pods of sin make very poor eating!*

17-19. **At last he came to his senses.** He could see the mess he was in, and he remembered how it was *back home*. This is the contrast between *sin* and *salvation*. **I will get up and go.** This decision to *get up and go home* is repentance. However, note that the younger son in this parable had no high motives in what he did. "He went home because he was hungry, and there was plenty of food at home." **I am no longer fit.** Notice the *hopelessness!* The son has no thought of another chance, no hope of being restored. He will be content to just be one of his father's hired workers. [Grace is *undeserved* favor.]

20-24. **When his father saw him.** Up to this point the parable tells a story that has happened many times in this world. Countless people have acted like this younger son. But the real difference in this

kissed him. ²¹“Father,” the son said, “I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.” ²²But the father called his servants: “Hurry!” he said, “Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on this finger and shoes on his feet. ²³Then go get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast! ²⁴Because this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.” And so the feasting began.

²⁵“The older son, in the meantime, was out in the field. On his way back, when he came close to the house, he heard the music and dancing. ²⁶He called one of the servants and asked him, “What’s going on?” ²⁷“Your brother came back home,” the servant answered, “and your father killed the prize calf, because he got him back safe and sound.” ²⁸The older brother was so angry that he would not go into the house; so his father came out and begged him to come in. ²⁹“Look,” he answered back to his father, “all these years I have worked like a slave for you, and I never disobeyed your orders. What have you given me? Not even a goat for me to have a

“The son said to him, ²¹ ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

“But the father said to his ²² servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring ²³ the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine ²⁴ was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

“Meanwhile, the older ²⁵ son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants ²⁶ and asked him what was going on. ‘Your brother ²⁷ has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

“The older brother ²⁸ came angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But ²⁹ he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could cele-

parable is the *Father who waited!* The father waiting and watching and while the younger son was still a long way from home, the father *saw him!* **And he ran.** No sober dignity! No stern demands! [God runs to meet the sinner who is bringing himself home. See notes on *Acts 2:36-38.*] **Father, the son said.** And as the son confesses his sins, the Father is saying: “Hurry! Bring the best robe . . . Put a ring on his finger . . . shoes . . . prize calf . . . but now he is alive!” [God gives *everyman* the gift of freedom, which can be misused. He waits and hopes for *everyman’s* return. He runs when he sees *everyman* bringing himself back home. He does not say: “You are only coming back because you are hungry; go back to your pigs until you can become pure and spiritual.” It is this **HUMILITY** of God that the Jewish leaders could not understand. They thought one who had deliberately sinned should not be allowed to come back at all. But God was **RUNNING** to meet *everyman* in the historical **ACT** of the Cross. See *1 Cor. 2:9* and notes there.]

25-32. **The older son.** He is symbolic of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law in *verse 2*. He is also symbolic of some Christians who fall into the trap which James speaks about (*James 4:1-4*). The older son is angry, because he sees no reason to forgive the younger son and welcome him back. The Pharisees were angry with Jesus, because he offered **MERCY** to the tax collectors and outcasts. Some sanctimonious Christians find it hard to be happy when “tax collectors and outcasts,” “notorious sinners,” and in general “people shunned by their peer group” bring themselves home to Christ. Read the message in these scriptures: *1 John 1:10; James 2:10; Rom. 3:23; 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:15; Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 3:27.*

feast with my friends! ³⁰But this son of yours wasted all your property on prostitutes, and when he comes back home you kill the prize calf for him! ³¹‘My son,’ the father answered, ‘you are always here with me and everything I have is yours.’ ³²But we had to have a feast and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’ ”

The Shrewd Manager

16 Jesus said to his disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and he was told that the manager was wasting his master’s money. ²He called him in and said, ‘What is this I hear about you? Turn in a complete account of your handling of my property, because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ ³‘My master is going to dismiss me from my job,’ the man said to himself. ‘What shall I do? I am not strong enough to dig ditches, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴Now I know what I will do! Then when my job is gone I shall have friends who will welcome me in their homes.’ ⁵So he called in all the people who were in debt to his master. He said to the first one, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶‘One hundred barrels of olive oil,’ he answered, ‘Here is your account,’ the manager

brated with my friends. But ³⁰when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’
 “ ‘My son,’ the father ³¹said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to cele- ³²brate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ ”

The Parable of the Shrewd Manager

16 Jesus told his disciples:
 “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and ²asked him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’
 “The manager said to ³himself, ‘What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg—I know ⁴what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’
 “So he called in each one ⁵of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’
 “ ‘Eight hundred gallons ⁶of olive oil,’ he replied.
 “The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred.’

1-3. **There was a rich man.** The three parables of the 15th chapter were aimed at the *sanctimonious*. This one deals with *greed*, and may have been aimed at the tax collectors who were there. [Many of them were guilty of dishonesty and mismanagement.] **Was wasting his master’s money.** Just like the younger son in *chapter 15:13*. **What is this I hear about you?** The manager has betrayed his master by his action. **Turn in a complete account.** He is fired! And the books will all be audited. **What shall I do?** He has a few short days yet until the action is final. What can he do to help himself? “Reckless living” has made him too “soft” to work at manual labor. He is too proud to beg.

4-7. **Now I know what I will do.** The “way out” of all this comes to him in a flash! **So he called in all the people.** In order to make *friends* who will welcome him in their homes. He calls these people to come in and lets them “write off” their debts at reduced rates.

told him; 'sit down and write fifty.' ⁷He said to another one, 'And you—how much do you owe?' 'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he answered. 'Here is your account,' the manager told him; 'write eight hundred.' ⁸The master of this dishonest manager praised him for doing such a shrewd thing; because the people of this world are much more shrewd in handling their affairs than the people who belong to the light."

⁹And Jesus went on to say, "And so I tell you: make friends for yourselves with worldly wealth, so that when it gives out you will be welcomed in the eternal home. ¹⁰Whoever is faithful in small matters will be faithful in large ones; whoever is dishonest in small matters will be dishonest in large ones. ¹¹If, then, you have not been faithful in handling worldly wealth, how can you be trusted with true wealth? ¹²And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you what belongs to you?

¹³"No servant can be the slave of two masters; he will hate one and love the other; he will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

"Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?'"

"'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied."

"He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.'"

"The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings."

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?"

"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

8. **The master of this dishonest manager praised him.** Not for his dishonesty, but for his shrewdness in preparing for his future. **Are much more shrewd.** The shrewd manager knew better how to deal with his master and the debtors [who were probably tenants] under his control, than people of light know how to deal with their God above and their needy brothers here. **Central idea:** The one point taught in this parable is to use our earthly resources shrewdly to prepare for the time when these very things will fail us.

9. **And so I tell you.** We are managers of the worldly wealth which God gives us. We must not waste it, nor hoard it up. We are to *use it* in a way which meets with God's approval, to make friends in that eternal home. It is true of many things, that we "*use it, or lose it!*"

10-12. **Whoever is faithful in small matters.** A person who is faithful in minor details will not be unfaithful in more important things. **If, then, you have not been faithful.** Our management of worldly wealth clearly reveals our character and spirit. The *true wealth* is the Eternal. **With what belongs to someone else.** This world and all that is in it belongs to God! If we are faithful in our use of God's wealth, he will give us Eternity! See *Eph. 2:8-10*.

13. **No servant can be the slave of two masters.** See note on *Matt. 6:24*.

Some Sayings of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 11.12-13; 5.31-32; Mark 10.11-12*)

¹⁴The Pharisees heard all this, and they made fun of Jesus, because they loved money. ¹⁵Jesus said to them, "You are the ones who make yourselves look right in men's sight, but God knows your hearts. For what men think is of great value is worth nothing in God's sight.

¹⁶"The Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets were in effect up to the time of John the Baptist; since then the Good News about the Kingdom of God is being told, and everyone forces his way in. ¹⁷But it is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the smallest detail of the Law to be done away with.

¹⁸"Any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery; and the man who married a divorced woman commits adultery."

The Rich Man and Lazarus

¹⁹"There was once a rich man who dressed in the most expensive clothes and lived in great

The Pharisees, who loved 14 money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He 15 said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.

"The Law and the Pro- 16 phets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. It is easier for heaven 17 and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law.

"Anyone who divorces his 18 wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

"There was a rich man 19 who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in

14. **And they made fun of Jesus.** They understood Jesus to be attacking *greed*, and they thought this *foolish*, because they measured everything in terms of money.

15. **Is worth nothing in God's sight.** The things that seem so important in this world, have no value in God's sight. Compare *1 Cor. 1:26-31*.

16. **The Law of Moses and the writings.** See notes on *Matt. 11:12-13*.

17. **But it is easier.** See note on *Matt. 5:17-18*.

18. **Any man who divorces his wife.** Marriage meant little to the Pharisees. See notes on *Matt. 19:1-9*.

19. **There was once a rich man.** Jesus tells this to illustrate the result of a wrong attitude and misuse of worldly wealth. The parable of the Shrewd Manager showed how worldly wealth is to be used; this parable shows the horror which a failure to use worldly wealth properly will bring. [*Jesus brings the whole force of his rebuke on the one point of "failure to use." Nothing said about this rich man wasting other people's money nor any hint that he gained his riches dishonestly. To have described him as dishonest or drunken, would have clouded the issue. Here is a good citizen, with no hint of scandal attached to his name. He was "well off," and made no attempt to help anyone else. He spent his worldly wealth pleasing himself, and spent none serving God or helping his fellow man.*]

luxury every day. ²⁰There was also a poor man, named Lazarus, full of sores, who used to be brought to the rich man's door, ²¹hoping to fill himself with the bits of food that fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side, at the feast in heaven; the rich man died and was buried. ²³He was in great pain in Hades; and he looked up and saw Abraham, far away, with Lazarus at his side. ²⁴So he called out, 'Father Abraham! Take pity on me, and send Lazarus to dip his finger in some water and cool off my tongue, because I am in great pain in this fire!' ²⁵But Abraham said, 'Remember, my son, that in your lifetime you were given all the good things, while Lazarus got all the bad things; but now he is enjoying himself here, while you are in

luxury every day. At his gate ²⁰ was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell ²¹ from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

"The time came when the ²² beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, ²³ where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ²⁴ 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

"But Abraham replied, ²⁵ 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you

20. **There was also a poor man.** In the last stages of his life, this poor man has nothing to keep him alive, but the charity he receives. **Named Lazarus.** This is the only time Jesus mentions a name in a parable. *Lazarus* means *God a help*, and it is symbolic of *absolute poverty*. *Augustine* wrote: "Does not Christ seem to you to have been reading in that book where he found the name of the poor man written, but found not the name of the rich? For that book is the Book of Life." [*Book of the Living*; see note on *Rev. 20:14-15*.] The description shows the condition of the helpless poor at that time. The rich man has friends, and servants to wait on him. Lazarus has only dogs. [*Dogs*: see note on *Matt. 7:6*.] The whole point is that the rich man *gave* nothing to Lazarus. The *bits of food* from the rich man's table was the garbage which would be thrown out on the street.

22. **And was carried by the angels.** Not because he was poor, but because he pleased God.

23. **He was in great pain in Hades.** Not because he was rich [Abraham was rich], but because he *failed to use it shrewdly*. Note also that both were Jews, and therefore both people of God. The difference between them in this parable is how they used what they had.

24. **Take pity on me.** Note that the rich man was very conscious of his surroundings, and that he could both see and recognize Abraham. [The Jews had a saying: "Abraham sits at the entrance to Hades and will not let his descendants go in there."] He calls on Abraham for help. The conditions of the rich man and Lazarus are sharply reversed in the spirit world. [See note at the end of this chapter.]

25. **Remember, my son.** Alford (Greek Testament) says: "Analogy gives us every reason to suppose that in the disembodied state the whole life on earth will lie before the soul in all its thoughts, words, and deeds, like a map of the past journey before a traveler."

pain. ²⁶Besides all that, there is a deep pit lying between us, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot do it, nor can anyone cross over to us from where you are.' ²⁷The rich man said, 'Well, father, I beg you, send Lazarus to my father's house, ²⁸where I have five brothers; let him go and warn them so that they, at least, will not come to this place of pain.' ²⁹Abraham said, 'Your brothers have Moses and the prophets to warn them; let your brothers listen to what they say.' ³⁰The rich man answered, 'That is not enough, father Abraham! But if someone were to rise from death and go to them, then they would turn from their sins.' ³¹But Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone were to rise from death.' "

Sin

(Also Matt. 18.6-7, 21-22; Mark 9.42)

17 Jesus said to his disciples, "Things that make people fall into sin are bound to happen; but how terrible for the one who makes them happen! ²It would be better for him if a large millstone were tied around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than for him to cause

are in agony. And besides all ²⁶this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

"He answered, 'Then I ²⁷beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for ²⁸I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

"Abraham replied, 'They ²⁹have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

"'No, father Abraham,' ³⁰he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

"He said to him, 'If they ³¹do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' "

Sin, Faith, Duty

17 Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these lit-

26. **There is a deep pit.** Permanent and impassible! In the future state, the good and the evil will be separated from each other. [See note at the end of this chapter.]

27-31. **Send Lazarus to my father's house.** He first thought of himself. Now he wants to warn his family. This is brought up to emphasize what follows. **Your brothers have Moses and the prophets to warn them.** The rich man and his brothers thought worldly wealth was the only REALITY. The warning was there, loud and clear, but they did not listen! **They will not be convinced.** If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, Lazarus returning from the dead would not make them listen. **JESUS DID RETURN FROM THE DEAD!** But many of the enemies of Jesus paid no attention to it! Compare 1 Thess. 2:14-16. [Hades is the Greek name for the world of the dead, and is the same as Sheol in the Old Testament. Hades sometimes means the *abyss*, a place of punishment for the wicked awaiting judgment (see note on Rev. 9:2). But also in this spirit world of Hades is Paradise—"heaven" before the Judgment. In Hades we see the wicked in great pain; while the good enjoy their rewards. The joys of Paradise were thought of as "the feast in heaven." After the resurrection and the Judgment, the good will inherit the Eternal Kingdom; while the wicked, death, and the world of the dead (Hades) will be thrown into the lake of fire (see Rev. 20:14-15).]

1-2. **Things that make people fall into sin.** See notes on Matt. 18:6-7.

one of these little ones to sin. ³Be on your guard!
 "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. 'If he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time he comes to you saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him.'"

Faith

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, "Make our faith greater."

⁶The Lord answered, "If you had faith as big as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Pull yourself up by the roots and plant yourself in the sea!' and it would obey you."

A Servant's Duty

⁷"Suppose one of you has a servant who is plowing or looking after the sheep. When he comes in from the field, do you say to him, 'Hurry along and eat your meal'? ⁸Of course not! Instead, you say to him, 'Get my supper ready, then put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink.' ⁹The servant does not deserve thanks for obeying orders, does he? ¹⁰It is the same with you; when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are ordinary servants; we have only done our duty.' "

tle ones to sin. So watch 3
 yourselves.

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him." 4

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" 5

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you. 6

"Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? 7

Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So 8

you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.' " 9

3-4. **If your brother sins, rebuke him.** Note that a rebuke and forgiveness are both duties. Compare *Gal. 6:1-2*. See notes on *Matt. 18:15-22*.

5-6. **Make our faith greater.** The disciples ask for faith to be able to do the things he has just told them. **If you had faith as big as a mustard seed.** *Godet* writes: "The only real power of the universe is the divine will. The human will, which has discovered the secret of blending with this force of forces, is raised, in virtue of this union, to omnipotence." But the gap between ourselves and God shows how far we are from that *perfect* union. See notes on *Matt. 14:28-31*. [The mulberry tree is a "fig-mulberry," called a *sycamine* in some versions. It was large, with very deep roots.]

7-10. **Suppose one of you has a servant.** This parable is based on the custom of having the same servant work in the fields and in the house. The servant expected to serve his master *first*, and himself *last*! **The servant does not deserve thanks for obeying orders.** There is no special *merit* in doing what you are supposed to do. **It is the same with you.** Since in God's sight no one can even fulfill their duty (*Psalms 143:2*), it is not possible for someone to do *more than* their duty. One who has *great faith* has no reason to be proud of what he does! God owes us nothing just because we do a good job. The eternal reward comes through grace, not debt (*Rom. 11:6; Eph. 2:4-10*). But notice the warning in *Rom. 6:1-2*.

Jesus Makes Ten Lepers Clean

¹¹As Jesus made his way to Jerusalem he went between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²He was going into a village when he was met by ten lepers. They stood at a distance ¹³and shouted, "Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!"

¹⁴Jesus saw them and said to them, "Go and let the priests examine you."

On the way they were made clean. ¹⁵One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶He threw himself to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him. The man was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Jesus spoke up, "There were ten men made clean; where are the other nine? ¹⁸Why is this foreigner the only one who came back to give thanks to God?" ¹⁹And Jesus said to him, "Get up and go; your faith has made you well."

The Coming of the Kingdom

(Also Matt. 24.23-28, 37-41)

²⁰Some Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God would come. His answer was, "The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen. ²¹No one will say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!'; because the Kingdom of God is within you."

Ten Healed of Leprosy

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

The Coming of the Kingdom of God

Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come visibly, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

11-19. As Jesus made his way to Jerusalem. The time of this is uncertain. If this happened on his last tour, it would be just after he left Galilee, before he reached Perea. He went between Samaria and Galilee. From west to east, to cross the Jordan river. He was met by ten lepers. [Leprosy: see notes on Matt. 8:1-2.] Expelled from society, lepers banded together for company and protection. They stood at a distance. The Law required this (Lev. 13:45-46). Go and let the priests examine you. The priest had to certify the leper as clean (see note on Matt. 8:4). Notice at this point they are still lepers. On the way they were made clean. This was a test of faith. Not one would have been healed, if he disobeyed. But when faith is action, their leprosy is gone! One of them . . . came back. To praise God and to thank Jesus! Where are the other nine? One returns to thank Jesus, and it is the foreigner [a Samaritan]. The others, saved from a living death, are seen no more. Your faith has made you well. God says in effect: "You move, and I will bless you." This man's faith also showed itself in love.

20-21. When the Kingdom of God would come. These Pharisees, and the Jewish people, expected a political kingdom with the power and glory of David's kingdom restored to Israel. Compare note on Acts 1:6. In such a way as to be seen. It was not to be material and visible. Is within you. "You are in fact the slaves of the master you obey" (Rom. 6:16). The Kingdom of God is made up of people who have yielded their heart and loyalty to Christ—have become his disciples.

²²Then he said to the disciples, "The time will come when you will wish you could see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. ²³There will be those who will say to you, 'Look, over there!' or, 'Look, over here!' But don't go out looking for it. ²⁴As the lightning flashes across the sky and lights it up from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. ²⁵But first he must suffer much and be rejected by the people of this day. ²⁶As it was in the time of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷Everybody kept on eating and drinking, men and women married, up to the very day Noah went into the ark and the Flood came and killed them all. ²⁸It will be as it was in the time of Lot. Everybody kept on eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹On the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and killed them all. ³⁰That is how it will be on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

³¹"The man who is on the roof of his house on that day must not go down into the house to get his belongings that are there; in the same way, the man who is out in the field must not go back to the house. ³²Remember Lot's wife! ³³Whoever tries to save his own life will lose it; whoever loses his life will save it. ³⁴On that night, I tell you, there will be two men sleeping in one bed; one

Then he said to his disci- 22
 ples, "The time is coming
 when you will long to see one
 of the days of the Son of
 Man, but you will not see it.
 Men will tell you, "There he 23
 is!" or "Here he is!" Do not go
 running off after them. For 24
 the Son of Man in his day
 will be like the lightning,
 which flashes and lights up
 the sky from one end to the
 other. But first he must suffer 25
 many things and be re-
 jected by this generation.

"Just as it was in the days 26
 of Noah, so also will it be in
 the days of the Son of Man.
 People were eating, drink- 27
 ing, marrying and being
 given in marriage up to the
 day Noah entered the ark.
 Then the flood came and de-
 stroyed them all. "It was
 the same in the days of Lot. 28
 People were eating, drink-
 ing, buying, selling, plant-
 ing and building. But the 29
 day Lot left Sodom, fire and
 sulfur rained down from
 heaven and destroyed them
 all.

"It will be just like this on 30
 the day the Son of Man is re-
 vealed. On that day no one 31
 who is on the roof of his
 house, with his goods inside,
 should go down to get them.
 Likewise, no one in the field
 should go back for anything.
 Remember Lot's wife! Who- 32
 ever tries to keep his life will
 lose it, and whoever loses his 33
 life will preserve it. I tell 34
 you, on that night two
 people will be in one bed;
 one will be taken and the

22-24. **When you will wish you could see.** In their restless eagerness to see a *visible* kingdom, many would be tempted to follow false prophets and false Messiahs. He warns them against this, telling them that just as the lightning lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will be his *visible* Second coming! "Look, he is coming with the clouds! Everyone will see him, including those who pierced him" (Rev. 1:7).

25. **But first he must suffer.** See notes on Luke 24:25-27.

26-37. **As it was in the time of Noah.** This is similar to parts of Matt. 24:17-41. See notes there. **Remember Lot's wife!** By delaying and looking back, as they were fleeing Sodom, she lost her life. Compare notes on Matt. 24:16-18. **Where, Lord?** They still thought the things he spoke about were a *local* prediction. Jesus gave a proverbial answer. Sin will draw punishment and destruction to itself! Compare note on Matt. 24:28.

will be taken away, the other left behind. ³⁵Two women will be grinding meal together: one will be taken away, the other left behind. [³⁶Two men will be in the field: one will be taken away, the other left behind.]”

³⁷The disciples asked him, “Where, Lord?”

Jesus answered, “Where there is a dead body the vultures will gather.”

The Parable of the Widow and the Judge

18 Then Jesus told them this parable, to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged. ²“There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected men. ³And there was a widow in that same town who kept coming to him and pleading for her rights: ‘Help me against my opponent!’ ⁴For a long time the judge was not willing, but at last he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or respect men, ⁵yet because of all the trouble this widow is giving me I will see to it that she gets her rights; or else she will keep on coming and finally wear me out!’ ”

⁶And the Lord continued, “Listen to what that corrupt judge said. ⁷Now, will God not judge in favor of his own people who cry to him for help day and night? Will he be slow to help

other left. Two women will ³⁵ be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.” [Two men will ³⁶ be in the field; one will be taken away, the other left behind.]”*

“Where, Lord?” they ³⁷ asked.

He replied, “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.”

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

18 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said:

² “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ³ ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

⁴ “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually wear me out with her coming!’ ” ⁵

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep put- ⁶ ⁷

1. To teach them that they should always pray. Prayer is a right, not a duty. And never become discouraged. God knows our needs, much better than we do. But he wants us to ask him and to praise him, just as we want our children to talk to us. See Eph. 6:18.

2-3. There was a judge. Judges in the East were notorious for being dishonest and taking bribes. And there was a widow. In the East, a widow was almost totally helpless, unless she had powerful friends. The Bible presents God as a friend to the widow and the orphan. Help me against my opponent. She had an enemy against whom she was helpless.

4-5. For a long time. The judge had no high motives, and she had no money to bribe him. This is important, because it builds up to the “punch line.” Yet because of all the trouble. She kept on “nagging” him, and finally he did what she wanted, even though there was nothing in it for him.

6-8. Listen to what the corrupt judge said. This is the application of the parable—the “punch line.” Will God not judge in favor of his own people? If a corrupt and dishonest judge would finally act be-

* Some MSS add verse 36.

them? ⁸I tell you, he will judge in their favor, and do it quickly. But will the Son of Man find faith on earth when he comes?"

ting them off? I tell you, he ⁸ will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹Jesus also told this parable to people who were sure of their own goodness and despised everybody else. ¹⁰"Two men went up to the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood apart by himself and prayed, 'I thank you, God, that I am not greedy dishonest, or immoral, like everybody else; I thank you that I am not like that tax collector. ¹²I fast two days every week, and I give you one tenth of all my income.' ¹³But the tax collector stood at a distance and would not even raise his face to heaven, but beat on his breast and said,

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

"Two men went up to the ¹⁰ temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood ¹¹ up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like all other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week ¹² and give a tenth of all my income.'

"But the tax collector ¹³ stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

cause of the continual "nagging" of this widow, Jesus says, what about a God who loves you??? Will he be slow to help them? God will not act like the judge in this parable. He will answer right away! [But note God does not always answer yes; sometimes he says no, or wait a while—just as we do with our own children.] Find faith on earth when he comes? Not "The Faith," but the kind of faith the widow showed in going to the judge again and again! The Lord is distressed by the unbelief of those who believe! See note on Matt. 17:17. [Christians will be alive and waiting when Jesus returns. See notes on 1 Thess. 4:15-18.]

9. Jesus also told this parable. He must mean the Pharisees, since they were sanctimonious. Rabbi Simeon, a Pharisee, is supposed to have said: "If there were only thirty righteous men in the world like Abraham, my son and I would be two of them; if only two, my son and I would be those; if only one, it would be myself."

10. Two men went up to the temple to pray. Jesus deliberately uses extremes in this parable. The Pharisees were very religious, and the tax collectors were outcasts. See notes on Matt. 3:7; 9:9.

11-12. The Pharisee stood apart by himself. So everyone would be sure to see him. The Pharisees liked to impress people by showing off their goodness. Like everybody else. The Pharisees thought they had "God in a box," and so they despised all "non-pharisees." [But avoid praying: "I thank You that I am not like that Pharisee!"]

13. But the tax collector stood at a distance. He was conscious of being an outcast, and so stayed at a distance from the others. But beat on his breast. Symbolic of sadness. Have pity on me, a sinner! Note the difference in attitude. The Pharisee thought God owed him something. The tax collector humbly asks for pity and mercy.

'God, have pity on me, a sinner!' "I tell you," said Jesus, "this man, and not the other, was in the right with God when he went home. Because everyone who makes himself great will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be made great."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

(Also *Matt 19.13-15; Mark 10.13-16*)

¹⁵Some people brought their babies to Jesus to have him place his hands on them. But the disciples saw them and scolded them for doing so. ¹⁶But Jesus called the children to him, and said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷Remember this! Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."

The Rich Man

(Also *Matt 19.16-30; Mark 10.17-31*)

¹⁸A Jewish leader asked Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?"

¹⁹"Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "No one is good except God alone. ²⁰You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not lie; honor your father and mother.'"

²¹The man replied, "Ever since I was young I have obeyed all these commandments."

²²When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still need to do one thing. Sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me."

"I tell you that this man, ¹⁴ rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

The Little Children and Jesus

People were also bringing ¹⁵ babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, ¹⁷ anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

The Rich Ruler

A certain ruler asked him, ¹⁸ "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me ¹⁹ good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the com- ²⁰ mandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'"

"All these I have kept ²¹ since I was a boy," he said.

When Jesus heard this, he ²² said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

14. **This man, and not the other.** This is the "punch line." The tax collector was forgiven and made right with God. [He was already a *child of God*, but had sinned.] This parable teaches us that the *right attitude* is important, for us to receive the promise of *1 John 1:9*. This parable, and the one before this, should be kept in mind by every Christian.

15-17. **Some people brought their babies to Jesus.** See notes on *Matt. 19:13-15*. It was the custom for a rabbi to bless babies.

18-30. **A Jewish leader asked Jesus.** See notes on *Matt. 19:16-30*. He was probably leader of a synagogue (see note on *Luke 13:14*).

²³But when the man heard this he became very sad, because he was very rich.

²⁴Jesus saw that he was sad and said, "How hard it is for rich people 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."

²⁶The people who heard him asked, "Who, then, can be saved?"

²⁷Jesus answered, "What is impossible for men is possible for God."

²⁸Then Peter said, "Look! We have left our homes to follow you."

²⁹"Yes," Jesus said to them, "and I tell you this: anyone who leaves home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God ³⁰will receive much more in this present age, and eternal life in the age to come."

Jesus Speaks a Third Time about His Death

(Also Matt. 20.17-19; Mark 10.32-34)

³¹Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, "Listen! We are going to Jerusalem where everything the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will come true. ³²He will be handed over to the Gentiles, who will make fun of him, insult him, and spit on him. ³³They will whip him and kill him, but on the third day he will rise to life."

³⁴The disciples did not understand any of these things; the meaning of the words was hidden from them, and they did not know what Jesus was talking about.

When he heard this, he ²³ became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked at him and ²⁴ said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for ²⁵ a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Those who heard this ²⁶ asked, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus replied, "What is ²⁷ impossible with men is possible with God."

Peter said to him, "We ²⁸ have left all we had to follow you!"

"I tell you the truth," ²⁹ Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much ³⁰ in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

Jesus took the Twelve a- ³¹ side and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He ³² will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise ³³ again."

The disciples did not ³⁴ understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

31-34. Listen! We are going to Jerusalem. See notes on Matt. 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34. Luke adds: "where everything the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will come true." See Luke 9:31. [Some of what the prophets wrote: Psalm 16:10; 22:7-8; 49:15; Isa. 53:1-9; Dan. 9:26.]

Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar*(Also Matt 20.29-34; Mark 10.46-52)*

³⁵Jesus was coming near Jericho, and a certain blind man was sitting by the road, begging. ³⁶When he heard the crowd passing by he asked, "What is this?"

³⁷"Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," they told him.

³⁸He cried out, "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me!"

³⁹The people in front scolded him and told him to be quiet. But he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David! Have mercy on me!"

⁴⁰So Jesus stopped and ordered that the blind man be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹"What do you want me to do for you?"

"Sir," he answered, "I want to see again."

⁴²Then Jesus said to him, "See! Your faith has made you well."

⁴³At once he was able to see, and he followed Jesus, giving thanks to God. When the crowd saw it, they all praised God.

Jesus and Zacchaeus

19 Jesus went on into Jericho and was passing through. ²There was a chief tax collector

A Blind Beggar Receives His Sight

As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."

He called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Lord, I want to see," he replied.

Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector

35-43. **Jesus was coming near Jericho.** This is the last time he would go to Jerusalem, since the crucifixion was just a little more than a week away. See notes on *Matt. 20:29-34*. Matthew says there were two, but Mark and Luke mention only the one who shouted.

1. **Jesus went on into Jericho.** Jesus had crossed the Jordan near Jericho, the city of palm trees, and the road led directly through there on the way to Jerusalem. Mark shows us that Jesus was ahead of the crowd; went on in to Jericho; the noise of the crowd disturbed the blind men [Luke mentions only the one who shouted]; and as Jesus was leaving the town, the healing in *Luke 18:35-43* took place; then this meeting with Zacchaeus. From Jericho the road climbs more than 3,000 feet in eighteen miles, from the valley floor to Jerusalem in the mountains.

2. **There was a chief tax collector there.** Both the importance and location of Jericho would make it a center for the Roman tax collection. Zacchaeus was supervisor of the district. **Who was rich.** The job paid very well. But he was honest (*verse 8*).

there, named Zacchaeus, who was rich. ³He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was a little man and could not see Jesus because of the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus, who would be going that way. ⁵When Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to Zacchaeus, "Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today."

⁶Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed him with great joy. ⁷All the people who saw it started grumbling, "This man has gone as a guest to the home of a sinner!"

⁸Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Listen, sir! I will give half my belongings to the poor; and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay him back four times as much."

⁹Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today; this man, also, is a descendant of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

and was wealthy. He wanted 3
to see who Jesus was, but
being a short man he could
not, because of the crowd.
So he ran ahead and 4
climbed a sycamore-fig tree
to see him, since Jesus was
coming that way.

When Jesus reached the 5
spot, he looked up and said
to him, "Zacchaeus, come
down immediately. I must
stay at your house today."
So he came down at once 6
and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this 7
and began to mutter, "He
has gone to be the guest of a
sinner."

But Zacchaeus stood up 8
and said to the Lord, "Look,
Lord! Here and now I give
half of my possessions to the
poor, and if I have cheated
anybody out of anything, I
will pay back four times the
amount."

Jesus said to him, "Today 9
salvation has come to this
house, because this man,
too, is a son of Abraham.
For the Son of Man came to 10
seek and to save what was
lost."

3-4. **He was trying to see who Jesus was.** His curiosity was aroused by all the noise and the crowd. **Climbed a sycamore tree.** This was a type of *fig-mulberry* tree with low-hanging branches. His smallness would not allow him to see over the heads of the crowd.

5. **Because I must stay in your house today.** Not just to find a place to stay, but because Jesus saw in this man something valuable. His work was to search out and to save.

6. **And welcomed him with great joy.** He had not expected such an honor.

7. **Started grumbling.** This crowd expected Jesus to be crowned king of a political kingdom as soon as he arrived at Jerusalem. Here he is the guest of a tax collector, a chief agent for the Roman oppressors. If Jesus had been concerned about popularity, he would not have gone to Zacchaeus' house.

8. **Zacchaeus stood up.** This must be in response to the Lord's teaching. **I will give half my belongings to the poor.** This is proof of his faith! No doubt he had been in love with the idea of being rich. Now he has found something much greater, and gives his love to Jesus! **And if I have cheated anyone.** Perhaps he had, because tax collectors were notorious for their dishonesty. If he has cheated anyone, he makes the promise to pay them back *four times as much!* True repentance causes us to try to right the wrongs we have done to others. "If you cannot restore what you got by cheating others, give it to God; because the poor receive God's charity."

9. **Salvation has come to this house.** Because Zacchaeus has truly turned from sin and turned to God! **Is a descendant of Abraham.** Jesus may have said this to the crowd, because in their narrow understanding, they thought only Jews had any part in God's kingdom. But the true descendants of Abraham are those who believe in Christ (*Gal. 3:7, 29*).

10. **For the Son of Man came.** His whole purpose is to *rescue* those who are lost. This is why he went to Zacchaeus' house.

The Parable of the Gold Coins

(Also Matt 25:14-30)

¹¹While the people were listening to this, Jesus continued and told them a parable. He was now almost at Jerusalem, and they supposed that the Kingdom of God was just about to appear. ¹²So he said, "There was a nobleman who went to a country far away to be made king and then come back home. ¹³Before he left, he called his ten servants and gave them each a gold coin and told them, 'See what you can earn with this while I am gone.' ¹⁴Now, his countrymen hated him, and so they sent messengers after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

¹⁵"The nobleman was made king and came back. At once he ordered his servants, to whom he had given the money, to appear before him in order to find out how much they had earned. ¹⁶The first one came and said, 'Sir, I have earned ten gold coins with the one you gave me.' ¹⁷'Well done,' he said; 'you are a good servant! Since you were faithful in small matters, I will put you in charge of ten cities.' ¹⁸The second servant came and said, 'Sir, I have earned five gold coins with

The Parable of the Ten Minas

While they were listening ¹¹ to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. He said: ¹²

"A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he ¹³ called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'

"But his subjects hated ¹⁴ him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

"He was made king, how- ¹⁵ ever, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

"The first one came and ¹⁶ said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.'

"Excellent, my good ser- ¹⁷ vant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

"The second came and ¹⁸ said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.'

11. He was now almost at Jerusalem. Not over twenty miles from there. Since the crowd expected him to set up an earthly kingdom like David's as soon as he arrived at Jerusalem, he tells this parable.

12. There was a nobleman. This is a lot like the parable of the Three Servants in Matt. 25:14-30. But this one has a different purpose. To be made king. Christ would leave earth and return to heaven before being made King.

13. And gave them each a gold coin. [Worth perhaps \$160 in 1974 dollars.] See what you can earn with this. It was given to be used. Note that in this parable, each received exactly the same amount. It seems a small amount for a nobleman to give, and would not "buy loyalty."

14. We don't want this man to be our king. After his raising from death and his being taken up to heaven, many of the Jews would still reject him.

15. The nobleman was made king and came back. His Second Coming, when he rewards his servants. To appear before him. To find out how much each has earned with the "gold coin."

16-19. Sir, I have earned ten gold coins. Compare notes on Matt. 25:19-23. The gold coin can be symbolic of truth. Their ability to use it accounts for the different degree of gain. [Will there be degrees of reward and punishment in Eternity? See note on Luke 12:48.] In this life, being trustworthy in small matters brings greater responsibility, and honor as well.

the one you gave me.' ¹⁹To this one he said, 'You will be in charge of five cities.' ²⁰Another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your gold coin; I kept it hidden in a handkerchief. ²¹I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take what is not yours, and reap what you did not plant.' ²²He said to him, 'You bad servant! I will use your own words to condemn you! You know that I am a hard man, taking what is not mine and reaping what I have not planted. ²³Well, then, why didn't you put my money in the bank? Then I would have received it back with interest when I returned.' ²⁴Then he said to those who were standing there, 'Take the gold coin away from him and give it to the servant who has ten coins.' ²⁵They said to him, 'Sir, he already has ten coins!' ²⁶'I tell you,' he replied, 'that to every one who has, even more will be given; but the one who does not have, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. ²⁷Now, as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to be their king: bring them here and kill them before me!'"

"His master answered, ¹⁹You take charge of five cities.'

"Then another servant ²⁰came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because ²¹you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.'

"His master replied, ²²I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? Why then didn't you put my ²³money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?"

"Then he said to those ²⁴standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.'

"'Sir,' they said, 'he ²⁵already has ten!'"

"He replied, ²⁶'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. But those ²⁷enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.'"

20-23. **Sir, here is your gold coin.** It is not enough that we do no harm to others. We must take positive action to *do good!* Salvation is solely on the basis of *God's act in Christ*; but we have been *created* for a life of *good works* (*Eph. 2:10*). To fail to do this is rebellion against God! Compare notes on *Matt. 25:24-27*.

24-26. **Then he said.** To the angels (*Matt. 13:41*; *2 Thess. 1:7*; *Jude 14*). **That to everyone who has.** Those who have been faithful to their trust will receive all that God has promised! But the unfaithful will be disinherited forever! [These are all God's people who are being judged. The Jews had not kept their *trust* (compare *Matt. 23:37-39*).]

27. **As for these enemies of mine.** This shows the doom of all who will not permit the Lord to be their King. See *Matt. 13:49*; *21:44*; *25:30*; *2 Thess. 1:8-10*.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also *Matt. 21.1-11; Mark 11.1-11; John 12.12-19*)

²⁸Jesus said this and then went on to Jerusalem ahead of them. ²⁹As he came near Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples ahead ³⁰with these instructions, "Go to the village there ahead of you; as you go in you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If someone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Master needs it.' "

³²They went on their way and found everything just as Jesus had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying it?"

³⁴"The Master needs it," they answered, ³⁵and took the colt to Jesus. Then they threw their cloaks over the animal and helped Jesus get on. ³⁶As he rode on, they spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷When he came near Jerusalem, at the place where the road went down the Mount of Olives the large crowd of his disciples began to thank God and praise him in loud voices for all the great things that they had seen: ³⁸"God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory to God!"

³⁹Then some of the Pharisees spoke up from the crowd to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "command your disciples to be quiet!"

⁴⁰Jesus answered, "If they keep quiet, I tell you, the stones themselves will shout."

The Triumphant Entry

After Jesus had said this, ²⁸ he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them: "Go to the village ahead of you, and 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 ³¹ you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.' "

Those who were sent went ³² and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

They replied, "The Lord ³⁴ needs it."

They brought it to Jesus, ³⁵ threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

When he came near the ³⁷ place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

"Blessed is the king who ³⁸ comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Some of the Pharisees in ³⁹ the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

"I tell you," he replied, ⁴⁰ "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

28-40. **And then went on to Jerusalem.** The road from Jericho to Jerusalem climbs 3,000 feet in eighteen miles. All four Gospels give this. See notes on *Matt. 21:1-16*. **Down the Mount of Olives.** The city of Jerusalem and the temple burst into view! **God bless the king!** They still expected Jesus to announce himself as the Messiah-King and set up a political kingdom. Jesus had told them he must die, but they could not understand. Compare note on *Acts 1:6*.

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

⁴¹He came closer to the city and when he saw it he wept over it, ⁴²saying, "If you only knew today what is needed for peace! But now you cannot see it! ⁴³The days will come upon you when your enemies will surround you with barricades, blockade you, and close in on you from every side. ⁴⁴They will completely destroy you and the people within your walls; not a single stone will they leave in its place, because you did not recognize the time when God came to save you!"

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also *Matt. 21.12-17; Mark 11.15-19; John 2.13-22*)

⁴⁵Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out the merchants, ⁴⁶saying to them, "It is written in the Scriptures that God said, 'My house will be called a house of prayer.' But you have turned it into a hideout for thieves!"

⁴⁷Jesus taught in the temple every day. The chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the leaders of the people wanted to kill him, ⁴⁸but they could not find how to do it, because all the people kept listening to him, not wanting to miss a single word.

As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "if you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

Jesus at the Temple

Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be a house of prayer"; but you have made it a 'den of robbers.'"

Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

41-44. **When he saw it he wept over it.** Only Luke gives these words. This is a lot like what Jesus predicted in *Matt. 24:15-22*. Compare notes there. Only one other place speaks of Jesus weeping (*John 11:35*). **If you only knew today.** This was the time of opportunity and peace. But unbelief made it impossible for them to see the truth. **What is needed for peace.** If they had believed in Christ, they would not have rebelled against Rome, Jerusalem would not have been destroyed, and the 1,100,000 who were killed in that horror would not have died (see note on *Matt. 24:21*). They could have had earthly peace, as well as the peace of God, but they did not want it! **Will surround you with barricades.** The Roman soldiers built barricades to blockade the city and starve it into surrender. Inside the city civil war raged, they destroyed their own food supplies, and the thousands died at the hands of their own people (see note on *Matt. 24:21*). **Not a single stone.** This is how complete the destruction would be! The soldiers may have believed gold had been hidden between the stones, and they dismantled the entire city completely! **Because you did not recognize the time.** Christ had come to save them from their doom. Because they would not listen and repent, a double measure of God's wrath would come on them (*Matt. 23:35-36*).

45-48. **Jesus went into the temple.** An act of authority. He made the temple ritually pure. See notes on *Matt. 21:12-17*. **Because all the people.** Public opinion made it difficult for the Jewish leaders to kill Jesus.

The Question about Jesus' Authority

(Also Matt. 21.23-27; Mark 11.27-33)

20 One day, when Jesus was in the temple teaching the people and preaching the Good News, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law, together with the elders, came ²and said to him, "Tell us, what right do you have to do these things? Who gave you the right to do them?"

³Jesus answered them, "Now let me ask you a question. Tell me, 'did John's right to baptize come from God or from men?'"

⁵They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we say, 'From God,' he will say, 'Why, then, did you not believe John?' ⁶But if we say, 'From men,' this whole crowd here will stone us, because they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷So they answered, "We don't know where it came from."

⁸And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you, then, by what right I do these things."

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

20 One day as he was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him. "Tell us by what authority you are doing these things," they said. "Who gave you this authority?"

He replied, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me, John's baptism—was it from heaven, or from men?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet."

So they answered, "We don't know where it was from."

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

The Parable of the Tenants

He went on to tell the people this parable:

"A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out."

The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard

(Also Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12.1-12)

⁹Then Jesus told the people this parable, "A man planted a vineyard, rented it out to tenants, and then left home for a long time. ¹⁰When the time came for harvesting the grapes, he sent a slave to the tenants to receive from them his share of the harvest. But the tenants beat the slave and sent him back without a thing. ¹¹So he sent another slave; but the tenants beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him back

1-8. Tell us, what right do you have? A man must have authority to do what Jesus did. See notes on *Matt. 21:23-27*.

9-19. A man planted a vineyard. See notes on this parable in *Matt. 21:33-46*. The Jewish leaders rejected every prophet God sent them!

without a thing. ¹²Then he sent a third slave; the tenants hurt him, too, and threw him out. ¹³Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my own dear son; surely they will respect him!' ¹⁴But when the tenants saw him they said to one another, 'This is the owner's son. Let us kill him and his property will be ours!' ¹⁵So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to the tenants?" Jesus asked. ¹⁶"He will come and kill those men, and turn over the vineyard to other tenants."

When the people heard this they said, "Surely not!"

¹⁷Jesus looked at them and asked, "What, then, does this scripture mean?"

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

¹⁸Everyone who falls on that stone will be cut to pieces; and if the stone falls on someone, it will crush him to dust."

The Question about Paying Taxes

(Also *Matt. 22.15-22; Mark 12.13-17*)

¹⁹The teachers of the Law and the chief priests tried to arrest Jesus on the spot, because they knew that he had told this parable against them; but they were afraid of the people. ²⁰So they watched for the right time. They bribed some men to pretend they were sincere, and sent them to trap Jesus with questions, so they could hand him over to the authority and power of the Governor. ²¹These spies said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that what you say and teach is right. We know that you pay no attention to a man's status, but teach the truth about God's will for man.

"Then the owner of the 13 vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'

"But when the tenants 14 saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they threw 15 him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill 16 those tenants and give the vineyard to others."

When the people heard this, they said, "May this never be!"

Jesus looked directly at 17 them and asked, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written:

'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone?'

Everyone who falls on that 18 stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."

The teachers of the law 19 and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

Keeping a close watch on 20 him, they sent spies, who pretended to be honest. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. So the spies 21 questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.

20-26. Tell us, is it against our Law? For notes on this question about paying taxes, see *Matt. 22:15-22*.

²²Tell us, is it against our Law for us to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?"

²³But Jesus saw through their trick and said to them, ²⁴"Show me a silver coin. Whose face and name are these on it?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

²⁵So Jesus said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to him, and pay to God what belongs to God."

²⁶They could not catch him in a thing there before the people, so they kept quiet, amazed at his answer.

The Question about Rising from Death

(Also Matt. 22. 23-33; Mark 12.18-27)

²⁷Some Sadducees came to Jesus. (They are the ones who say that people will not rise from death.) They asked him, ²⁸"Teacher, 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.'²⁹Once there were seven brothers; the oldest got married, and died without having children. ³⁰Then the second one married the woman, ³¹and then the third. The same thing happened to all seven—they died without having children. ³²Last of all, the woman died. ³³Now, on the day when the dead rise to life, whose wife will she be? All seven of them had married her."

³⁴Jesus answered them, "The men and women of this age marry, ³⁵but the men and women who are worthy to rise from death and live in the age to come do not marry. ³⁶They are like angels and cannot die. They are the sons of God, because

Is it right for us to pay taxes 22 to Caesar or not?"

He saw through their duplicity and said to them, 23 "Show me a denarius. 24 Whose portrait and inscription are on it?"

"Caesar's," they replied. 25

He said to them, "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

They were unable to trap 26 him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

The Resurrection and Marriage

Some of the Sadducees, 27 who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question. "Teacher," they 28 said, "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 29 were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. The 30 second and then the third 31 married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. Finally, 32 the woman died too. Now 33 then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"

Jesus replied, "The people 34 of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those 35 who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no 36 longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are chil-

27-40. Some Sadducees came to Jesus. For notes on this question about Rising from Death, see Matt. 22:23-33.

they have risen from death. ³⁷And Moses clearly proves that the dead are raised to life. In the passage about the burning bush he speaks of the Lord as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' ³⁸This means that he is the God of the living, not of the dead, because all are alive to him."

³⁹Some of the teachers of the Law spoke up, "A good answer, Teacher!" ⁴⁰For they did not dare ask him any more questions.

The Question about the Messiah

(Also *Matt. 22.41-46; Mark 12.35-37*)

⁴¹Jesus said to them, "How can it be said that the Messiah will be the descendant of David? ⁴²Because David himself says in the book of Psalms,

'The Lord said to my Lord:

Sit here at my right side,

⁴³until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet.'

⁴⁴David, then, called him 'Lord.' How can the Messiah be David's descendant?"

Jesus Warns against the Teachers of the Law

(Also *Matt. 23.1-36; Mark 12.38-40*)

⁴⁵As all the people listened to him, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁶"Watch out for the teachers of the Law, who like to walk around in their long robes, and love to be greeted with respect in the market place; who choose the reserved seats in the synagogues and the best places at feasts; ⁴⁷who 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!"

of the resurrection. But ³⁷in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' He is not ³⁸the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."

Some of the teachers of ³⁹law responded, "Well said, teacher!" And no one dared ⁴⁰to ask him any more questions.

Whose Son Is the Christ?

Then Jesus said to them, ⁴¹"How is it that they say the Christ is the Son of David? David himself declares in ⁴²the Book of Psalms:

'The Lord said to my

Lord:

Sit at my right hand, until I make your ene- ⁴³mies your footstool.'

David calls him 'Lord.' How ⁴⁴then can he be his son?"

While all the people were ⁴⁵listening, Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware of the ⁴⁶teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour ⁴⁷widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely."

41-44. How can it be said? For notes on this question about the Messiah, see *Matt. 22:41-46*. The Jews did not expect the Messiah to be *divine* [God in human form]. But they did expect him to be David's descendant, which he was.

45-47. Watch out for the teachers of the Law. See notes on Jesus' warning in *Matt. 23:5-14*.

The Widow's Offering

(Also Mark 12.41-44)

21 Jesus looked around and saw rich men dropping their gifts in the temple treasury, ²and he also saw a very poor widow dropping in two little copper coins. ³He said, "I tell you that this poor widow put in more than all the others. ⁴'For the others offered their gifts from what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, gave all she had to live on.'"

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple

(Also Matt. 24.1-2; Mark 13.1-2)

⁵Some of them were talking about the temple, how beautiful it looked with its fine stones and the gifts offered to God. Jesus said, "'All this you see—the time will come when not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one will be thrown down.'"

Troubles and Persecutions

(Also Matt. 24.3-14; Mark 13.3-13)

⁷"Teacher," they asked, "when will this be? And what will happen to show that the time has come for it to take place?"

⁸Jesus said, "Watch out; don't be fooled. Because many men will come in my name saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time has come!' But don't follow them. ⁹'Don't be afraid when you hear of wars and revolutions; such things must happen first, but they do not mean that the end is near.'"

¹⁰He went on to say, "Countries will fight each other, kingdoms will attack one another. ¹¹There will be terrible earthquakes, famines, and plagues everywhere; there will be awful things

The Widow's Offering

21 As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Signs of the End of the Age

Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

"Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?"

He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away."

Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven."

1-4. Saw rich men dropping their gifts. For notes on the widow's copper coins, see *Mark 12:41-44*.

and great signs from the sky. ¹²Before all these things take place, however, you will be arrested and persecuted; you will be handed over to trial in synagogues and be put in prison; you will be brought before kings and rulers for my sake.

¹³This will be your chance to tell the Good News.

¹⁴Make up your minds ahead of time not to worry about how you will defend yourselves; ¹⁵because I will give you such words and wisdom that none of your enemies will be able to resist or deny what you say. ¹⁶You will be handed over by your parents, your brothers, your relatives, and your friends; they will put some of you to death.

¹⁷Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸But not a single hair from your heads will be lost.

¹⁹Stand firm, because this is how you will save yourselves."

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of Jerusalem

(Also *Matt. 24.15-21; Mark 13.14-19*)

²⁰When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you will know that soon she will be destroyed. ²¹Then those who are in Judea must run away to the hills; those who are in the city must leave, and those who are out in the country must not go into the city. ²²For these are 'The Days of Punishment,' to make come true all that

"But before all this, they ¹² will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them. But make up ¹³ your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you ¹⁴ because of me. But not a ¹⁵ hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will ¹⁶ save yourselves. ¹⁷

"When you see Jerusalem ²⁰ surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who ²¹ are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. ²²

5-33. **When will this be?** This parallels *Matthew 24*. See notes on each section at the reference in *Matt.* 18. **But not a single hair from your heads will be lost.** Every Christian escaped from Jerusalem before the Roman armies built the barricades. Not one of them died in the horror of the destruction. But also even if some were killed because of their faith in Christ, they would not lose any of God's promise! 20. **When you see Jerusalem surrounded.** This is the "Awful Horror" of *Matthew*. See note on *Matt. 24:15*. 24. **And the heathen will trample over Jerusalem.** This must mean the actual work of destruction. The Romans were thought of as "heathen" by the Jews. See notes on *Matt. 24:29-31*. 25. **There will be signs in the sun.** Josephus the Jewish historian tells that these things were actually seen and heard in the last few years before Jerusalem was destroyed. 27. **Then the Son of Man will appear.** *Matthew* says the *sign* of the Son of Man. Not the Second Coming, but a "spiritual coming" of Jesus in the *judgment* on the Jewish nation. This can be tied in with *1 Pet. 4:17-18*. 32. **Before the people now living have all died.** This shows the "time frame" for the fulfillment of what he says. It would be while that *generation* of people were still living. See note on *Matt. 24:34*.

the Scriptures say. ²³How terrible it will be in those days for women who are pregnant, and for mothers with little babies! Terrible distress will come upon this land, and God's wrath will be against this people. ²⁴Some will be killed by the sword, and others taken as prisoners to all countries; and the heathen will trample over Jerusalem until their time is up."

The Coming of the Son of Man

(Also Matt. 24.29-31; Mark 13.24-27)

²⁵There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth, whole countries will be in despair, afraid of the roar of the sea and the raging tides. ²⁶Men will faint from fear as they wait for what is coming over the whole earth; for the powers in space will be driven from their courses. ²⁷Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. ²⁸When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your salvation is near."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

(Also Matt. 24.32-35; Mark 13.28-31)

²⁹Then Jesus told them this parable, "Remember the fig tree and all the other trees. ³⁰When you see their leaves beginning to appear you know that summer is near. ³¹In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know the Kingdom of God is about to come.

³²"Remember this! All these things will take place before the people now living have all died. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away; my words will never pass away."

The Need to Watch

³⁴Watch yourselves! Don't let yourselves become occupied with too much feasting and strong drink, and the worries of this life, or that

How dreadful it will be in ²³ those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They ²⁴ will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

"There will be signs in the ²⁵ sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from ²⁶ terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they ²⁷ will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these ²⁸ things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

He told them this parable: ²⁹ "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout ³⁰ leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when ³¹ you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

"I tell you the truth, this ³² generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass ³³ away, but my words will never pass away.

"Be careful, or your ³⁴ hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a

Day may come on you suddenly. ³⁵For it will come like a trap upon all men over the whole earth. ³⁶Be on watch and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all these things that will happen, and to stand before the Son of Man."

³⁷Jesus spent those days teaching in the temple, and when evening came he would go out and spend the night on the Mount of Olives. ³⁸All the people would go to the temple early in the morning to listen to him.

The Plot against Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.1-5; Mark 14.1-2; John 11.45-53*)

22 The time was near for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover. ²The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were trying to find some way of killing Jesus; because they were afraid of the people.

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

(Also *Matt 26.14-16; Mark 14.10-11*)

³Then Satan went into Judas, called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve disciples. ⁴So Judas went off and spoke with the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard about how he could hand Jesus over to them. ⁵They were pleased and offered to pay him money. ⁶Judas agreed to it and started looking for a good chance to betray Jesus to them without the people knowing about it.

trap. For it will come upon ³⁵ all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

22 Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him money. He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

34-36. **Watch yourselves!** Only Luke gives this exact wording. See notes on *Matt. 24:38-51*.

37. **Spend the night on the Mount of Olives.** Johnson thinks this means "at Bethany," rather than out on the lonely mountain side. See note on *Matt. 21:17*.

38. **All the people would go to the temple.** All the Gospels picture the intense interest of the people in his teaching during this *last week*.

1-2. **The time was near for the Feast.** No leavened bread could be eaten during Passover week. The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted seven days after Passover, and was named because they did not use leaven (yeast) in making the special bread for that week. **Were trying to find some way of killing Jesus.** Public opinion was against them, so they search for a way to do it that will not *stir up* the people. See notes on *Matt. 26:1-5*.

3-6. **Then Satan went into Judas.** Judas *volunteered* to do Satan's *dirty work!* See notes on *Matt. 26:14-16*.

Jesus Prepares to Eat the Passover Meal

(Also *Matt. 26.17-25; Mark 14.12-21; John 13.21-30*)

⁷The day came during the Feast of Unleavened Bread when the lambs for the Passover meal had to be killed. ⁸Jesus sent Peter and John with these instructions, "Go and get our Passover meal ready for us to eat."

⁹"Where do you want us to get it ready?" they asked him.

¹⁰He said, "Listen! As you go into the city a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters, ¹¹and say to the owner of the house: 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the room where my disciples and I will eat the Passover meal?' ¹²He will show you a large furnished room upstairs, where you will get everything ready."

¹³They went off and found everything just as Jesus had told them, and prepared the Passover meal.

The Lord's Supper

(Also *Matt. 26.26-30; Mark 14.22-26; 1 Cor. 11.23-25*)

¹⁴When the hour came, Jesus took his place at the table with the apostles. ¹⁵He said to them, "I have wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer! ¹⁶For I tell you, I will never eat it until it is given its full meaning in the Kingdom of God."

The Last Supper

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

"Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked.

He replied, "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there."

They left and found 13 things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

When the hour came, 14 Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For 15 I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." 16

7-8. **The day came during the Feast.** This says the Feast of Unleavened Bread had begun *before* the Passover had been eaten. Alford (Greek Testament), et. al., believe Jesus and his disciples ate this Passover a day before the Jews ate theirs, and that Jesus died on the cross about the time the passover lambs were being killed. See notes on *John 18:28; 19:31*; and on the parallel verses in the other Gospels.

9-13. **Where do you want us to get it ready?** On this preparation, see notes on *Matt. 26:17-25*. **A large furnished room upstairs.** The guest room of the house. [Some have thought the "young man" of *Mark 14:51* was Mark, and that since Mark's mother lived in Jerusalem (*Acts 12:12,25*), this room was in her home.]

14-20. **When the hour came.** There are four descriptions of the beginning of the Lord's Supper [the Holy Meal]. See notes on *Matt. 26:26-30*.

¹⁷Then Jesus took the cup, gave thanks to God, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; ¹⁸for I tell you that I will not drink this wine from now on until the Kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹Then he took the bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body [which is given for you. Do this in memory of me." ²⁰In the same way he gave them the cup, after the supper, saying, "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood which is poured out for you.]

²¹"But, look! The one who betrays me is here at the table with me! ²²Because the Son of Man will die as God has decided it; but how terrible for that man who betrays him!"

²³Then they began to ask among themselves which one of them it could be who was going to do this.

The Argument about Greatness

²⁴An argument came up among the disciples as to which one of them should be thought of as the greatest. ²⁵Jesus said to them, "The kings of this world have power over their people, and the rulers are called 'Friends of the People.' ²⁶But this is not the way it is with you; rather, the greatest one among you must be like the youngest, and the leader must be like the servant.

²⁷Who is greater, the one who sits down to eat or the one who serves him? The one who sits down, of course. But I am among you as one who serves.

²⁸"You have stayed with me all through my

After taking the cup, he ¹⁷ gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

And he took some bread, ¹⁹ gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after the ²⁰ supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him." They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, ²⁵ "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them are given the title Benefactor. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, ²⁷ the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are ²⁸ those who have stood by me

21-23. **But, look!** Luke puts this incident after the Lord's Supper, while Matthew and Mark place it before the Supper. Johnson thinks that Luke has it out of sequence, and that Judas therefore was not present when the Supper was instituted. *John 13:21-35* seems to imply this. Compare notes on *Matt. 26:21-25*.

24-30. **An argument came up.** They must have argued more than once about who was the greatest. Jesus scolded their attitude by washing their feet (see *John 13:2-12*). **But this is not the way it is with you.** He is *greatest* who serves the world best. **The same agreement with you.** A spiritual Kingdom, not a political power. See note on *Matt. 19:28*.

trials; ²⁹and just as my Father has given me the right to rule, so I will make the same agreement with you, ³⁰You will eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and you will sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also *Matt. 26.31-35; Mark 14.27-31; John 13.36-38*)

³¹"Simon, Simon! Listen! Satan has received permission to test all of you, as a farmer separates the wheat from the chaff. ³²But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail. And when you turn back to me, you must strengthen your brothers."

³³Peter answered, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you and to die with you!"

³⁴"I tell you, Peter," Jesus answered, "the rooster will not crow today until you have said three times that you do not know me."

Purse, Bag, and Sword

³⁵Then Jesus said to them, "When I sent you out that time without purse, bag, or shoes, did you lack anything?"

"Not a thing," they answered.

³⁶"But now," Jesus said, "whoever has a purse or a bag must take it; and whoever does not have

in my trials. And I confer on ²⁹ you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"Simon, Simon, Satan ³¹ has asked to sift you all as wheat. But I have prayed for ³² you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brothers."

But he replied, "Lord, I ³³ am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

Jesus answered, "I tell ³⁴ you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

Then Jesus asked them, ³⁵ "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"

"Nothing," they answered.

He said to them, "But ³⁶ now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one.

31-34. **Sim, Simon! Listen!** For notes on this prediction and warning, see *Matt. 26:31-35*. Peter was so confident here! But when the time actually came, he did deny Jesus, and even used a vow to make it stronger. (*Matt. 26:74*).

35. **When I sent you out that time.** See notes on *Matt. 10:9-15*. Luke gives the "sending out" of seventy-two more (*Luke 10:1-12*).

36. **But now, Jesus said.** Before they could count on the good will of the Jewish people they were working among. Now they can expect severe opposition. **Whoever does not have a sword.** This is symbolic, meaning they will find enemies on every side. Compare *Matt. 5:38-42; 26:51-52*.

a sword must sell his coat and buy one. ³⁷For I tell you this: the scripture that says, 'He was included with criminals,' must come true about me. Because that which was written about me is coming true."

³⁸The disciples said, "Look! Here are two swords, Lord!"

"That is enough!" he answered.

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

(Also *Matt. 26.36-46; Mark 14.32-42*)

³⁹Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples went with him. ⁴⁰When he came to the place he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation."

⁴¹Then he went off from them, about the distance of a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed. ⁴²"Father," he said, "if you will, take this cup away from me. Not my will, however, but your will be done." [⁴³An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴In great anguish he prayed even more fervently; his sweat was like drops of blood, falling to the ground.]

⁴⁵Rising from his prayer, he went back to the disciples and found them asleep, worn out by their grief. ⁴⁶And he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up, and pray that you will not fall into temptation."

It is written: 'And he was ³⁷ numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."

The disciples said, "See, ³⁸ Lord, here are two swords."

"That is enough," he replied.

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

Jesus went out as usual to ³⁹ the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray so that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a ⁴¹ stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed,

"Father, if you are willing, ⁴² take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from ⁴³ heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And ⁴⁴ being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

When he rose from prayer ⁴⁵ and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" ⁴⁶ he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

37. **He was included with criminals.** This is quoted from *Isa. 53:12*. It was about to come true in Jesus.

38. **Look! Here are two swords.** They take what he said in *verse 36* literally. **That is enough!** He says this to show he does not mean them to literally arm themselves with swords, since two swords would not have been enough for twelve men.

39-46. **To the Mount of Olives.** For the suffering of Gethsemane, see notes on *Matt. 26:36-46. Heb. 5:7* also speaks of this. **His sweat was like drops of blood.** Only Luke tells this. It shows the agony of Christ's suffering!

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.47-56; Mark 14.43-50; John 18.3-11*)

⁴⁷Jesus was still speaking when a crowd arrived. Judas, one of the twelve disciples, was leading them, and he came up to Jesus to kiss him. ⁴⁸But Jesus said, "Is it with a kiss, Judas, that you betray the Son of Man?"

⁴⁹When the disciples who were with Jesus saw what was going to happen, they said, "Shall we strike with our swords, Lord?" ⁵⁰And one of them struck the High Priest's slave and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹But Jesus said, "Enough of this!" He touched the man's ear and healed him.

⁵²Then Jesus said to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and the elders who had come there to get him, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs, as though I were an outlaw? ⁵³I was with you in the temple every day, and you did not arrest me. But this is your hour to act, when the power of darkness rules."

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.57-58, 69-75; Mark 14.53-54, 66-72; John 18.12-18, 25-27*)

⁵⁴They arrested Jesus and took him away into the house of the High Priest; and Peter followed from a distance. ⁵⁵A fire had been lit in the center of the courtyard, and Peter joined those who were sitting around it. ⁵⁶When one of the servant girls saw him sitting there at the fire, she looked straight at him and said, "This man too was with him!"

⁵⁷But Peter denied it, "Woman, I don't even know him!"

Jesus Arrested

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, ⁴⁸"Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

When Jesus' followers saw ⁴⁹what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" And one of them struck the ⁵⁰servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

But Jesus answered, "No ⁵¹more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

Then Jesus said to the ⁵²chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? ⁵³Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns."

Peter Disowns Jesus

Then seizing him, they led ⁵⁴him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. But when they had kindled a ⁵⁵fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl ⁵⁶saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him."

But he denied it. "Girl, I ⁵⁷don't know him," he said.

47-53. **When a crowd arrived.** For notes on this arrest of Jesus, see *Matt. 26:47-56*. Be sure to read the section in the other Gospels.

54-62. **And Peter followed from a distance.** For notes on Peter's denial, see *Matt. 26:69-75*.

⁵⁸After a little while, a man noticed him and said, "You are one of them, too!"

But Peter answered, "Man, I am not!"

⁵⁹And about an hour later another man insisted strongly, "There isn't any doubt that this man was with him, because he also is a Galilean!"

⁶⁰But Peter answered, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about!"

At once, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned around and looked straight at Peter, and Peter remembered the Lord's words, how he had said, "Before the rooster crows today, you will say three times that you do not know me." ⁶²Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Mocked and Beaten

(Also *Matt. 26.67-68; Mark 14.65*)

⁶³The men who were guarding Jesus made fun of him and beat him. ⁶⁴They blindfolded him and asked him, "Who hit you? Guess!" ⁶⁵And they said many other insulting things to him.

Jesus before the Council

(Also *Matt. 26.59-66; Mark 14.55-64;*

John 18.19-24)

⁶⁶When day came, the elders of the Jews, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law met together, and Jesus was brought to their Council.

⁶⁷"Tell us," they said, "are you the Messiah?"

He answered, "If I tell you, you will not believe me, ⁶⁸and if I ask you a question you will not

A little later someone else ⁵⁸saw him and said, "You also are one of them."

"Man, I am not!" Peter replied.

About an hour later a ⁵⁹nother asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean."

Peter replied, "Man, I ⁶⁰don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned ⁶¹and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he ⁶²went outside and wept bitterly.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

The men who were guard- ⁶³ing Jesus began mocking and beating him. They ⁶⁴blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophesy! Who hit you?" And they said ⁶⁵many other insulting things to him.

Jesus Before Pilate and Herod

At daybreak the council ⁶⁶of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and teachers of the law, met together, and Jesus was led before them. "If you are the ⁶⁷Christ," they said, "tell us."

Jesus answered, "If I tell you, you will not believe me, and if I asked you, you ⁶⁸

63-65. **Made fun of him and beat him.** For notes on this, see *Matt. 26:67-68; Mark 14:65*.

66. **When day came.** Jesus had already had a hearing before Annas, and had been sentenced to death by Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. But another meeting of their Council [Sanhedrin] had to be held to make it legal, since the night trial had no legal standing. Luke gives this formal hearing in detail.

67-68. **Are you the Messiah?** They had expected the Messiah to set up an earthly kingdom like David's. He already answered this at the night trial (*Matt. 26:63*) He protests the violence and injustice of his trial.

answer. ⁶⁹But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right side of the Almighty God."

⁷⁰They all said, "Are you; then, the Son of God?"

He answered them, "You say that I am."

⁷¹And they said, "We don't need any witnesses! We ourselves have heard his very own words!"

Jesus before Pilate

(Also Matt. 27.1-2, 11-14; Mark 15.1-5; John 18.28-38)

23 The whole group rose up and took Jesus before Pilate, ²where they began to accuse him, "We caught this man misleading our people, telling them not to pay taxes to the Emperor and claiming that he himself is Christ, a king."

³Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"You say it," answered Jesus.

⁴Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no reason to condemn this man."

⁵But they insisted even more strongly, "He is starting a riot among the people all through Judea with his teaching. He began in Galilee, and now has come here."

would not answer. But from ⁶⁹ now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God."

They all asked, "Are you ⁷⁰ then the Son of God?"

He replied, "You are right in saying I am."

Then they said, "Why do ⁷¹ we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips."

23 Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. And they ² began to accuse him, saying, "We have found this man subverting our nation, He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king."

So Pilate asked Jesus, ³ "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

Then Pilate announced to ⁴ the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no basis for a charge against this man."

But they insisted, "He ⁵ stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here."

69-70. **But from now on the Son of Man.** Notice how the Council understands "the Son of Man." **Are you, then, the Son of God?** In their minds, *Son of Man* and *Son of God* meant the same thing. Jesus had used the language of *Dan. 7:13*, which they understood to apply to the Messiah. Jesus was God [the Eternal Logos of *John 1:1-3*] in human form.

71. **We don't need any witnesses!** To their minds, what Jesus has just said is **BLASPHEMY!** [But it wasn't! He really was God in human form!]

1-25. **And took Jesus before Pilate.** See notes on *Matt. 27:11-35; John 18:28 to 19:16*. Matthew says they put Jesus in chains and took him. **Telling them not to pay taxes to the Emperor.** This was false (see *Matt. 22:21*). It is ironic that they accuse Jesus of doing what Barabbas had actually done (see *Mark 15:7* and note there). **Claiming that he himself is Christ, a king.** This was true, but not in the sense of their charge. He did not claim to be an earthly king. **I find no reason to condemn this man.** This is Pilate's verdict, after questioning Jesus (see *John 18:33-38*). **He is starting a riot.** They try again to make Jesus seem to be one of the "Zealots" who start riots in their attempt to drive out the Roman

Jesus before Herod

⁶When Pilate heard this he asked, "Is this man a Galilean?" ⁷When he learned that Jesus was from the region ruled by Herod, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸Herod was very pleased when he saw Jesus, because he had heard about him and had been wanting to see him for a long time. He was hoping to see Jesus perform some miracle. ⁹So Herod asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus did not answer a word. ¹⁰The chief priests and the teachers of the Law stepped forward and made strong accusations against Jesus. ¹¹Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus and treated him with contempt. They put a fine robe on him and sent him back to Pilate. ¹²On that very day Herod and Pilate became friends; they had been enemies before this.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also *Matt. 27.15-26; Mark 15.6-15; John 18.39-19.16*)

¹³Pilate called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, ¹⁴and said to them, "You brought this man to me and said that he was misleading the people. Now, I have examined him here in your presence, and I have not found him guilty of any of the crimes you accuse him of. ¹⁵Nor did Herod find him guilty, because he sent him back to us. There is nothing this man has done to deserve death. ¹⁶I will have him whipped, then, and let him go."

[¹⁷At each Passover Feast Pilate had to set free one prisoner for them.] ¹⁸The whole crowd cried

On hearing this, Pilate ⁶asked if the man was a Galilean. When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. ⁷

When Herod saw Jesus, ⁸he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle. ⁹He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, ¹⁰vehemently accusing him. Then Herod and his soldiers ¹¹ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. That day Herod ¹²and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies.

Pilate called together the ¹³chief priests, the rulers and the people, and said to ¹⁴them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has ¹⁵Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. Therefore, I will ¹⁶punish him and then release him."

Now he was obliged to release ¹⁷one man to them at the feast.

With one voice they cried ¹⁸out, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!"

Occupation Troops. He sent him to Herod. Herod Antipas. This man murdered John the Baptist. Herod was very pleased. He had a great curiosity about Jesus. Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus. Pilate was not cruel like Herod. Herod and Pilate became friends. Because Pilate had sent Jesus to Herod. Nor did Herod find him guilty. Pilate tries again to set Jesus free. I will have him whipped, then, and let him go. This would be a compromise which would allow the Council to "save face." Pilate will have an innocent man whipped and then let him go free. Set Barabbas free for us! Barabbas is a guilty man! See notes on *Matt. 27:15-26*. See note on *verse 2*.

out, "Kill him! Set Barabbas free for us!" ¹⁹(Barabbas had been put in prison for a riot that had taken place in the city, and for murder.)

²⁰Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, so he called out to the crowd again. ²¹But they shouted back, "To the cross with him! To the cross!"

²²Pilate said to them the third time, "But what crime has he committed? I cannot find anything he has done to deserve death! I will have him whipped and set him free."

²³But they kept on shouting at the top of their voices that Jesus should be nailed to the cross; and finally their shouting won. ²⁴So Pilate passed the sentence on Jesus that they were asking for. ²⁵He set free the man they wanted, the one who had been put in prison for riot and murder, and turned Jesus over to them to do as they wished.

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also Matt. 27.32-44; Mark 15.21-32; John 19.17-27)

²⁶They took Jesus away. As they went, they met a man named Simon, from Cyrene, who was coming into the city from the country. They seized him, put the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷A large crowd of people followed him; among them were some women who were weeping and wailing for him. ²⁸Jesus turned to them and said, "Women of Jerusalem! Don't cry for me, but for yourselves and your children. ²⁹For the days are coming when people will say, 'How lucky are the women who never had children, who never bore babies, who never nursed them!' ³⁰That will be the time when people will say to the mountains,

(Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.)

Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

For the third time he spoke to them: "Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore, I will have him punished and then release him."

But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed. So Pilate decided to grant their demand. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, the one they asked for, and surrendered Jesus to their will.

The Crucifixion

As they led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!'"

Then, "They will say to the mountains: Fall on us; and to the hills: Cover us."

26-49. They took Jesus away. The most complete notes on the Crucifixion are found in *Matt. 27:32-56*. A large crowd of people followed him. This shows that Jesus had a lot of sympathizers in Jerusalem. **Women of Jerusalem.** These are local residents, not from outlying areas. **Don't cry for me.** Even in his own agony, Jesus thinks of these people and the horrors which they are bringing on themselves (see

'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Hide us!' ³¹For if such things as these are done when the wood is green, what will it be like when it is dry?"

³²They took two others also, both of them criminals, to be put to death with Jesus. ³³When they came to the place called "The Skull," they nailed Jesus to the cross there, and the two criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."

They divided his clothes among themselves by throwing dice. ³⁵The people stood there watching, while the Jewish leaders made fun of him, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Messiah whom God has chosen!"

³⁶The soldiers also made fun of him; they came up to him and offered him cheap wine, ³⁷and said, "Save yourself, if you are the king of the Jews!"

³⁸These words were written above him: "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

⁴⁰The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? We are all under the

For if men do these things 31 when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two other men, both 32 criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place 33 called The Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus 34 said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

The people stood watch- 35 ing, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One."

The soldiers also came up 36 and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and 37 said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."

There was a written notice 38 above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

One of the criminals who 39 hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!"

But the other criminal re- 40 buked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sen-

note on *Matt. 24:21*). For if such things as these are done. This is a proverb. The meaning is: "If the leaders and the Romans crucify the nation's Messiah, what will they do to the nation itself?" **Forgive them, Father.** Only Luke tells these words. Jesus must have said this just after they nailed him to the cross. The kind of LOVE which he demonstrates here, is the kind of love Christians are to develop. See *John 13:34-35*; *1 John 4:16-21*. **They don't know what they are doing.** They don't know they are rejecting and killing their own Messiah. They don't know they are sealing the doom of their own city and nation. **They divided his clothes among themselves.** See *John 19:23-24*.

39. One of the criminals hanging there. These criminals were certainly associates of Barabbas (see *Mark 15:7* and note there). Matthew and Mark show these criminals insulting Jesus. [The Zealots tried to drive out the Roman Occupation Forces. They had expected Jesus to announce himself king and raise an army. Their insults express their frustration.]

40. The other one, however. This one has a "change of heart," and rebukes his fellow criminal. Alford (Greek Testament) mentions that some feel this penitent criminal was a disciple of Christ. If he was, this would fit in with the fanaticism of the Zealots, especially what he says in *verse 42*. [One of the Twelve was a "zealot," *Simon the Patriot*.] **41. Ours, however, is only right.** They knew the risks they were taking by being political activists, and they knew also that Jesus was not one of them, but was

same sentence. ⁴¹Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." ⁴²And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!"

⁴³Jesus said to him, "I tell you this: today you will be in Paradise with me."

The Death of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 27.45-56; Mark 15.33-41; John 19.28-30*)

⁴⁴It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock; ⁴⁵and the curtain hanging in the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father! In your hands I place my spirit!" He said this and died.

⁴⁷The army officer saw what had happened, and he praised God, saying, "Certainly he was a good man."

⁴⁸When the people who had gathered there to watch the spectacle saw what happened, they all went back home, beating their breasts. ⁴⁹All those who knew Jesus personally, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood off at a distance to see these things.

tence? We are punished ⁴¹ justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

Then he said, "Jesus, re- ⁴² member me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "I ⁴³ tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus' Death

It was now about the sixth ⁴⁴ hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun ⁴⁵ stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out ⁴⁶ with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

The centurion, seeing ⁴⁷ what had happened, praised God and said, "Surely this was a righteous man." ⁴⁸ When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. But all those who ⁴⁹ knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

innocent of the charges. ⁴². Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King! This is an expression of faith! This man obviously knows something of Jesus' teaching, and expects him to come as King [of a spiritual Kingdom]. ⁴³. Today you will be in Paradise with me. Paradise is "heaven before the Judgment" (see note at end of *Luke 16:31*). This man was Jew, a descendant of Abraham. If he was a disciple of Christ (see note on *verse 40*), he had been baptized (*John 4:1-2*). Until Jesus died, the Old Law was in effect (see *Col. 2:14* and note). ⁴⁶. Jesus cried out in a loud voice. He first said *Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?* Then: *It is finished!* Then: *Father! In your hands I place my spirit!* [We ordinarily say "soul" when we mean "spirit."] ⁴⁷. The army officer. See note on *Matt. 27:54*. ⁴⁸. Beating their breasts. People would pound on their chest as a sign of great sadness! ⁴⁹. Including the women. See notes on *Matt. 27:55-56*.

The Burial of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 27.57-61; Mark 15.42-47; John 19.38-42*)

⁵⁰⁻⁵¹There was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a good and honorable man, and waited for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Although a member of the Council, he had not agreed with their decision and action. ⁵²He went into the presence of Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³Then he took the body down, wrapped it in a linen sheet, and placed it in a grave which had been dug out of the rock—a grave which had never been used. ⁵⁴It was Friday and the Sabbath was about to begin.

⁵⁵The women who had followed Jesus from Galilee went with Joseph and saw the grave and how Jesus' body was placed in it. ⁵⁶Then they went back home and prepared the spices and ointments for his body.

On the Sabbath they rested, as the Law commanded.

The Resurrection

(Also *Matt. 28.1-10; Mark 16.1-8; John 20.1-10*)

24 Very early on Sunday morning the women went to the grave carrying the spices they had prepared. ²They found the stone rolled away from the entrance to the grave, ³so they went in; but they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus' Burial

Now there was a man ⁵⁰ named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not ⁵¹ consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to ⁵² Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, ⁵³ wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was ⁵⁴ Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

The women who had come ⁵⁵ with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went ⁵⁶ home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

The Resurrection

24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They ² found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when ³ they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord

50-56. **There was a man named Joseph.** On the Burial of Jesus, see notes on *Matt. 27:57-61*. **Although a member of the Council.** Both Joseph and Nicodemus were members of the Sanhedrin (the ruling Jewish Council and Supreme Court) but had opposed the decision and action against Jesus. [Johnson thinks that they were not present when the Sanhedrin took their action against Jesus.] **It was Friday.** The day before the Passover (*John 19:14*). [Remember the Sabbath would begin at 6 P.M. Friday.] Jesus died about 3 P.M. (*Matt. 27:46*), the time the lambs would be killed in preparation for the Passover. This shows the Jews had not yet eaten the Passover Meal.

1-12. **Very early on Sunday morning.** Sunday has been called the "Lord's Day" since then, because Jesus raised from death on Sunday. The women "*saw the grave and how Jesus' body was placed in it*" on Friday, had "*prepared the spices and ointments for his body*" following the Jewish custom, and "*on*

"They stood there puzzled about this, when suddenly two men in bright shining clothes stood by them. ⁵Full of fear, the women bowed down to the ground. as the men said to them, "Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? ⁶He is not here; he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was in Galilee: ⁷"The Son of Man must be handed over to sinful men, be nailed to the cross, and rise to life on the third day.' "

⁸Then the women remembered his words, ⁹returned from the grave, and told all these things to the eleven disciples and all the rest. ¹⁰The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James; they and the other women with them told these things to the apostles. ¹¹But the appostles thought that what the women said was nonsense, and did not believe them. ¹²But Peter got up and ran to the grave; he bent down and saw the grave cloths and nothing else. Then he went back home wondering at what had happened.

The Walk to Emmaus

(Also Mark 16.12-13)

¹³On that same day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking to each other about all the things that had happened. ¹⁵As they talked and discussed, Jesus himself

Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' " Then they remembered his words.

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, However, got up and ran to the tomb. Stooping down, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

On the Road to Emmaus

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked

the Sabbath they rested. " Notice the women came *expecting* to embalm the DEAD BODY. When they told the apostles, they thought it was *nonsense, and did not believe them*. For notes on Resurrection, and an explanation of how the Gospels agree on this, see *Matt. 28:1-10*.

13. **Two of them were going.** Only Luke tells this in detail. Cleopas was one of the two (*verse 18*). Emmaus. Six or eight miles west of Jerusalem.

15. **As they talked and discussed.** About Jesus and his death. **Jesus himself drew near.** Mark says Jesus appeared in a different manner (see *Mark 16:12-13*). They did not know who he was. When our thoughts are on Jesus, we are most likely to have him with us (see notes on *Matt. 18:19-20*).

drew near and walked along with them; ¹⁶they saw him, but somehow did not recognize him. ¹⁷Jesus said to them, "What are you talking about, back and forth, as you walk along?"

They stood still, with sad faces. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only man living in Jerusalem who does not know what has been happening there these last few days?"

¹⁹"What things?" he asked.

"The things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth," they answered. "This man was a prophet, and was considered by God and by all the people to be mighty in words and deeds. ²⁰Our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and he was nailed to the cross. ²¹And we had hoped that he would be the one who was going to redeem Israel! Besides all that, this is now the third day since it happened. ²²Some of the women of our group surprised us; they went at dawn to the grave, ²³but could not find his body. They came back saying they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. ²⁴Some of our group went to the grave and found it exactly as the women had said; but they did not see him."

²⁵Then Jesus said to them, "How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said! ²⁶Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and enter his

along with them; but they ¹⁶were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What ¹⁷are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of ¹⁸them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one living in Jerusalem who doesn't know what things have happened there in these days?"

"What things?" he asked. ¹⁹

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests ²⁰and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that ²¹he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our ²²women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his ²³body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our com- ²⁴panions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

He said to them, "How ²⁵foolish you are, and how slow of heart that you do not believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the ²⁶Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his

18. **One of them, named Cleopas.** Probably the Clopas of *John 19:25*. Compare note on *Matt. 10:2-4, 19-24*. **What things?** Christ asks this to get them to talk about it. They give a condensed version of the recent events. **Who was going to redeem Israel.** They had expected him to declare himself king and raise an army to drive out the Romans. Their hopes of this happening died with him. **This is now the third day.** This clearly identifies the day of Jesus' resurrection. See note on *Matt. 12:40*. **But could not find his body.** This shows they still could not think in terms of a *resurrection!* They still had trouble believing even when they had seen him (*Mark 16:14*).

25. **How foolish you are!** They knew very well what the prophets had said, and they had been with Jesus over three years, and heard him explain all these things.

26. **Was it not necessary?** *Isaiah 53; Daniel 9:26; etc.*, speak about this. **And enter his glory.** The ACT of the Cross is meant. See *Luke 9:31*.

glory?" ²⁷And Jesus explained to them what was said about him in all the Scriptures, beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets.

²⁸They came near the village to which they were going, and Jesus acted as if he were going farther; ²⁹but they held him back, saying, "Stay with us; the day is almost over and it is getting dark." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰He sat at table with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. ³¹Their eyes were opened and they recognized him; but he disappeared from their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"

³³They got up at once and went back to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven disciples gathered together with the others ³⁴and saying, "The Lord is risen indeed! He has appeared to Simon!"

³⁵The two then explained to them what had happened on the road, and how they had recognized the Lord when he broke the bread.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

(Also Matt 28. 16-20; Mark 16. 14-18;

John 20. 19-23; Acts 1. 6-8)

³⁶While they were telling them this, suddenly the Lord himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

³⁷Full of fear and terror, they thought that they

glory?" And beginning with ²⁷ Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached ²⁸ the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. But they ²⁹ urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table ³⁰ with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened ³¹ and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each ³² other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us?"

They got up and returned ³³ at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is ³⁴ true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had ³⁵ happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

While they were still talk- ³⁶ ing about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

They were startled and ³⁷ frightened, thinking they

29-32. **Stay with us.** That is, stay overnight and talk some more. **And said the blessing.** Not as a guest would do, but as a host. **Their eyes were opened.** This implies their eyesight was "distorted" so that he was *unrecognizable* to them. (See verse 15.)

33-35. **They got up at once!** This kind of news would not keep! **Found the eleven disciples.** This may be the same meeting as the one in *John 10:19-23*. **He has appeared to Simon!** See *1 Cor. 15:5*.

36-43. **Suddenly the Lord himself stood among them.** They were behind locked doors (*John 20:19*). This implies that Jesus could "pass through" a door or wall *in his resurrection body*. **Feel me, and you**

were seeing a ghost. ³⁸But he said to them, "Why are you troubled? Why are these doubts coming up in your minds? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet and see that it is I, myself. Feel me, and you will see, because a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, as you can see I have."

⁴⁰He said this and showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹They still could not believe, they were so full of joy and wonder; so he asked them, "Do you have anything to eat here?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of cooked fish, ⁴³which he took and ate before them.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are the very things I told you while I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the Psalms had to come true."

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, "This is what is written: that the Messiah must suffer, and rise from death on the third day, ⁴⁷and that in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And I myself will send upon you what my Father has promised. But you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you."

saw a ghost. He said to ³⁸ them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my ³⁹ hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

When he had said this he ⁴⁰ showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did ⁴¹ not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They ⁴² gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate ⁴³ it in their presence.

He said to them, "This is ⁴⁴ what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

Then he opened their ⁴⁵ minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told ⁴⁶ them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead ⁴⁷ on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning ⁴⁸ at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am ⁴⁹ going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

will see. His body showed the marks of his suffering. Thomas spoke of this as being proof (*John 20:25*). They were so full of joy and wonder. This all seems too good to be true! Which he took and ate before them. As proof that he was real, not just a ghost or materialized spirit.

44-49. Then he said to them. Luke passes over an interval of weeks, between verses 43 and 44. Christ was seen a number of times after his resurrection (see notes on *Matt. 28:9*). Then he opened their minds. To help them understand. He repeats the "OBLIGATION" he placed on them in Galilee (see notes on *Matt. 28:16-20*). Jesus requires that in his name (1) repentance; (2) forgiveness of sins; (3) must be preached; (4) to all nations; (5) beginning in Jerusalem. They did this, beginning from the Day of Pentecost. What my Father has promised. The baptism with the Holy Spirit (*Acts 1:5*). But you must wait. Their great mission of making disciples to Christ could not begin until they received the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Father.

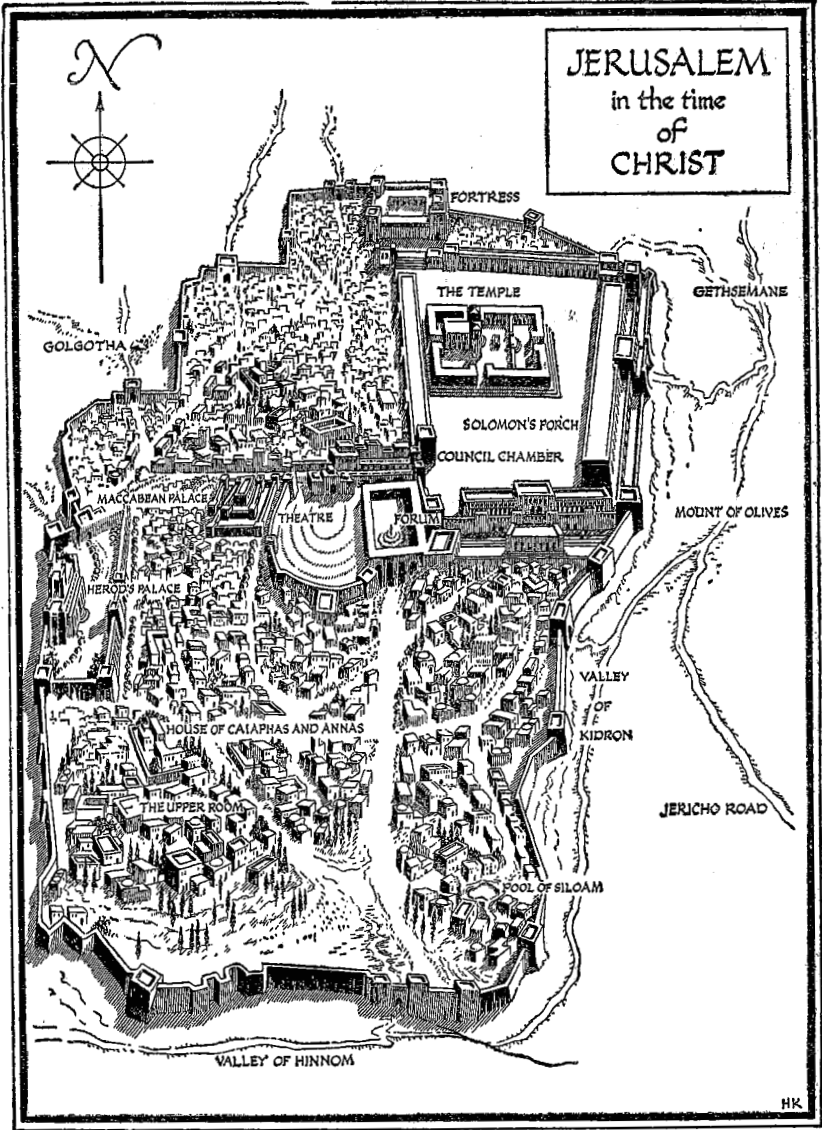
Jesus Is Taken up to Heaven*(Also Mark 16.19-20; Acts 1.9-11)*

⁵⁰Then he led them out of the city as far as Bethany, where he raised his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹As he was blessing them, he departed from them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵²They worshiped him and went back into Jerusalem, filled with great joy, ⁵³and spent all their time in the temple giving thanks to God.

The Ascension

When he had led them out ⁵⁰ to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was ⁵¹ blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped ⁵² him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And ⁵³ they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

50-53. **Then he led them out.** Compare *Mark 16:19-20; Acts 1:1-9*. **And blessed them.** The last act of our Lord on the earth, was a *blessing*. **Filled with great joy.** Their Lord and Savior was *ALIVE* and had been taken up to sit on his throne! [Compare *Acts 15:16-18* and notes there.] **And spent all their time in the temple.** Worshiping and teaching. See *Acts 2:46*. *Verse 53* is a connecting link between Luke and Acts.



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INTRODUCTION TO JOHN

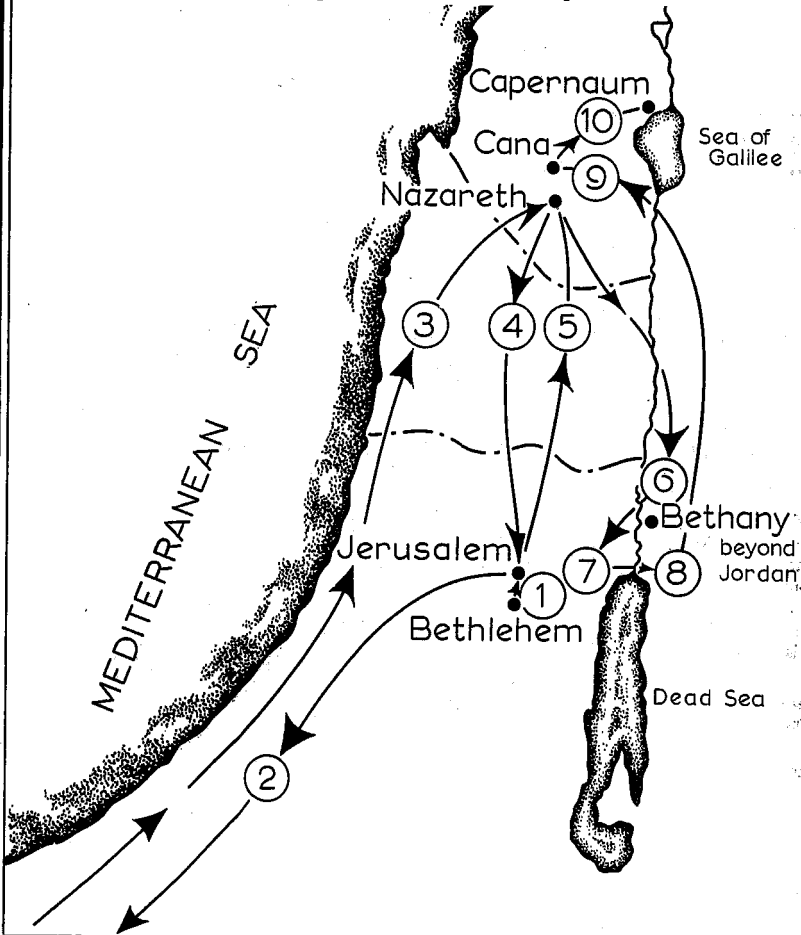
John was the son of Zebedee and Salome; brother of James; in early life a fisherman on Lake Galilee. He was an apostle of Christ, one of the Twelve, and also one of the *inner circle* [along with Peter and James]. He was an "ordinary man of no education" (*Acts 4:13*), which means he did not have a "theological education" in the rabbinical schools. Yet we can be sure he had the kind of education all respectable Jewish families gave their children. Every synagogue was a school in which children were taught to read and write, and were given fundamentals not greatly different from the basic skills today. The children of the ordinary Jewish people were better educated than those of any other country in the world.

John was a disciple of John the Baptist when Jesus found him. We see him next at Lake Galilee when Jesus gives the official call to be an apostle. Along with Peter and James, he was a constant companion with Jesus. These three, only, see the raising of Jairus' daughter; see the glory of the Transfiguration; and witness the anguish of the garden. John and Peter follow Jesus after the arrest, and John goes right into the house of Caiaphas; to the trial before Pilate; and to the cross. When news of the Resurrection came, John and Peter were the first to reach the grave. Jesus placed his human mother in John's care. John alone of the Twelve lived beyond the *destruction of Jerusalem* [all the others were dead before it happened]. From that event, he lived in Ephesus, and died about 100 A.D. It was probably in the last ten years of his life that he wrote the Gospel of John; 1,2,3 John; and Revelation.

John writes to show Jesus as the WORD [Eternal Logos] who comes to earth in human form. He shows the special personality and mission of the Savior. He opens up and explains the doctrine of THE HELPER - the Holy Spirit. John explains the purpose of his Gospel in these words: "*These have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this faith you may have life in his name*" (*John 20:31*).

MAP NO. 1—PERIOD OF PREPARATION

1. Bethlehem/Jerusalem—Birth & Presentation in Temple, *Luke 2*
2. Egypt—Flight from Herod, *Luke 2*
3. Nazareth—Returns to spend boyhood, *Matthew 2*
4. Jerusalem—Taken to Passover at age 12, *Luke 2*
5. Nazareth—Returns home until about 30, *Luke 2*
6. Bethany beyond Jordan—baptized by John the Baptist, *Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3*
7. Wilderness of Judea—Temptations, *Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4*
8. Bethany beyond Jordan—obtains first disciples, *John 1*
9. Cana of Galilee—Wedding feast, first miracle, *John 2*
10. Capernaum—moves headquarters with family and disciples, *John 2:12*



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

The Word of Life

1 Before the world was created, the Word already existed; he was with God, and he was the same as God. **2** From the very beginning, the Word was with God. **3** Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him. **4** The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

6 God sent his messenger, a man named John, **7** who came to tell people about the light. He came to tell them, so that all should hear the message and believe. **8** He himself was not the

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light: He came only as a

1-3. **Before the world was created.** The brief time from the Virgin Birth in Bethlehem to the Ascension from the Mount of Olives must be understood in its relationship to the WHOLE of the Son of God. Read what Paul says in *1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 1:15-20*. John shows us, that: (1) the One who appeared in human form as Jesus the Christ EXISTED before the world was created; (2) that he was with God FACE TO FACE before the world was created; (3) that he was DIVINE - the same as God; (4) that he was the Word [LOGOS]; (5) that through him ALL creation was done. Some secrets of the *divine nature* of the Word, and the exact relationship between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, must wait for Eternity to unfold. But this much is clear: God *creates* through the Word, and God *speaks* to man through the Word. When that Word became a human being and lived among us, we recognize him as Jesus the Christ. [On the wording of *John 1:1* Seth Wilson writes: "THE TEV TRANSLATION DOES NOT MISREPRESENT WHAT JOHN ACTUALLY WROTE! The Bible teaches that Jesus, the Son of God, is so much the same as God that it is right to call him God; but it is not wrong to say he is the same as God, because he is the same deity with a distinct identity." Compare *Heb. 1:1-3; Phil. 2:6-11; John 8:58*.

4. **The Word was the source of life.** Compare *John 5:26; 11:25*. The *power* which creates life and supports all Creation is in the Word (*Heb. 1:3*). **And this life brought light to men.** That *life* reveals God to us in human terms that we can understand. Compare *Matt. 4:14-17*.

5. **And the darkness has never put it out.** His light drives away the darkness of ignorance and error. **The darkness cannot extinguish the light!**

6. **God sent his messenger.** The "advance man" is now introduced. This is John the Baptist. He was appointed to this mission, even before his birth.

7. **Who came to tell people about the light.** John came to lead a "spiritual renewal." But his chief purpose was to point people to Jesus. See *verse 30*.

8. **He himself was not the light.** John was not "The Man," but only the "advance man." [Some were teaching that John the Baptist was the Messiah.] John the apostle, makes it very plain!

light; he came to tell about the light. ⁹This was the real light, the light that comes into the world and shines on all men.

¹⁰The Word, then, was in the world. God made the world through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. ¹²Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. ¹³They did not become God's children by natural means, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.

¹⁴The Word became a human being and lived among us. We saw his glory, full of grace and truth. This was the glory which he received as the Father's only Son.

¹⁵John told about him. He cried out, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'He comes after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.'"

¹⁶Out of the fulness of his grace he has blessed

witness to the light. The true ⁹ light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and ¹⁰ though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came ¹¹ to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received ¹² him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of ¹³ natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh ¹⁴ and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John testifies concerning ¹⁵ him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'" From the fullness of his ¹⁶ grace we have all received one blessing after another.

9. **This was the real light.** See *John 12:46*. God's final message to the world is through the Son (*Heb. 1:1-2*).

10-11. **God made the world through him.** See *Col. 1:16*. He was: in the world; God made the world through him; the world did not know him. **He came to his own country.** When he became a human being, he took Jewish citizenship (see *Gal. 4:4*). The "world" is the whole human race. His "country" is the Jewish Nation.

12. **Some, however, did receive him.** Many of the Jewish people did accept him as Messiah (see *Acts 21:20*). **So he gave them the right.** Compare *John 6:44-45*. **To become God's children.** Everyone who believes is given the "right to become," but he must *reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ* (see notes on *Acts 2:38*).

13. **They did not become God's children by natural means.** Before the Cross, the Jews were God's children, by natural means. After the Cross, the New Birth (*John 3:5*, *Titus 3:5*) *initiates* people into *spiritual Israel*.

14. **The Word became a human being.** The Word [Eternal Logos] took a body of flesh. One who denies this, is an Enemy of Christ [anti-Christ] (see *1 John 4:2-3*). **We saw his glory.** See *Luke 9:32*; *John 2:11*. **As the Father's only Son.** See note on *John 3:16*.

15. **John told about him.** John *identified* Jesus as the Messiah! See *verses 33-34*.

16. **Out of the fulness of his grace.** See *Col. 1:19*. His "grace and truth" bless all who *belong* to him. **Giving us one blessing after another.** He is a "stream of water, flowing ever deeper!"

us all, giving us one blessing after another. ¹⁷God gave the Law through Moses; but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. The only One, who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

John the Baptist's Message

(Also *Matt. 3.1-12; Mark 1.1-8; Luke 3.1-18*)

¹⁹The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to John, to ask him, "Who are you?"

²⁰John did not refuse to answer, but spoke out openly and clearly. This is what he said, "I am not the Messiah."

²¹"Who are you, then?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No, I am not," John answered.

"Are you the Prophet?" they asked.

"No," he replied.

²²"Tell us who you are," they said. "We have to take an answer back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

For the law was given ¹⁷ through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man has ever ¹⁸ seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John the Baptist Denies Being the Christ

Now this was John's testi- ¹⁹ mony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, ²⁰ but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."

They asked him, "Then ²¹ who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

Finally they said, "Who ²² are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

17. God gave the Law through Moses. The Law is contrasted with "grace and truth." Compare *Heb. 12:18-24; Rom. 8:1-4*. See also *verse 14*.

18. No one has ever seen God. See *1 Tim. 6:16*. Flesh and blood cannot look upon the Living God. The only One. See note on *John 3:16*. He has made him known. The Old Testament painted only a partial picture of God. In Jesus the Son we see the complete picture of God! See *John 17:26*.

19. The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem. Our writer now skips the childhood of Jesus, and most of John the Baptist's work. He jumps to the time that Jesus, about thirty years old, begins his public career. A Council of seventy-two, called the Sanhedrin, ruled Israel. The term "Jew" often is speaking of this ruling Council. John the Baptist is asked *officially*: "Who are you?"

20. John did not refuse to answer. He made no attempt to conceal his mission. I am not the Messiah. [The terms "Christ" and "Messiah" mean the same thing in the Bible. Perhaps because "Christ" has come to be used as a personal name for Jesus, the TEV often prefers "Messiah" as a translation of CHRISTOS.] John made it plain that he was not the Messiah they looked for.

21. Are you Elijah? The Jews expected Elijah to come before the Messiah. See notes on *Matt. 16:14; 17:10*. Are you the Prophet? Moses had predicted the coming of the Prophet (*Deut. 18:15*).

22. Tell us who you are. "If you are not the Messiah, not Elijah, not the Prophet, who are you?"

²³John answered, "This is what I am:
"The voice of one who shouts in the
desert:

Make a straight path for the Lord to
travel!" "

(This is what the prophet Isaiah had said.)

²⁴The messengers had been sent by the Phari-
sees. ²⁵They asked John, "If you are not the
Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why do you
baptize?"

²⁶John answered, "I baptize with water; among
you stands the one you do not know. ²⁷He is
coming after me, but I am not good enough to
untie his sandals."

²⁸All this happened in Bethany, on the east
side of the Jordan River, where John was bap-
tizing.

The Lamb of God

²⁹The next day John saw Jesus coming to him,
and said, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes
away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is the one I
was talking about when I said, 'A man is coming
after me, but he is greater than I am, because he

John replied in the words ²³
of Isaiah the prophet, "I am
the voice of one calling in
the desert, 'Make straight
the way for the Lord.' "

Now some Pharisees who ²⁴
had been sent questioned ²⁵
him, "Why then do you bap-
tize if you are not the Christ,
nor Elijah, nor the Pro-
phet?"

"I baptize with water," ²⁶
John replied, "but among
you stands one you do not
know. He is the one who ²⁷
comes after me, the thongs
of whose sandals I am not
worthy to untie."

This all happened at ²⁸
Bethany on the other side of
the Jordan, where John was
baptizing.

Jesus the Lamb of God

The next day John saw ²⁹
Jesus coming toward him
and said, "Look, the Lamb
of God, who takes away the
sin of the world! This is the ³⁰
one I meant when I said, 'A
man who comes after me has
surpassed me because he

23. **The voice of one who shouts in the desert.** See note on *Matt. 3:3*. He was to get things ready for Jesus to carry out his mission.

24. **The messengers had been sent by the Pharisees.** See notes on *Matt. 3:7*.

25. **Why do you baptize?** The fact that they are mystified shows they were unfamiliar with the rite of baptism. If John were the Messiah, or Elijah, or the Prophet, they could understand why he would introduce a new religious rite. But if he is none of these, why does he do this? [Josephus, the Jewish historian, makes no mention about "Gentiles converted to Judaism" being baptized (immersed) to make them Jews.]

26-27. **I baptize with water.** John's baptism was water baptism. See notes on *Matt. 3:11*.

28. **All this happened in Bethany.** On the east bank of the Jordan River.

29. **The next day John saw Jesus.** John [*the apostle*] omits all of Jesus' personal life up to this point. Jesus is now thirty years old, and walked from Galilee to the Jordan River area where John the Baptist is doing his work (about 60 or 70 miles distance). This conversation was after Jesus' baptism (*verse 33*), and probably after the Temptation. **Here is the Lamb of God.** A lamb was the common "SIN OFFERING" (see *Lev. 4:32*). What John says points to Jesus as the "SIN OFFERING" for the whole world. Compare the language in *Isa. 53:7*. **The sin of the world.** Both Jews and Gentiles!

30. **This is the one I was talking about.** See *verses 26-27*. **Because he existed before I was born.** As a human being, John was six months older than Jesus. But Jesus was the Word (*verses 1-3*).

existed before I was born.' ³¹I did not know who he would be, but I came baptizing with water in order to make him known to Israel."

³²This is the testimony that John gave: "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. ³³I still did not know him, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, said to me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴I have seen it," said John, "and I tell you that he is the Son of God."

The First Disciples of Jesus

³⁵The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, ³⁶when he saw Jesus walking by. "Here is the Lamb of God!" he said.

³⁷The two disciples heard him say this and went with Jesus. ³⁸Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, "What are you looking for?"

They answered, "Where do you live, Rabbi?" (This word, translated, means "Teacher.")

³⁹"Come and see," he answered. So they went with him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that day with him. (It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.)

was before me.' I myself did ³¹ not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

Then John gave this testi- ³² mony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³ I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and ³⁴ testify that this is the Son of God."

Jesus' First Disciples

The next day John was ³⁵ there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus ³⁶ passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

When the two disciples ³⁷ heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning ³⁸ around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means, Teacher), "where are you staying?"

"Come," he replied, "and ³⁹ you will see."

So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.

31. I did not know who he would be. This means John did not know Jesus would be the Messiah, until the Holy Spirit clearly identified him. [Jesus and John were relatives (Luke 1:36).]

32-34. I saw the Spirit come down like a dove. John declares what he saw with his own eyes! See notes on Matt. 3:16. God had told John what the sign would be to identify the Messiah. John says that he did see it!

35. The next day John was there again. In verses 19-28 we read of the visit of the priests and Levites. Verses 29-34 are "the next day." This then, is the third day after the messengers from the Sanhedrin had come, and probably the second day after Jesus had come back from the Temptation. With two of his disciples. One of these was Andrew (verse 40) and the other was certainly John, the writer of this Gospel.

36. Here is the Lamb of God! The day before, John had cited Jesus as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" Now he personally directs his own disciples to Jesus.

37. And went with Jesus. John had pointed out the source of life. Christianity is following Jesus!

38. Where do you live, Rabbi? Their question implies their interest in Jesus. It may be they only wished to know where to find him in the future.

39. Come and see. This is an invitation, or perhaps a call. (Compare verse 43.)

⁴⁰One of the two who heard John, and went with Jesus, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹At once Andrew found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah." (This word means "Christ.") ⁴²Then he took Simon to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. Your name will be Cephas." (This is the same as Peter, and means "Rock.")

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Come with me!" ⁴⁴(Philip was from Bethsaida, the town where Andrew and Peter lived.) ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one of whom Moses wrote in the book of the Law, and of whom the prophets also wrote. He is Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

⁴⁶"Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," answered Philip.

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

Then he brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

Jesus Calls Phillip and Nathanael

The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," said Philip.

40-41. One of the two who heard John. Andrew was one of the first two disciples of Christ. At once Andrew found his brother Simon. Simon Peter. This is the true Christian spirit. Messiah. See note on verse 20.

42. Your name will be Cephas. A Hebrew word meaning "rock." Peter is the Greek form.

43. He found Phillip and said to him. [The Phillip in Acts 6:5 is a different person.] This Philip is only a name in the other Gospels. John tells us more about him (John 6:5; 12:21; 14:8).

45. Phillip found Nathanael. He is identified as being from Cana in Galilee (John 21:2). He is named in only these two places, but he is certainly the Bartholomew who was one of the Twelve. We have found the one. Moses predicted the Prophet (Deut. 18:15). They evidently mean, the Messiah. [The Jews thought the Prophet might be a second Moses, or a second Elijah, or perhaps the Messiah. But they tended to view the Messiah as a king, and the Prophet as a separate person. Christians see Jesus as both King and Prophet.]

46. Can anything good come from Nazareth? Nazareth was a "hick town." The fact that the enemies of Jesus called him the Nazarene shows there was some disgrace connected with the name. Come and see. "Find out for yourself!" The strongest proof that Jesus is the Messiah is Jesus himself!

⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, he said about him, "Here is a real Israelite; there is nothing false in him!"

⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?"

Jesus answered, "I saw you when you were under the fig tree, before Philip called you."

⁴⁹"Teacher," answered Nathanael, "you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

⁵⁰Jesus said, "Do you believe just because I told you I saw you when you were under the fig tree? You will see much greater things than this!" ⁵¹And he said to them, "I tell you the truth: you will see heaven open and God's angels going up and coming down on the Son of Man."

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false."

"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall all see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Jesus Changes Water to Wine

2 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been in-

The Wedding at Cana

2 Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana, in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been

47. There is nothing false in him. Quite a contrast to the formalism and hypocrisy of that time. This also shows that the statement of Nathanael in *verse 46* was not based on jealousy (Cana and Nazareth were rival towns, about twelve miles apart).

48. How do you know me? Nathanael had never met Jesus before this. When you were under the fig tree. Johnson believes that Nathanael had some unusual experience under the fig tree, of which we are told nothing, and that he saw in what Jesus said, supernatural knowledge that both startled him and caused him to believe.

49. You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel! This is the first recorded *uninspired* declaration of Jesus' divinity, but he could not have understood what he was saying at that time. If he had, a "human being" could have instructed Peter (see notes on *Matt. 16:17*).

50-51. You will see heaven open. This language is based on "*Jacob's ladder*," (*Gen. 28:12*). Here Jesus makes himself that ladder, and communication between earth and heaven takes place through him. *Son of Man*. See *John 9:35*.

1. Two days later. [Two days later = the third day.] This is two days later, measured from the calling of Philip (*John 1:43*). The "days" mentioned in the first two chapters of John make a week, and may form a contrast to the last week of Christ's public ministry (*John 12:1*). **A wedding in the town of Cana.** About twelve miles north of Nazareth in Galilee. **Jesus' mother was there.** John seems to never call the human mother of Jesus by name. Since Joseph is never mentioned after Jesus began his public ministry, he is thought to have died before this time. The way Mary "takes over," suggests she was related to the family.

2. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. Jesus now had disciples with him: John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael.

invited to the wedding. ³When all the wine had been drunk, Jesus' mother said to him, "They are out of wine."

"You must not tell me what to do, woman," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

⁴Jesus' mother then told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁵The Jews have religious rules about washing, and for this purpose six stone water jars were there, each one large enough to hold between twenty and thirty gallons. ⁶Jesus said to the servants, "Fill these jars with water." They filled them to the brim, ⁷and then he told them, "Now draw some water out and take it to the man in charge of the feast." They took it to him, ⁸and he tasted the water, which had turned into wine. He did not know where this wine had come from (but the servants who had drawn out the water knew);

invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 3

"Why do you involve me?" Jesus replied, "My time has not yet come." 4

His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 5

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 6

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 7

Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." 8

They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom 9

3. **They are out of wine.** This would be a great disgrace in the East, at such a celebration. The fact that she says this shows both that she must have been related to the family [or at least a very close friend]; and that she expected Jesus to do something about it. [Wine = οἶνος.]

4. **You must not tell me what to do, woman.** This sounds harsh and rude in our language, but "woman" is a term of gentle respect (*John 19:26*), even though Jesus is mildly scolding his human mother here. There is also a hint in this that his *mission* would require him to follow a different route than she might wish. **My time has not yet come.** It seems that what Mary has asked, meant she wanted him to declare himself the Messiah right then and there! He rebukes her request. Only one *sign* or declaration will be given, and that is the miracle of the prophet Jonah (*Matt. 12:39-40*).

5. **Do whatever he tells you.** She seems to understand that he will do something about the shortage of wine.

6. **Six stone water jars were there.** On the "religious rules," see note on *Matt. 15:2; Mark 7:4*.

8. **Now draw some water out.** Note Jesus made between 120 and 180 gallons of wine [οἶνος]. *Agustine* says: "He that hath made wine that day in those six waterpots does the same every year in the vines. For as what the servants put in the waterpots was changed into wine by the operation of the Lord, just so what the clouds pour forth is changed into wine by the operation of the same law." [This is not our *commercial wine* which has added alcohol.]

9. **And he tasted the water, which had turned into wine.** The man in charge of the feast would be similar to our "toastmaster."

so he called the bridegroom ¹⁰and said to him, "Everyone else serves the best wine first, and after the guests have drunk a lot he serves the ordinary wine. But you have kept the best wine until now.!"

¹¹Jesus performed this first of his mighty works in Cana of Galilee; there he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

¹²After this, Jesus and his mother, brothers, and disciples went to Capernaum, and stayed there a few days.

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also *Matt. 21.12-13; Mark 11.15-17; Luke 19.45-46*)

¹³It was almost time for the Jewish Feast of Passover, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found men selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons, and also the moneychangers sitting at

aside and said, "Everyone ¹⁰brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.!"

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Jesus Clears the Temple

After this he went down ¹²to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. Here they stayed for a few days.

When it was almost time ¹³for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple court he found ¹⁴men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money.

10. **Everyone else serves the best wine first.** Notice that even though they have already drunk up all the wine in the house, he immediately tastes the superiority of the wine Jesus made. [Scholars have argued long and loud over the wine Jesus made here. It may have been a kind of "grape-cider." The Bible strongly condemns drunkenness (*Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; Eph. 5:18*). Yet the same Bible speaks of wine as one of God's blessings on the human family (*Psalms 104:15; Isa. 55:1; 1 Tim. 5:23*). It is obvious there were different kinds of wine in the first century.]

¹¹ **Jesus performed this first of his mighty works in Cana of Galilee.** We think of Jesus as a "man of sorrows" [which is true, up to a point], but we see him perform his first miracle in the happy and festive atmosphere of a *wedding-feast!* **And his disciples believed in him.** That is, their faith was made stronger by seeing this.

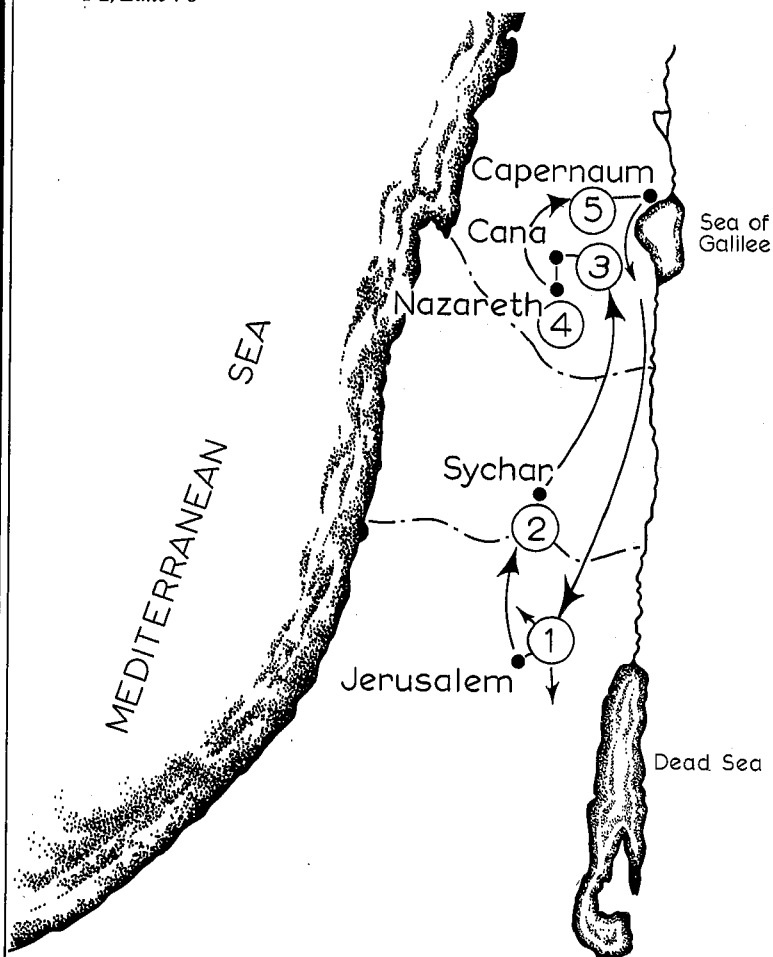
12. **Jesus and his mother, brothers.** The natural meaning of this is that these were his brothers in the flesh, sons of Mary. His sisters in the flesh are mentioned in *Matt. 13:55-56; Mark 6:3*. No hint is given in the Bible of the *dogma* of "Mary's perpetual virginity." See note on *Luke 11:27-28*. **Went to Capernaum.** Cana was in the hills; Capernaum down on the shore of Lake Galilee.

13. **It was almost time.** This will be Jesus' first Passover since he began his public ministry. Only John tells us about this first purifying of the temple. See notes on *Matt. 21:12-13*.

14. **In the temple.** This would be in the Court of the Gentiles. **He found men selling.** It was not proper for them to be selling animals for sacrifice inside the temple. [The selling of animals for sacrifice was all right in itself, and was a needed service for the great crowds of people who came to worship in the temple. But the priests had made a monopoly of it, and brought all the noise, confusion, and smell right into the temple.] Compare *Mark 11:15-19*. **The moneychangers.** The priests would not take the Greek and Roman coins that were used by everyone. They made the people exchange their money for official Jewish coins, at unreasonable prices. Just this alone was making the priests something like *three million dollars* a year [in 1974 dollars].

MAP NO. 2—FIRST YEAR OF MINISTRY

1. Jerusalem—Passover, cleanses Temple, talks with Nicodemus, works many miracles, *John 2 & 3*
2. Sychar—about 9 mos. later, talks with woman at well, *John 4*
3. Cana of Galilee—Heals nobleman's son sick at Capernaum, *John 4*
4. Nazareth—Preaches in synagogue, first rejection there, *Luke 4*
5. Capernaum—2nd call of fishermen, preaching tour, heals man let down through roof, call of Matthew, controversy about eating and fasting, *Matthew 4-8-9; Mark 1-2; Luke 4-5*



their tables. ¹⁵He made a whip from cords and drove all the animals out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle; he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and scattered their coins; ¹⁶and he ordered the men who sold the pigeons, "Take them out of here! Do not make my Father's house a market place!" ¹⁷His disciples remembered that the scripture says, "My devotion to your house, God, burns in me like a fire."

¹⁸The Jewish authorities came back at him with a question, "What miracle can you perform to show us that you have the right to do this?"

¹⁹Jesus answered, "Tear down this house of God and in three days I will build it again."

²⁰"You are going to build it again in three days?" they asked him. "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple!"

²¹But the temple Jesus spoke of was his body.

²²So when he was raised from death, his disciples remembered that he said this; and they believed the scripture and what Jesus had said.

Jesus Knows All Men

²³While Jesus was in Jerusalem during the Passover Feast, many believed in him as they

So he made a whip out of 15 cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. To 16 those who sold doves, he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

His disciples remembered 17 that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

Then the Jews demanded 18 of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"

Jesus answered them, 19 "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

The Jews replied, "It has 20 taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he 21 had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the 22 dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Now while he was in Jeru- 23 salem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing

15. **He made a whip from cords.** Notice he used it on the animals. The whip was mostly *symbolic*. This is the first time he demonstrated his *authority*.

16. **Do not make my Father's house a market place!** God no longer lives in temples made by men (*Acts 17:24*). It is a sin to use religion as a money making scheme (*1 Tim. 6:5*). [But "the worker deserves his wages" (*1 Tim. 5:17-18*).]

17. **My devotion to your house, God.** Quoted from *Psalms 69:9*.

18. **What miracle can you perform?** To do what Jesus had just done required some authority. They are asking him to prove this authority by performing some miracle that would impress them.

19-22. **Tear down this house of God.** He speaks of the miracle of Jonah (see note on *verse 4*). The "house of God" is his own human body. Even his disciples didn't understand this, until after he raised from death. **It has taken forty-six years.** Solomon had built the first temple, which had been destroyed. After Captivity, a new temple had been built. Herod the Great had torn it down and started construction of this present temple forty-six years before this, and it was not yet completed. When Jesus was on trial before the Council, what he had said was brought up as evidence against him.

23. **Many believed in him.** These "mighty works" are mentioned again in *John 3:4*, but nothing else is known of them.

say the mighty works he did. ²⁴But Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all men well. ²⁵There was no need for anyone to tell him about men, because he knew what was in their hearts.

Jesus and Nicodemus

3 There was a man named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews, who belonged to the party of the Pharisees. ²One night he went to Jesus and said to him, "We know, Rabbi, that you are a teacher sent by God. No one could do the mighty works you are doing unless God were with him."

³Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again."

⁴"How can a grown man be born again?" Nicodemus asked. "He certainly cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!"

and trusted in his name. But ²⁴Jesus would not trust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's ²⁵testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus

3 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." ²

In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." ³

"But," said Nicodemus, ⁴"how can a man be born when he is old? Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

24. But Jesus did not trust himself to them. He knew only too well what their real character was, and what some of them would do to him.

1. There was a man named Nicodemus. Only John tells us about this man. He was a Pharisee; a teacher of the Law [rabbi]; a member of the Council [Sanhedrin]. He and Joseph of Arimathea, both members of the Council, believed the claims of Jesus (*verse 2*). He protested against condemning Jesus without a hearing (*John 7:51*); and he helped Joseph bury the body of Jesus (*John 19:38-39*).

2. One night he went to Jesus. He did this at night, either because of the hostility toward Jesus [of the Council], or to have a more personal interview with Christ. **That you are a teacher sent by God.** The Council knew that Jesus had not been to their theological schools; and the miracles he was performing identified him clearly as a *prophet*. He wanted information, and Jesus gave it to him in the conversation which follows.

3. Unless he is born again. Jesus answers the thoughts of Nicodemus. "Again" is the proper translation, as can be seen from *verse 4*. *Luther* says on this: "My doctrine is not of doing, and of leaving undone, but of being and becoming; so that it is not a new work to be done, but the being new created - not the living otherwise, but the being new-born." Nicodemus would think that all who were Abraham's descendants would be citizens of the Kingdom. What Jesus says to him is in contrast to his Jewish heritage. The teaching that a man can bury his old life of sin, to begin a new life of hope, is predicted by the Old Testament (*Isa. 1:18; Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26*), and clearly taught in the New Testament (*Rom. 6:8; 8:3; 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15-16*).

4. How can a grown man be born again? Nicodemus states the literal meaning of Jesus' words, to ask for an explanation. If Jesus meant this literally, he sees himself forever barred from the Kingdom.

"I tell you the truth," replied Jesus, "that no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. 'A man is born physically of human parents, but he is born spiritually of the Spirit. 'Do not be surprised because I tell you, 'You must all be born again.' 'The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is the same way with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

"How can this be?" asked Nicodemus.

¹⁰Jesus answered, "You are a great teacher of Israel, and you don't know this? ¹¹I tell you the truth; we speak of what we know, and tell what we have seen, yet none of you is willing to accept

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You may hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." 5
6
7

"How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. 9

"You are a teacher of Israel," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our 10
11

5. **Unless he is born of water and the Spirit.** Whatever Jesus means here, all will agree; that: (1) no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born again; (2) only being born of water and the Spirit makes it possible. All will agree that the birth of the Spirit points to a spiritual *change*. The majority of scholars see in *water* the rite of Christian baptism. See *Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22*. Alford (Greek Testament) says: "All attempts to get rid of this have sprung from doctrinal prejudices." We view *Christian baptism* [in contrast to John's baptism] as a *reaching out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make ourselves part of it*. Compare notes on *Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21*.

6. **But he is born spiritually of the Spirit.** The new birth has nothing to do with natural birth. It is one who has already been born of natural birth, who is to be born again of water and the Spirit. It is the spirit, not the physical, which is radically transformed in the new birth. [But a physical act can have spiritual results. Look at the Cross!]

7. **Do not be surprised.** Being Abraham's descendant by natural birth, means nothing. **You must all be born again.** No exceptions. [God's act in Christ is the only basis for salvation. All must reach out through faith to seize that act and make themselves part of it.] Being born of water and the Spirit are not two *discrete* acts, but being born of water and being born of the Spirit is the same act (*Titus 3:5*).

8. **The wind blows wherever it wishes.** *Pendleton* says: "I take the passage to mean that the process by which a man is regenerated [born again] by the Spirit of God is no more mysterious than other operations in the natural world, of which operations the blowing of the wind is taken as example." *Lipscomb* says: "These verses have been ever of great difficulty because men try to get out of them what is not in them. Flesh in the mind of Nicodemus is the difficulty Jesus is trying to remove . . . The effort was to show Nicodemus that it was the spiritual part of man, not the fleshly part that is to be born again." [Compare *1 Thess. 5:23; Gal. 4:6; 1 Pet. 1:22-23*.]

9. **How can this be?** His problem is that he had thought he was already in the Kingdom.

10. **And you don't know this?** Nicodemus was one who taught others. The Doctors of the Law were very proud of how much they knew. He could not fail to know the prophecy of a *new covenant* (*Jer. 31:31-33; Heb. 8:7-13*).

11. **We speak of what we know.** Jesus came from God, and he knew *first-hand* the things he spoke about. The prophets told of the coming Kingdom, and even though no one expected what God was doing (*1 Cor. 2:9*), they should have been able to see how the prophecies were coming true in Christ.

our message. ¹²You do not believe me when I tell you about the things of this world; how will you ever believe me, then, when I tell you about the things of heaven? ¹³And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven."

¹⁴As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to be its Judge, but to be its Savior.

testimony. I have spoken to 12
you of earthly things and you
do not believe; how then will
you believe if I speak of
heavenly things? No one has
ever gone into heaven except 13
the one who came from
heaven—the Son of Man.
Just as Moses lifted up the 14
snake in the desert, so the
Son of Man must be lifted
up, that everyone who 15
believes in him may have
eternal life.

"For God so loved the 16
world that he gave his one
and only Son, that whoever
believes in him shall not
perish but have everlasting
life. For God did not send 17
his Son into the world to
condemn the world, but to
save the world through him.

12. **How will you ever believe me, then?** What he has told Nicodemus and the others, has to do with the Kingdom of God here on earth and their relationship to it. If these things are too hard to understand, how can they believe the things about the eternal world?

13. **Except the Son of Man.** Over eighty times in the Gospels, Jesus calls himself "Son of Man," emphasizing his humanity (compare *Heb. 2:14-15*). The things he was doing declared him to be the Son of God. [The Jews understood the two titles to mean the same thing. See *Luke 22:69-70*] No one else but Jesus himself is COMPETENT to teach these things. [Some ancient authorities add: *who is in heaven.*]

14-15. **In the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up.** *Numbers 21:4-9* tells about Moses and the bronze snake. The bitten Israelites had to *believe* that God would heal those who looked; *turn from sin* and come to the pole; *look up* to be healed. God himself made the salvation available to them, but they had to *act out their faith* to be healed. God still requires us to act out our faith (see note on verse 5).

16. **For God loved the world so much.** Love caused God to act through Jesus to set men free! This verse says: (1) God is love. (2) Instead of hating the world, he loved it. (3) He gave his only Son because of this love. [Note: not to appease *wrath*, but because of *love*. The other religions of the world appease the wrath of an angry god. Christianity is unique in showing the God who acts in history to make it possible to change men.] (4) He came to keep men from dying eternally. **His only Son.** Seth Wilson writes on this: "MONOGENES has been mistakenly treated in English translations for hundreds of years as if it were MONOGNETOS, from GENNAO, which WOULD MEAN 'only one begotten.'" Of the two words, John chose to use the one which means UNIQUE rather than ONLY-BEGOTTEN." TEV makes clear that Jesus is God's unique Son. It correctly translates the Greek word MONOGENES. Compare note on *Heb. 11:17*.

17. **But to be its Savior.** The world was already condemned because of sin, and doomed. Jesus came to make it possible for us to escape from this, and to return to God. See *Rev. 1:5-6*. [When Jesus Comes Again, he will be the Judge at that time. See *Acts 17:31; Matt. 25:31-46*.]

¹⁸Whoever believes in the Son is not judged; whoever does not believe has already been judged, because he has not believed in God's only Son. ¹⁹This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but men love the darkness rather than the light, because they do evil things. ²⁰Anyone who does evil things hates the light and will not come to the light, because he does not want his evil deeds to be shown up. ²¹But whoever does what is true comes to the light, in order that the light may show that he did his works in obedience to God.

Jesus and John

²²After this, Jesus and his disciples went to the province of Judea. He spent some time with them there, and baptized. ²³John also was baptizing in Aenon, not far from Salim, because there was plenty of water there. People were going to him

Whoever believes in him is 18
not condemned, but who-
ever does not believe stands
condemned already because
he has not believed in the
name of God's one and only
Son. This is the verdict: 19
Light has come into the
world, but men loved dark-
ness instead of light because
their deeds were evil. Every-
one who does evil hates the
light, and will not come into
the light for fear that his
deeds will be exposed. But 21
whoever lives by the truth
comes into the light, so that
it may be seen plainly that
what he has done has been
done through God."

John the Baptist's Testi- mony About Jesus

After this, Jesus and his 22
disciples went out into the
Judean countryside, where
he spent some time with
them, and baptized. Now 23
John also was baptizing at
Aenon near Salim, because
there was plenty of water,
and people were constantly

18. **Whoever believes in the Son.** Belief includes reaching out to seize the sacrifice of Christ. See note on *James 2:19*. "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" (*Mark 16:16*). **Whoever does not believe.** He is already lost, and refuses to be saved by Christ. The unbeliever condemns himself. "Whoever does not believe will be condemned" (*Mark 16:16*).

19-20. **This is how the judgment works.** God's judgment is not despotic or senseless. Men *believe* on the basis of their hidden motives and goals. Usually it is not *evidence*, but honesty and love for truth which is required to believe. This world is set up in such a way that all who love *evil* are repelled by Christ and the Cross.

21. **But whoever does what is true.** Those who *LIVE truth LOVE the light* are pleased to come to Jesus. God's call makes no sense, if men and women cannot respond to it (see notes on *Rev. 22:17*).

22. **Went to the province of Judea.** He left Jerusalem and went out into the countryside. **And baptized.** This is the first statement that Jesus baptized disciples. McGarvey says this must have been a continuation of John's baptism, and not into the "three names of God," since the Holy Spirit had not yet been given (*John 7:39*). With the coming of the Spirit on Pentecost, the rite of baptism took on a new meaning (see notes on *Acts 19:1-6*). Note also that Jesus baptized by *proxy* through his disciples [in contrast to John the Baptist]. See *John 4:1-2*.

23. **John also was baptizing in Aenon.** Close to the Jordan, northeast of Samaria, where there were lots of pools which could be used to immerse people. **Because there was plenty of water there.** Baptism of the crowds of people required an open area and plenty of water.

and he was baptizing them. ²⁴(John had not yet been put in prison.)

²⁵Some of John's disciples began arguing with a Jew about the matter of religious washing.

²⁶So they went to John and told him, "Teacher, you remember the man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan, the one you spoke about? Well, he is baptizing now, and everyone is going to him!"

²⁷John answered, "No one can have anything unless God gives it to him. ²⁸You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.' ²⁹The bridegroom is the one to whom the bride belongs; the bridegroom's friend stands by and listens, and he is glad when he hears the bridegroom's voice. This is how my own happiness is made complete.

³⁰He must become more important, while I become less important."

He Who Comes from Heaven

³¹He who comes from above is greater than all; he who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly matters. He who

coming to be baptized. (This ²⁴ was before John was put in prison.) An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. They ²⁶ came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one about whom you testified—well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

To this John replied, "A ²⁷ man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You ²⁸ yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' The bride belongs to the ²⁹ bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must ³⁰ become greater; I must become less important.

"The one who comes from ³¹ above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes

24. (John had not yet been put in prison.) John's Gospel shows that the ministry of Jesus was put into effect and was very successful, before the work of John the Baptist terminated. McGarvey thinks this is further proof that Jesus continued the baptism of John up to the Cross [where it terminated]. See *verse 22*.

25-26. **About the matter of religious washing.** Probably a Pharisee who linked John's baptism with ritual religious washing (see note on *Matt. 15:2*) in his mind. It is clear that Jesus' name came up in the discussion. **And everyone is going to him.** These friends of John felt harshly toward Jesus, because they thought John had made Jesus famous by all that he had said (*John 1:19-34*).

27-29. **John answered.** John is talking about himself. A *man* can take only what he is given. The Son of God takes all he chooses. John was doing all he was supposed to do as "advance man" for the Messiah. **The bridegroom is the one.** John is the "best man," but he does not get the bride. The bride is the church; the bridegroom is Christ. John, the friend, finds his happiness in the union of the Bride and the Bridegroom!

30. **He must become more important.** Jesus was doing a work that no human being could do! John the Baptist was a Jewish prophet, and would not share in the Kingdom of God *on earth* (see *Matt. 11:11* and note there). We are sad to see John "fade out of the picture," yet he did not lose anything God had promised him!

31. **He who comes from above.** The Son of God outranks John and all mankind!

comes from heaven is above all. ³²He tells what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his message. ³³Whoever accepts his message proves by this that God is true. ³⁴The one whom God has sent speaks God's words, because God gives him the fulness of his Spirit. ³⁵The Father loves his Son and has put everything in his power. ³⁶Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will never have life, but God's wrath will remain on him forever.

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

4 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was winning and baptizing more disciples than John. ²(Actually, Jesus himself did not baptize anyone; only his disciples did.) ³When Jesus heard what was being said, he left Judea and went back to Galilee; ⁴on his way there he had to go through Samaria.

⁵He came to a town in Samaria named Sychar, which was not far from the field that Jacob had

from heaven is above all. He ³² testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. The ³³ man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. For the one whom God ³⁴ has sent speaks the words of God; to him God gives the Spirit without limit. The ³⁵ Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever puts his ³⁶ faith in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see that life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Jesus Talks with a Samaritan Woman

4 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, although in fact ² it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. When the Lord learned of ³ this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

Now he had to go through ⁴ Samaria. So he came to a ⁵ town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to

32. But no one accepts his message. It was no great disappointment to John that so few of his disciples understood what he had said about Jesus. Only a very few believed Jesus himself. [Yet don't overlook *John 4:1; Luke 13:23; Rev. 7:9.*]

36. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Both eternal life and eternal death pivot around belief in Christ. See note on *John 1:12*. **Will remain on him.** The human race is already condemned and God's wrath is already on them. Only those who believe in the Son and obey the truth, can escape that wrath.

1-2. More disciples than John. The jealous friends of John (*John 3:26*) may have told the Pharisees about this. (Actually, Jesus himself did not baptize anyone.) Had Jesus done so, those personally baptized by him might have mistakenly claimed some foolish honor (*which is Paul's thought, 1 Cor. 1:14-15*). The disciples did the actual work of baptizing, but Jesus DID IT BY PROXY through them. He still does!

3. And went back to Galilee. It was not time yet for open confrontation, and the Pharisees were getting jealous. John the Baptist had been arrested.

4. He had to go through Samaria. The hostility between Jews and Samaritans made the Jews usually take a roundabout route across the Jordan, through Perea, to avoid Samaria. But that took about seven days travel time, while the direct route took only three days.

5. A town in Samaria named Sychar. Samaria was the area of Palestine where the tribe of Ephraim and half the tribe of Manasseh [the other half was across the Jordan] had lived. When the Ten Tribes were taken to Babylon, the king of Assyria sent foreigners in to occupy the land, and they intermarried

given to his son Joseph. 'Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water." ⁸(His disciples had gone into town to buy food.)

⁹The woman answered, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan—how can you ask me for a drink?" (Jews will not use the same dishes that Samaritans use.)

¹⁰Jesus answered, "If you only knew what God gives, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him and he would give you living water."

¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you don't have a bucket and the well is deep. Where would you

his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 6

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 7 8

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) 9

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 10

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living 11

with those Jews who were left there. When the Two Tribes came back from Babylon, they would not associate with the Samaritans, rejecting them as "half-breeds." The Samaritans used only the first five books of the Bible, and had their own forms of worship and their own temple on Mount Gerizim. Sychar is the "Schechem" of the Old Testament. It is forty miles north of Jerusalem, between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal (*Joshua 8:30-35*). Sychar means "town of the grave," the grave of Joseph being only about one hundred yards away. **Not far from the field.** See *Gen. 33:18-20; 48:22; Joshua 24:32*.

6. **Jacob's well was there.** It was some nine feet across, 105 feet deep, and had 15 feet of water in it, when Maundrell visited it in 1697. **Sat down by the well.** There was a raised stone edging around the well, with an arch over the top. Jesus sat on this stone edging, in the shade of the arch. The sun is very hot at noon.

7-8. **A Samaritan woman came.** She had walked out from the city to get water. Women were the water-carriers of the East (*Gen. 24:13-14; Exod. 2:16*), and water was important in this dry land (compare *Matt. 10:42*). **Give me a drink of water.** A rope and a bucket were necessary to reach down to the water in the well.

9. **How can you ask me for a drink?** She is surprised! She can see he is a Jew, and the Jews and Samaritans are hostile to each other. (**Jews will not use the same dishes that Samaritans use.**) This is the literal translation. The Expositor's Greek Testament says: **Sugchrasthal** literally signifies "to use together with," so that the sense here might be that the woman was surprised that Jesus should use the same vessel [bucket] she used."

10. **If you only knew what God gives.** The great gift of God is Christ himself! **He would give you living water.** We see that: (1) Christ asks a favor to give a blessing. (2) The well and the water are symbolic of the thirst of the spirit and the water of life.

11. **Where would you get living water?** She is thinking in material terms. He has no way of getting water from this deep well.

get living water? ¹²Our ancestor Jacob gave us this well; he, his sons, and his flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?"

¹³Jesus answered, "Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring which will provide him with living water, and give him eternal life."

¹⁵"Sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I will never be thirsty again, nor will I have to come here and draw water."

¹⁶"Go call your husband," Jesus told her, "and come back here."

¹⁷"I don't have a husband," the woman said.

Jesus replied, "You are right when you say you don't have a husband. ¹⁸You have been married to five men, and the man you live with now is not really your husband. You have told me the truth."

¹⁹"I see you are a prophet, sir," the woman

water? Are you greater than ¹²our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

Jesus answered, "Every- ¹³one who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but ¹⁴whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to everlasting life."

The woman said to him, ¹⁵"Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

He told her, "Go, call ¹⁶your husband and come back."

"I have no husband," she ¹⁷replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact ¹⁸is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I ¹⁹can see that you are a pro-

12. **You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?** The Samaritans thought of Jacob as their great ancestor. The fact that she says this shows she is beginning to understand this is no ordinary man. She can see Jesus is a Jew, and he is talking with her, a woman!

13. **Will get thirsty again.** She would know this to be true. Nothing material satisfies very long.

14. **Will never be thirsty again.** He speaks as the Son of God. He has the authority to give this living water. **Will become in him a spring.** If you have your own *spring*, you don't need someone else's *well*! Jesus uses these same words in *John 7:37-39* where the Scripture clearly identifies this as the Holy Spirit. Compare notes on *Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 6:19-20*.

15. **I give me this water!** Is she still thinking in material terms? Yet she must have some understanding of what Jesus offers.

16. **Go call your husband.** Jesus is answering her request. But she must become aware of her sinfulness to understand her real need. This question makes her review her past.

17. **I don't have a husband.** She lives with a man, but has no husband.

18. **You have told me the truth.** Jesus shows her something of who he is, by telling her what she already knows. Under the tolerant laws of divorce, she had been married five times, and had not bothered to marry the sixth man.

19. **I see you are a prophet, sir.** She had felt all along that this was no ordinary man who spoke to her. He has demonstrated supernatural knowledge.

said. ²⁰“My Samaritan ancestors worshiped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship God.”

²¹Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, the time will come when men will not worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem.

²²You Samaritans do not really know whom you worship; we Jews know whom we worship, because salvation comes from the Jews. ²³But the time is coming, and is already here, when the real worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. These are the worshipers the Father wants to worship him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

²⁵The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah, called Christ, will come. When he comes he will tell us everything.”

phet. Our fathers worshiped 20 on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

Jesus declared, “Believe 21 me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his wor- 23 shippers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

The woman said, “I know 25 that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

20. **But you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place.** She does this partly to turn attention from herself, and partly to solve the “live question” of where to worship God. The Samaritans had their own temple on Mount Gerizim, and she worshiped there because her ancestors had done so. Many now worship God in conflicting “traditional ways,” because that’s the way their ancestors did it.

21. **The time will come.** Jesus announces an important truth: the *place* where you worship means nothing! As Jesus said this, God’s *presence* was in the temple at Jerusalem. But all that would change! See *Acts 17:24; Eph. 2:22*.

22. **We Jews know whom we worship.** The Samaritans used only the first five books of the Bible, and rejected the prophets who would have taught them the truth. So, they worshiped in ignorance. The Jews used the entire Old Testament, and they worshiped in the truth of God. But God’s final revelation had come - Jesus Christ the Son of God!

23. **Will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.** A worship of “ritual and holy places” will not meet the demands of the Father. The “childhood age” is about to terminate, and the Gospel Age is beginning! Spiritual worship can be offered anywhere. But as “faith without actions is useless,” it is just as true that we express our worship through actions. [Material actions can have spiritual results. Remember the Cross. The messianic community expressed their worship through: singing; praying; preaching and Bible study; participating in the Lord’s Supper (the Holy Meal); and contributing money to the Lord’s work.] **The Father wants.** *He must* be worshiped with the heart, in spirit and in truth!

24. **God is Spirit.** Not “a” spirit, but *Spirit!* God is not *material*, therefore needs no temple constructed by human hands.

25. **I know that the Messiah, called Christ, will come.** Does she say this because she is overwhelmed by what he has said; or does she connect his supernormal ability with her understanding of the Messianic promise??? Perhaps both. The Samaritan’s hope of a Messiah was based on Moses’ prediction of “The Prophet” in *Deut. 18:18*.

²⁶Jesus answered, "I am he, I who am talking with you."

²⁷At that moment Jesus' disciples returned; and they were greatly surprised to find him talking with a woman. But none of them said to her, "What do you want?" or asked him, "Why are you talking with her?"

²⁸Then the woman left her water jar, went back to town, and said to the people there, ²⁹"Come and see the man who told me everything I have ever done. Could he be the Messiah?" ³⁰So they left the town and went to Jesus.

³¹In the meantime the disciples were begging Jesus, "Teacher, have something to eat!"

³²But he answered, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

³³So the disciples started asking among themselves, "Could somebody have brought him food?"

³⁴"My food," Jesus said to them, "is to obey the will of him who sent me and finish the work

Then Jesus declared, "I 26 who speak to you am he."

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

Just then his disciples re- 27 turned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

Then, leaving her water 28 jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man 29 who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" They came out of 30 the town and made their way toward him.

Meanwhile his disciples 31 urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

But he said to them, "I 32 have food to eat that you know nothing about."

Then his disciples said to 33 each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

"My food," said Jesus, 34 "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his

26. **I am he.** This is the first recorded declaration of Jesus being the Messiah. "I think there is something very beautiful and characteristic of our Lord in his declaring himself to be the Messiah, to this dark-minded and sin-stained woman, whose spiritual nature is just "coming alive" as he teaches her."

27. **Greatly surprised to find him talking with a woman.** The Jews strongly disapproved talking to a woman in public. The teachers of the Law thought of it as disgrace. This explains part of the woman's surprise in *verse 9*.

28. **Then the woman left her water jar.** This shows her sincerity! She has completely forgotten why she had come here!

29-30. **Could he be the Messiah?** This woman skillfully excites their interest! Her question is worded to show she thinks he is the Messiah.

31-32. **I have food to eat that you know nothing about.** "Man cannot live on bread alone." After his baptism and being filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus went without food forty days during the Temptation. Hunger is forgotten, as he pours out the "water of life" to a thirsty woman.

33. **Could someone have brought him food?** They cannot think of the spiritual food, the bread of life. Long before, Isaiah had spoken about this food and said: "Come, buy, and eat! Come, buy without money and without payment, wine and milk" [*Isa. 55:1b* Zamenhof].

34. **My food.** ["Meat" in old English meant "any kind of solid food."] Jesus says that obeying God and doing his work is "food" to him!

he gave me to do. ³⁵You have a saying, 'Four more months and then the harvest.' I tell you, take a good look at the fields; the crops are now ripe and ready to be harvested! ³⁶The man who reaps the harvest is being paid and gathers the crops for eternal life; so that the man who plants and the man who reaps will be glad together. ³⁷The saying is true, 'One man plants, another man reaps.' ³⁸I have sent you to reap a harvest in a field where you did not work; others worked there, and you profit from their work."

³⁹Many of the Samaritans in that town believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I have ever done." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him they begged him to stay with them; and Jesus stayed there two days.

⁴¹Many more believed because of his message,

work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest?' I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper ³⁶ draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying ³⁷ 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to ³⁸ reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

Many Samaritans Believe

Many of the Samaritans ³⁹ from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So ⁴⁰ when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of ⁴¹ his words many more became believers.

35. **You have a saying.** Harvest began about the middle of April in Palestine. This would be in December as he says this. But he quotes a "proverb." **The crops are now ripe!** As they look up, they see the crowd of Samaritans coming, who are *ripe* for the Kingdom.

36. **Is being paid.** Jesus continues the symbolism of the proverb he has quoted. The one who reaps the harvest in the fields is paid for his work, and so will be those who harvest human beings for God (*Matt. 4:19*). **Will be glad together.** Both those who "plant" the Good News and those who "gather men and women" for eternal life can be happy in working for the Lord! Compare Paul's words in *1 Cor. 3:5-9*.

37. **One man plants, another man reaps.** This is also a proverb. The spectacular results in a "Revival" are usually the results of someone who patiently *planted* God's truth.

38. **I have sent you.** Jesus speaks of some point in the past. The disciples had baptized huge crowds (*John 4:1*), so huge that John the Baptist's disciples had said, "everyone is going to him" (*John 3:26*). They were harvesting where John had planted (compare note on *John 3:22*).

39-40. **They begged him to stay with them.** It was a strange thing for Samaritans to invite a Jew to stay with them; stranger still for a Jew to do it! This showed their faith, and, his mission was to point men to God.

41. **Many more believed because of his message.** They saw and heard for themselves this unique prophet.

⁴²and they told the woman, "We believe now, not because of what you said, but because we ourselves have heard him, and we know that he is really the Savior of the world."

Jesus Heals an Official's Son

⁴³After spending two days there, Jesus left and went to Galilee. "For Jesus himself had said, "A prophet is not respected in his own country."⁴⁴When he arrived in Galilee the people there welcomed him, because they had gone to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem and had seen everything that he had done during the feast.

⁴⁶So Jesus went back to Cana of Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a government official there whose son in Capernaum was sick. ⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to go to Capernaum and heal his son, who was about to die. ⁴⁸Jesus said to him, "None of you will ever believe unless you see great and wonderful works."

⁴⁹"Sir," replied the official, "come with me before my child dies."

They said to the woman, ⁴²"We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

Jesus Heals the Official's Son

After the two days he left ⁴³for Galilee. (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, for they also had been there.

Once more he visited ⁴⁶Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When this man heard that ⁴⁷Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

"Unless you people see ⁴⁸miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

The royal official said, ⁴⁹"Sir, come down before my child dies."

42. He is really the Savior of the world. Here, many months before Peter's declaration (*Matt. 16:16*), the Samaritans declare Jesus to be the Messiah-Savior of the world! [But it is very unlikely they knew him to be the Son of God as well.]

43-45. And went to Galilee. Completing the trip that had brought him to Sychar in the first place.

46. Whose son in Capernaum was sick. This man is a government official, and could have been Chuza, an officer in Herod's court (*Luke 8:3*), as Johnson thinks.

47. And asked him to go to Capernaum. He believed Jesus could heal his son, but thought he had to be there in person to do it. This official: (1) had some degree of faith; (2) came looking for Jesus; (3) came in person rather than sending a servant; (4) did not think Jesus could heal from a distance.

48. Unless you see great and wonderful works. Samaria had welcomed Jesus as a prophet, without any miracles. The Jews did not welcome him as a prophet who spoke God's truth, but as a miracle-worker.

49. Come with me before my child dies. The father can think of nothing else but the danger to his child's life.

⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Go, your son will live!"

The man believed Jesus' words and went. ⁵¹On his way home his servants met him with the news. "Your boy is going to live!"

⁵²He asked them what time it was when his son got better, and they said, "It was one o'clock yesterday afternoon when the fever left him."

⁵³The father remembered, then, that it was at that very hour when Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." So he and all his family believed.

⁵⁴This was the second mighty work that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

The Healing at the Pool

5 After this, there was a Jewish religious feast, and Jesus went to Jerusalem. ²There is in Jerusalem, by the Sheep Gate, a pool with five porches; in the Hebrew language it is called Bethzatha. ³A large crowd of sick people were lying on the porches—the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed. [They were waiting for the water to move, 'because every now and then an angel of the Lord went down into the pool and stirred up the water. The first sick person to go into the pool after the water was stirred up was healed from whatever disease he had.] ⁵A man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. ⁶Jesus saw him lying there, and he knew that the man had been sick for such a long time; so he said to him, "Do you want to get well?"

Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live." 50

The man took Jesus at his word and departed. While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son had gotten better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour." 51
52

Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed. 53

This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee. 54

The Healing at the Pool

5 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" 2
3
5
6

50. Go, your son will live! Jesus speaks as the Son of God. No hesitation; no doubt! And the confidence which Jesus radiates fills the heart of the father. The little spark of faith is turned into a flame!

52-53. It was one o'clock yesterday. The boy had been healed at the exact hour Jesus had spoken.

1. There was a Jewish religious feast. Probably the second Passover Jesus attended since his public ministry began. The feast is mentioned as the reason for Jesus going to Jerusalem.

2. A pool with five porches. The porches were shelters for the sick, who lay jammed together on them.

3-4. A large crowd of sick people. Hoping for a miracle. The part in brackets [1] is omitted in most ancient manuscripts, but is found in the Latin Vulgate and was known in the second century. *Verse 7* seems to imply it, and it is in harmony with the Jewish understanding of the work of angels.

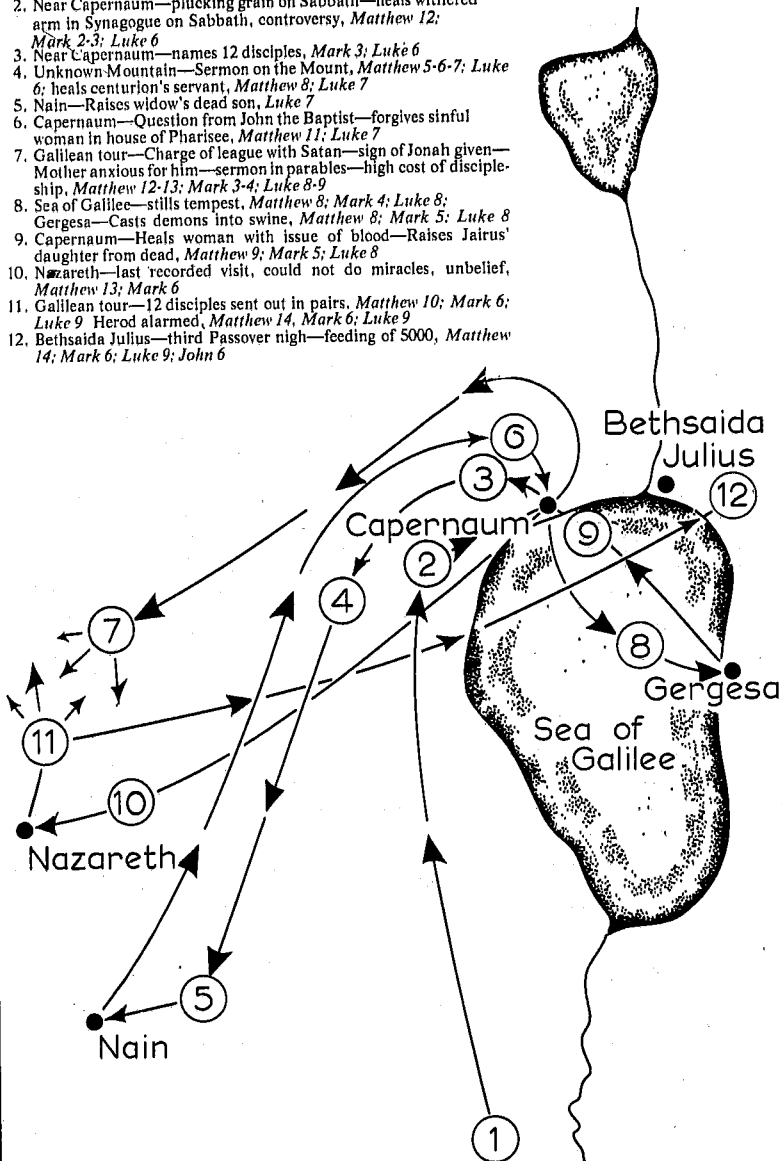
5. A man was there. He probably was paralyzed, and had been for thirty-eight years!

6. Do you want to get well? He asks this to get the man's attention, and to arouse him to hope.

MAP NO. 3—SECOND YEAR OF MINISTRY

1. Jerusalem—Second Passover, lame man healed at pool, *John 5*
2. Near Capernaum—plucking grain on Sabbath—heals withered arm in Synagogue on Sabbath, controversy, *Matthew 12; Mark 2-3; Luke 6*
3. Near Capernaum—names 12 disciples, *Mark 3; Luke 6*
4. Unknown Mountain—Sermon on the Mount, *Matthew 5-6-7; Luke 6*; heals centurion's servant, *Matthew 8; Luke 7*
5. Nain—Raises widow's dead son, *Luke 7*
6. Capernaum—Question from John the Baptist—forgives sinful woman in house of Pharisee, *Matthew 11; Luke 7*
7. Galilean tour—Charge of league with Satan—sign of Jonah given—Mother anxious for him—sermon in parables—high cost of discipleship, *Matthew 12-13; Mark 3-4; Luke 8-9*
8. Sea of Galilee—stills tempest, *Matthew 8; Mark 4; Luke 8*; Gergesa—Casts demons into swine, *Matthew 8; Mark 5; Luke 8*
9. Capernaum—Heals woman with issue of blood—Raises Jairus' daughter from dead, *Matthew 9; Mark 5; Luke 8*
10. Nazareth—last recorded visit, could not do miracles, unbelief, *Matthew 13; Mark 6*
11. Galilean tour—12 disciples sent out in pairs, *Matthew 10; Mark 6; Luke 9* Herod alarmed, *Matthew 14, Mark 6; Luke 9*
12. Bethsaida Julius—third Passover night—feeding of 5000, *Matthew 14; Mark 6; Luke 9; John 6*

Waters of Merom



⁷The sick man answered, "Sir, I don't have anyone here to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am trying to get in, somebody else gets there first."

⁸Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your mat, and walk." ⁹Immediately the man got well; he picked up his mat, and walked.

The day this happened was a Sabbath, ¹⁰so the Jewish authorities told the man who had been healed, "This is a Sabbath, and it is against our Law for you to carry your mat."

¹¹He answered, "The man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

¹²They asked him, "Who is this man who told you to pick up your mat and walk?"

¹³But the man who had been healed did not know who he was, because there was a crowd in that place and Jesus had slipped out.

¹⁴Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said, "Look, you are well now. Quit your sins, or something worse may happen to you."

¹⁵Then the man left and told the Jewish authorities that it was Jesus who had healed him.

"Sir," the invalid replied, ⁷
"I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

Then Jesus said to him, ⁸
"Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. ⁹

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, ¹⁰
"It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat."

But he replied, "The man ¹¹
who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

So they asked him, "Who ¹²
is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?"

The man who was healed ¹³
had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away in the crowd.

Later Jesus found him at ¹⁴
the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."
The man went away and told ¹⁵
the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

7. **Sir, I don't have anyone.** The man seems hopeless, because he believes only the first one to get into the water would be healed. He could move by himself, but not fast enough.

8. **Get up.** Jesus spoke with authority, as the Son of God.

9. **Immediately the man got well.** When Jesus spoke, the man was instantly healed! *Immediately* the now well man picks up his mat [bed] and walks! This man: (1) heard Christ's word of command; (2) obeys (the act of faith); (3) as he obeys, he is healed. It is Jesus who heals, but the man reaches out through faith to seize the blessing.

10. **So the Jewish authorities told the man.** The man is officially stopped and questioned. The law did say this (*Jer. 17:21*). The Tradition made it even stronger.

11. **The man who made me well told me.** This is the man's defence. He thinks anyone who can heal his sickness ought to be obeyed.

12-13. **Who is this man?** But the man did not know who Jesus was.

14. **Quit your sins.** This implies the man's sickness was caused by his own sins (compare *Mark 2:5-10*).

(1) Jesus sets men free from the wrath of the Law; (2) being set free is a command to repudiate sin.

15. **And told the Jewish authorities.** He knows who Jesus is now, but probably does not think he is doing the wrong thing by telling the authorities who had done this miracle to him.

¹⁶For this reason they began to persecute Jesus, because he had done this healing on a Sabbath.

¹⁷Jesus answered them, "My Father works always, and I too must work."

¹⁸This saying made the Jewish authorities all the more determined to kill him; not only had he broken the Sabbath law, but he had said that God was his own Father, and in this way had made himself equal with God.

The Authority of the Son

¹⁹So Jesus answered them, "I tell you the truth: the Son does nothing on his own; he does only what he sees his Father doing. What the Father does, the Son also does. ²⁰For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. He will show him even greater things than this to do, and you will all be amazed. ²¹Even as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, in the same way the Son gives life to those he wants to. ²²Nor does the Father himself judge anyone. He has given his Son the full right to judge, ²³so that all will honor the Son in the same way as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Life Through the Son

So, because Jesus was 16
doing these things on the
Sabbath, the Jews persecut-
ed him. Jesus said to them, 17
"My Father is always at his
work to this very day, and I,
too, am working." For this 18
reason the Jews tried all the
harder to kill him; not only
was he breaking the Sab-
bath, but he was even calling
God his own Father, making
himself equal with God. 19
Jesus gave them this answer:

"I tell you the truth, the
Son can do nothing by him-
self; he can do only what he
sees his Father doing, be-
cause whatever the Father
does the Son also does. For 20
the Father loves the Son and
shows him all he does. Yes,
to your amazement he will
show him even greater
things than these. For just 21
as the Father raises the dead
and gives them life, even so
the Son gives life to whom he
is pleased to give it. More- 22
over, the Father judges no
one, but has entrusted all
judgment to the Son, that 23
all may honor the Son just
as they honor the Father. He
who does not honor the Son
does not honor the Father
who sent him.

16. For this reason. Jesus had "kicked" their Tradition by healing the man on the Sabbath day.

17. My Father works always, and I too must work. The basis of the Sabbath recess, was that God had recessed his work of creation on the seventh day. But God had not quit, but continued to do his works of love and mercy. The Sabbath does not suspend benevolence and mercy. The Father's example is our pattern.

18. This saying made the Jewish authorities. They are horrified! Not only has he "kicked" their Tradition by healing on the Sabbath, but he said God was his own Father! This was blasphemy to them! 19-21. So Jesus answered them. He answers their charge of blasphemy by showing there is the closest cooperation between the Father and the Son. The Son does nothing on his own. This is said directly about Jesus himself. So close is the Son and the Father, that the Son does only what the Father authorizes him to do. See Col. 1:20 and note. Even as the Father raises the dead. Jesus had just given life to one who was as good as dead for thirty-eight years.

22-23. So that all will honor the Son. God has placed "judgment" in the hands of Christ. The Son who speaks and acts by the Father's authority is to be honored. Whoever does not honor the Son. To reject Jesus the Son is to reject God the Father! Jesus is the ONLY "means of access" to the Father!

²⁴“I tell you the truth: whoever hears my words, and believes in him who sent me, has eternal life. He will not be judged, but has already passed from death to life. ²⁵I tell you the truth: the time is coming—the time has already come— when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear it will live. ²⁶Even as the Father is himself the source of life, in the same way he has made his Son to be the source of life. ²⁷And he has given the Son the right to judge, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸Do not be surprised at this; the time is coming when all the dead in the graves will hear his voice, ²⁹and they will come out of their graves: those who have done good will rise and live, and those who have done evil will rise and be condemned.”

Witnesses to Jesus

³⁰“I can do nothing on my own; I judge only as God tells me, so my judgment is right, because I am not trying to do what I want, but only what he who sent me wants.

³¹“If I testify on my own behalf, what I say is not to be accepted as real proof. ³²But there is someone else who testifies on my behalf, and I

“I tell you the truth, ²⁴ whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, ²⁵ a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father ²⁶ has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given ²⁷ him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

“Do not be amazed at ²⁸ this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. By myself I can do ³⁰ nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

Testimonies About Jesus

“If I testify about myself, ³¹ my testimony is not valid. There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid. ³²

24. **Has eternal life.** Hearing Jesus and believing in God through what he says, brings eternal life. Faith is “obediential.” See note on *James 2:19*.

25-27. **When the dead will hear the voice.** The spiritually dead, such as the man in *verse 5*. But this means the resurrection as well, as Jesus says in *verse 28*. **Because he is the Son of Man.** Jesus is THE Son of Man, because: (1) He has had “first-hand experience” with our humanity (*Heb. 4:15-16*). (2) He is the “go-between,” God in human form, Job complained: “*But there is no one to step between us - no one to judge both God and me*” (*Job 9:33*). **THERE IS NOW!**

28-29. **Do not be surprised at this.** That is, at the fact that the Father has given the Son the right to judge. Jesus here points out the **BODILY** raising of all the dead! This was one of the facts of the Good News that was to amaze people. Jesus himself came out of his grave in **BODILY** form. So shall we all (*I Cor. 15:35-58*).

30-31. **I can do nothing on my own.** Jesus makes it clear that both he and the Father are one in intent. His relationship to mankind (*Heb. 2:14-18*) grows out of the *intent* and *plan* of the Father. **If I testify on my own behalf.** That is, if only he testified in his own behalf, it would not be sufficient evidence for proof. This does not mean his testimony would be untrue (*John 8:14*).

32. **But there is someone else.** McGarvey says this is the Father, and cites *John 8:50-54* as a similar section.

know that what he says about me is true. ³³You sent your messengers to John, and he spoke on behalf of the truth. ³⁴It is not that I must have a man's witness; I say this only in order that you may be saved. ³⁵John was like a lamp, burning and shining, and you were willing for a while to enjoy his light. ³⁶But I have a witness on my behalf even greater than the witness that John gave: the works that I do, the works my Father gave me to do, these speak on my behalf and show that the Father has sent me. ³⁷And the Father, who sent me, also testifies on my behalf. You have never heard his voice, or seen his face, ³⁸and you do not keep his message in your hearts, because you do not believe in the one whom he sent. ³⁹You study the Scriptures because you think that in them you will find eternal life. And they themselves speak about me! ⁴⁰Yet you are not willing to come to me in order to have life.

⁴¹"I am not looking for praise from men.

"You have sent to John ³³ and he has testified to the truth. Not that I accept hu- ³⁴ man testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. John was a lamp that ³⁵ burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

"I have testimony weight- ³⁶ ier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me. And the Father ³⁷ who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his ³⁸ voice nor seen his form, nor does his world dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. You diligently ³⁹ study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse ⁴⁰ to come to me to have life.

"I do not accept praise ⁴¹

33. **You sent your messengers to John.** *John 1:19.* They evidently believed what John said. **And he spoke on behalf of the truth.** John the Baptist had clearly identified Jesus as the Messiah (*John 1:29-36*).

34. **It is not that I must have a man's witness.** John the Baptist was a reliable witness. Yet, as the scripture says: "*God must be true, even though every man is a liar*" (*Rom. 3:4*). The important witness is the Father. **That you may be saved.** He points them to the testimony of John [and of the Father]. If they will believe, they may be saved.

35. **John was like a lamp.** John the Baptist led a great spiritual renewal among the Jewish people. But like children, they listened for a while, but had not taken him seriously.

36-38. **Even greater than.** The miracles which Jesus did through the Father's power [and his other works]; the Father's voice at his baptism; the Father's testimony through the prophets. **You have never heard his voice.** That is, they refused to listen when God spoke. **And you do not keep his message.** The Father has given his testimony through the prophets and through John the Baptist, but they will not believe in the One who was sent by the Father.

39-41. **You study the Scriptures.** They were looking to find eternal life. Compare *Rom. 9:30-33*. **And they themselves speak about me!** The Scriptures gave their witness to Christ. The entire Old Testament pointed forward to "*Someone is coming!*" **I am not looking for praise from men.** He has scolded them, but not because of pride or ambition. He came to be the world's Savior!

⁴²But I know you; I know that you have no love for God in your hearts. ⁴³I have come with my Father's authority, but you have not received me; when someone comes with his own authority, you will receive him. ⁴⁴You like to have praise from one another, but you do not try to win praise from the only God; how, then, can you believe? ⁴⁵Do not think, however, that I will accuse you to my Father. Moses is the one who will accuse you—Moses, in whom you have hoped. ⁴⁶If you had really believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me. ⁴⁷But since you do not believe what he wrote, how can you believe what I say?"

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also *Matt. 14.13-21; Mark 6.30-44; Luke 9.10-17*)

6 After this, Jesus went back across Lake Galilee (or, Lake Tiberias). ²A large crowd followed him, because they had seen his mighty works in healing the sick. ³Jesus went up a hill and sat down with his disciples. ⁴The Passover

from men, but I know you. I ⁴² know that you do not have God's love in your hearts. I ⁴³ have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can ⁴⁴ you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?

"But do not think I will ⁴⁵ accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed Moses, you ⁴⁶ would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since ⁴⁷ you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

6 Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people ² followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. Then Jesus went up on the ³ hillside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish ⁴ Passover Feast was near.

42-43. **But I know you.** This is fact! He could look deep down inside them to see what they really were. **With my Father's authority.** If they had really loved God, they would have believed in Jesus. **When someone comes with his own authority.** They rejected Jesus, who was their only hope. But when *fake messiahs* would come, they would believe them (*Matt. 24:5*).

44. **How, then, can you believe?** Their unbelief grew out of their greed for glory and fame! They wanted a "messiah" who would give them important positions in a political kingdom. Compare *Luke 17:20-21* and notes there.

45-47. **Moses is the one who will accuse you.** They thought they believed Moses, but they didn't! If they disbelieve Moses, whom they honored, how could they believe Christ whom they did not honor? In rejecting Christ, they were also rejecting Moses, since he wrote about Christ.

1. **After this.** Not immediately, but perhaps one year later. John tells us very little of what Jesus did and said in the early years of his public ministry. **Jesus went back across Lake Galilee.** The scene of his ministry has shifted to the lake where he spent a lot of his time. The area along the western shore was heavily populated. John's Gentile readers knew the lake better as Tiberias.

2-13. **A large crowd followed him.** This is the only miracle recorded by all four Gospels. **The Passover Feast** is the third since Jesus' baptism. John the Baptist is dead, and this may be as late as the third year of his public ministry. See the notes on *Matt. 14:13-21*. John shows that it took place near the time for

Feast of the Jews was near. ⁵Jesus looked around and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, so he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food to feed all these people?" ⁶(He said this to test Philip; actually he already knew what he would do.)

⁷Philip answered, "For everyone to have even a little, it would take more than two hundred dollars' worth of bread."

⁸Another one of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, ⁹"There is a boy here who has five loaves of barley bread and two fish. But what good are they for all these people?"

¹⁰"Make the people sit down," Jesus told them. (There was a lot of grass there.) So all the people sat down; there were about five thousand men. ¹¹Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God, and distributed it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, and they all had as much as they wanted. ¹²When they were all full, he said to his disciples, "Pick up the pieces left over; let us not waste a bit." ¹³So they took them all up, and filled twelve baskets with the pieces left over from the five barley loaves which the people had eaten.

¹⁴The people there, seeing this mighty work that Jesus had done, said, "Surely this is the Prophet who was to come to the world!" ¹⁵Jesus knew that they were about to come and get him, to make him king by force, so he went off again to the hills by himself.

5 When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered, 7 him, "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

8 Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, how far will they go among so many?"

10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Jesus 11 then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they 13 gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

14 After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that 15 they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again into the hills by himself.

Passover, that is, early in the spring, about a year before the crucifixion of Jesus. **Pick up the pieces left over.** God does not allow wastefulness. Nature wastes nothing, but *recycles* everything! The wastefulness of man brings famine. If war, greed, etc., could be eliminated, the earth could support a much larger population.

14. **Surely this is the Prophet.** Moses predicted The Prophet (compare *John 1:21*). The Jews expected this Prophet to declare himself King, and set up a political kingdom which would make Israel great again, as it was in the time of David. In other words, they were saying: "This is the Messiah!"

15. **To make him king by force.** If Jesus had intended to become a political king, this was his opportunity! He frustrates their plans by dismissing his disciples and going off by himself into the hills.

Jesus Walks on the Water

(Also *Mtt. 14.22-33; Mark 6.45-52*)

¹⁶When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷got into the boat, and went back across the lake toward Capernaum. Night came on, and Jesus still had not come to them. ¹⁸By now a strong wind was blowing and stirring up the water. ¹⁹The disciples had rowed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the water, coming near the boat, and they were terrified. ²⁰“Don’t be afraid,” Jesus told them, “It is I!” ²¹They were willing to take him into the boat; and immediately the boat reached land at the place they were heading for.

The People Seek Jesus

²²Next day the crowd which had stayed on the other side of the lake saw that only one boat was left there. They knew that Jesus had not gone in the boat with his disciples, but that they had left without him. ²³Other boats, from Tiberias, came to shore near the place where the crowd had eaten the bread, after the Lord had give thanks. ²⁴When the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they got into boats and went to Capernaum, looking for him.

Jesus the Bread of Life

²⁵When the people found Jesus on the other side of the lake they said to him, “Teacher, when did you get here?”

Jesus Walks on the Water

When evening came, his 16 disciples went down to the lake, where they got into a 17 boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. A 18 strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed three 19 or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. But he said to 20 them, “It is I; don’t be afraid.” Then they were 21 willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

The next day the crowd 22 that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. Then some 23 boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. Once the crowd 24 realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

Jesus the Bread of Life

When they found him on 25 the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

16-21. **When evening came.** For notes on this storm on the lake, See *Matt. 14:22-33*. **It is I!** This is the message of the Good News. *Don't be afraid, It is I!* Christ brings the peace that the world does not have and cannot give.

22. **Next day the crowd.** This is the day following the feeding of the Five Thousand and the storm at night on the lake. They had stayed because there were no other boats, and, they had seen that Jesus had not gone in the boat with his disciples.

23. **Other boats, from Tiberias.** Tiberias was the largest city on the lake. It was built by Herod, and named for Emperor Tiberias. Herod Antipas used it as the capital of Galilee.

24. **And went to Capernaum, looking for him.** They knew Jesus made this town his home.

25. **Teacher, when did you get here?** They knew he had not gone with his disciples. This is the Sabbath day, and this conversation takes place in the synagogue at Capernaum (see *verse 59*).

²⁶Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth: you are looking for me because you ate the bread and had all you wanted, not because you understood my works of power. ²⁷Do not work for food that spoils; instead, work for the food that lasts for eternal life. This food the Son of Man will give you, because God, the Father, has put his mark of approval on him."

²⁸So they asked him, "What can we do in order to do God's works?"

²⁹Jesus answered, "This is the work God wants you to do: believe in the one he sent."

³⁰They replied, "What sign of power will you perform so that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? ³¹Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, just as the scripture says, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

³²"I tell you the truth," Jesus said, "What Moses gave you was not the bread from heaven; it is my Father who gives you the real bread from

Jesus answered, "I tell 26
you the truth, you are look-
ing for me, not because you
saw miraculous signs but
because you ate the loaves
and had your fill. Do not 27
work for food that spoils,
but for food that endures to
eternal life, which the Son of
Man will give you. On him
God the Father has placed
his seal of approval."

Then they asked him, 28
"What must we do to do the
work of God?"

Jesus answered, "The 29
work of God is this: to be-
lieve in the one whom he has
sent."

So they asked him, 30
"What miraculous sign then
will you give that we may see
it and believe you? What
will you do? Our forefathers 31
ate the manna in the desert;
as it is written: 'He gave
them bread from heaven to
eat.'"

Jesus said to them, "I tell 32
you the truth, it is not Moses
who has given you the bread
from heaven, but it is
my Father who gives you the

26. **Because you ate the bread.** They have no high spiritual motives. Most people are more interested in their stomach than in their spirit. This is especially true of those who see religion as a way to get rich (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

27. **Do not work for the food that spoils.** "The world and everything in it that men desire is passing away; but he who does what God wants lives forever" (1 John 2:17). Material needs are important (Matt. 6:11), but we must put our spirit first in priority (Matt. 6:25-34). **Has put his mark of approval on him.** Legal documents must be stamped with an official seal. God made it plain that he authorized the work Jesus was doing! The miracles were one mark of approval.

28. **In order to do God's works.** Jesus had told them: "Work for the food that lasts for eternal life." They ask how to go about doing this.

29. **This is the work God wants you to do.** Faith is a work. God's works are those things which God authorizes and requires to be done by men. These people are startled to hear that to please God requires that they first believe in Jesus.

30. **What sign of power will you perform?** These are the people who were just fed by a miracle! He mentioned *God's mark of approval*. Now they ask some special sign that only God can give, as a condition of believing in him. But they demand a miracle while refusing to believe the one already done!

31. **Our ancestors ate manna in the desert.** Jesus may have fed a few thousands, but they say their ancestors were fed by a miracle in the desert for forty years! Lipscomb thinks they expected Jesus to feed them miraculously the rest of their lives, as a miracle to get them to believe.

32. **What Moses gave you was not the bread from heaven.** The manna was not the true spiritual bread from God. **It is my Father.** God gives the true spiritual bread which feeds his people in the desert which is this world, as they travel to that heavenly "Canaan."

heaven. ³³For the bread that God gives is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

³⁴"Sir," they asked him, "give us this bread always."

³⁵"I am the bread of life," Jesus told them. "He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶Now, I told you that you have seen me but will not believe. ³⁷Everyone whom my Father gives me will come to me. I will never turn away anyone who comes to me, ³⁸because I have come down from heaven to do the will of him who sent me, not my own will. ³⁹He who sent me wants me to do this: that I should not lose any of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them all to life on the last day. ⁴⁰For what my Father wants is this: that all who see the Son and believe in him should have eternal life; and I will raise them to life on the last day."

true bread from heaven. For ³³the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

"Sir," they said, "from ³⁴now on give us this bread."

Then Jesus declared, "I ³⁵am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have ³⁶seen me and still you do not believe. All that the Father ³⁷gives me will come to me, whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have ³⁸come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him ³⁹who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my ⁴⁰Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

33. **Is he who comes down.** The true bread: (1) comes down from heaven; (2) gives life to the spirit; (3) is for the entire world. Jesus is that *bread*, and he alone can give life to mankind.

34. **Give us this bread always.** Compare the woman at the well, and what Jesus said to her there (*John 4:10-15*). They "half believe," but do not understand what it is all about.

35. **I am the bread of life.** Jesus himself is the spiritual bread. He gives spiritual and eternal life to those who come to him. He who *comes, believes*: we must reach out to seize this Jesus and become part of him! See *verse 53*.

36. **But will not believe.** The fact they had asked for a "sign of power" is proof they do not believe. Jesus had shown himself to them in his teaching, his actions, and his miracles. But they did not believe, and so could not receive this *life*.

37. **Everyone whom my Father gives me.** The Bible shows us that a certain type of person responds to the Good News. People who will respond are called "my people" by God before they confess him (*Acts 18:9-11*). God's salvation must be understood in this way. Jesus followed a *predetermined set of actions* to induce men to come to him. Those who do not respond, are not the Father's people. Everyone who does respond will be accepted; no one will be turned away! *Lipscomb says*: "God has called and predestinated to eternal life all willing to receive him."

39. **Because I have come.** Jesus came from heaven to earth, to *lead* men and women to eternal life. Jesus came to be the world's Savior.

39-40. **For what my Father wants is this.** God intends that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him, should have eternal life. (1) There is no "secret decree" of "election." People "sort themselves out" on the basis of believing in Christ. (2) Eternal life comes to all who reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make themselves part of it. (See notes on *Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3:11*.) (3) Christ has shown us *life*. He is the "*resurrection and the life*."

⁴¹The Jews started grumbling about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." ⁴²So they said, "This man is Jesus the son of Joseph, isn't he? We know his father and mother. How, then, does he now say he came down from heaven?"

⁴³Jesus answered, "Stop grumbling among yourselves. ⁴⁴No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him to me; and I will raise him to life on the last day. ⁴⁵The prophets wrote, 'All men will be taught by God.' Everyone who hears the Father and learns from him comes to me. ⁴⁶This does not mean that anyone has seen the Father; he who is from God is the only one who has seen the Father. ⁴⁷I tell you the truth: he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died. ⁵⁰But the bread that comes down from heaven is such that whoever eats it will not die. ⁵¹I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live."

At this the Jews began to ⁴¹ murmur against him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They said, "Is this ⁴² not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can we now say, 'I came down from heaven?'"

"Stop murmuring among ⁴³ yourselves." Jesus answered. "No one can come ⁴⁴ to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Pro- ⁴⁵ phets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes ⁴⁶ to me. No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen ⁴⁷ the Father. I tell you the truth, he who believes has ⁴⁸ everlasting life. I am the bread of life.

Your forefathers ate the ⁴⁹ manna in the desert, yet they died.

But here is the bread that ⁵⁰ comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living ⁵¹ bread that came down from heaven. If a man eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

41-42. **This man is Jesus the son of Joseph.** Joseph was his *legal* father. They knew (or thought they knew) his earthly origin. His claims seemed impossible to them.

44. **Draws him to me.** Two things are required to come to Christ; the human desire; the divine drawing. Man has the choice to refuse, or to come (see *John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; Rev. 22:17*). [Lazarus, in the grave, had not such freedom of choice. He could neither *refuse* nor *come*.]

45. **All men will be taught by God.** The Good News is the *drawing power* of God (*Rom. 1:16-17*). *All men* will be taught by God, therefore *all men* are called by God! The Law and the Prophets had pointed these people to the Messiah (*Gal. 3:24*), but they had refused God's teaching and rejected God's call. **Everyone who hears the Father.** To "hear" is to "learn." It is the *truth* learned from the Good News that makes people willing to come.

46. **This does not mean.** They are *drawn* by hearing the word, not by seeing God. **He who is from God.** Only Jesus has seen the Father, and only Jesus can be our "go-between" [mediator] with the Father.

50. **Whoever eats it will not die.** The miraculous manna was no different from other food. Jesus is supernatural food; he gives eternal life!

51. **Which I give so that the world may live.** See *John 2:21; Heb. 10:20*.

⁵²This started an angry argument among the Jews. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" they asked.

⁵³Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you will not have life in yourselves. ⁵⁴Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him to life on the last day. ⁵⁵For my flesh is the real food, my blood is the real drink. ⁵⁶Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. ⁵⁷The living Father sent me, and because of him I live also. In the same way, whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This, then, is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the bread that your ancestors ate, but then died. The one who eats this bread will live forever."

⁵⁹Jesus said this as he taught in the synagogue in Capernaum.

The Words of Eternal Life

⁶⁰Many of his disciples heard this and said, "This teaching is too hard. Who can listen to this?"

Then the Jews began to ⁵² argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them, "I tell ⁵³ you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever ⁵⁴ eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I raise him up at the last day.

For my flesh is real food ⁵⁵ and my blood is real drink.

Whoever eats my flesh ⁵⁶ and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.

Just as the living Father sent ⁵⁷ me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that ⁵⁸ came down from heaven. Our forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." He said this while ⁵⁹ teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

Many Disciples Desert Jesus

On hearing it, many of his ⁶⁰ disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"

53-56. **If you do not eat the flesh.** Verse 63 shows us these words are symbolic. The very thought of drinking blood was offensive to the Jews, who were forbidden to taste blood (*Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:10-14*); and this was reaffirmed for Christians (*Acts 15:20*). To "eat the flesh and drink the blood" of the Son of God, is to "reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make yourself part of it." See note on *Acts 2:38*. No reference to the Lord's Supper [Holy Meal] is here intended! Origen, Basil, Zwingle, Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, et. al., are agreed on this. The *flesh* and *blood* of Jesus symbolize the same *fact* which the Lord's Supper [Holy Meal] symbolizes - union with God! Jesus is implying in these words that his death is necessary to the world's life. *McGarvey* says: "It was difficult to bring home to their carnal minds so spiritual a thought, and therefore Jesus clothed it in carnal metaphors and made it as plain as possible. Christians today, being more spiritually minded, and more used to spiritual language, are somewhat confused by the carnal dress in which Jesus clothed his thought."

57. **The living Father sent me.** The Father, who is the source of life, sends life to the believer through the Son. "Perfect life" comes through our union with Christ (*Rom. 8:1-4*).

58. **This, then, is the bread.** This is the comparison between himself and the manna. He may have pointed to himself as he said this.

59. **As he taught in the synagogue.** This was the synagogue built by the Roman officer. See note on *Matt. 8:5*. "Pots of manna" were sculptured on the inner walls.

60-62. **This teaching is too hard.** About eating and drinking his flesh and blood. They wanted the

⁶¹Without being told, Jesus knew that his disciples were grumbling about this; so he said to them, "Does this make you want to give up?" ⁶²Suppose, then, that you should see the Son of Man go back up to the place where he was before? ⁶³What gives life is God's Spirit; man's power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and life. ⁶⁴Yet some of you do not believe." (Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones that would not believe, and which one would betray him.) ⁶⁵And he added, "This is the very reason I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father makes it possible for him to do so."

⁶⁶Because of this, many of his followers turned back and would not go with him any more. ⁶⁷So Jesus said to the twelve disciples, "And you—would you like to leave also?"

⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. ⁶⁹And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One from God."

⁷⁰Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose the

Aware that his disciples ⁶¹ were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? What if you ⁶² see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The ⁶³ Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you ⁶⁴ who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, "This is why I told you ⁶⁵ that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."

From this time many of ⁶⁶ his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "Do you want to leave ⁶⁷ too?" Jesus asked the Twelve.

Simon Peter answered ⁶⁸ him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe ⁶⁹ and know that you are the Holy One of God."

Then Jesus replied, ⁷⁰ "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a

glory of raising an army to fight the Romans. Even as Jesus got ready to go up to heaven, the disciples still thought in terms of a political kingdom (*Acts 1:6*). But just ten days later, at Pentecost, they abandoned the earthly idea and saw Jesus "raised to the right side of God" (*Acts 2:32-36*).

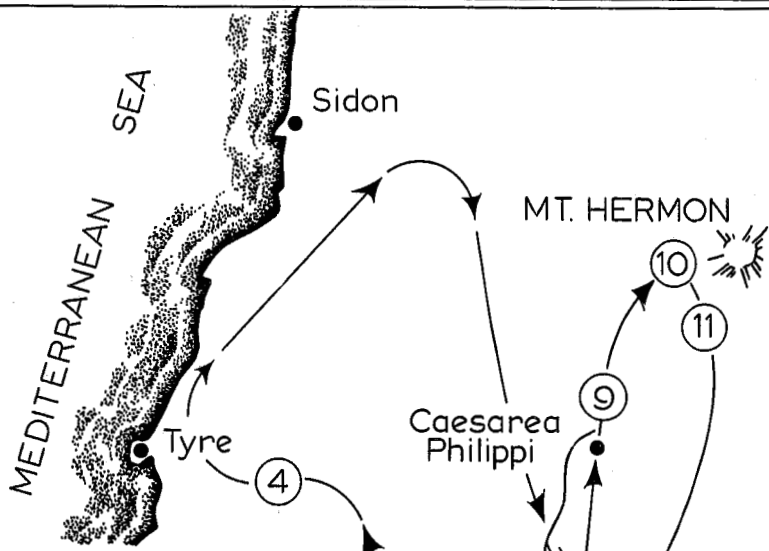
63. What gives life is God's Spirit. The fact that they were Abraham's descendants meant nothing. His actual flesh and blood in them would also mean nothing. If they had stood at the Cross and let the blood drop on them, it would still have meant nothing. Because men and women "eat" Jesus by faith. His words are Spirit and life. The power of God's act in Jesus to set men free operates through faith in the Son of God.

64-65. This is the very reason. It is correct to say that the Holy Spirit gives or produces faith through hearing and believing the gospel (*Gal. 3:2*). See notes on *verse 44-45*.

66-67. Many of his followers turned back. They were offended by the things which he said [in this chapter]. It costs you something to follow Jesus. Not all are willing to pay the price. God lets us choose!

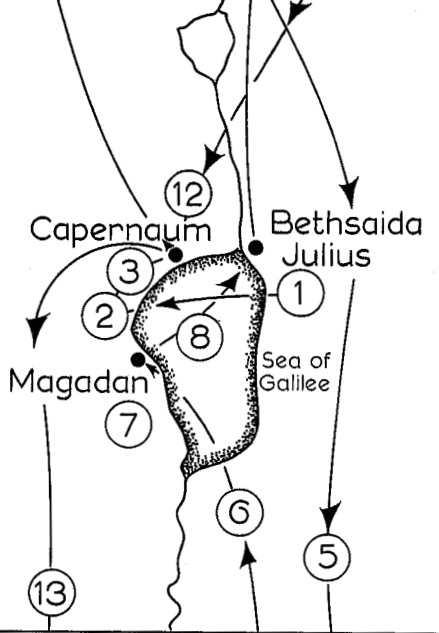
68-69. Lord, to whom would we go? No one else could give eternal life. Peter understood this. Eternal life is worth paying any price to follow Jesus! **You are the Holy One from God.** Peter's declaration here is much the same as *Matt. 16:16*.

70-71. Yet one of you is a devil. Devil means "one who falsely accuses; one who is malicious." The shadow of sadness still hovers over Jesus. [Notice the progression in this chapter. In *verse 33* he announces the "bread that God gives." In *verses 48 & 50* he says that he is the bread of life [himself]. In *verses 51-56* he shows that life comes ONLY through eating and drinking his flesh and blood. *Verse 63* shows that this is done by feeding on his life and his words SPIRITUALLY.]



**MAP NO. 4—LATER GALILEAN
MINISTRY THIRD YEAR**

1. Bethsaida Julius—walks on water of Sea—stills tempest, *Matthew 14; Mark 6; John 6*
2. Plain of Genesaret—many miracles, *Matthew 14; Mark 6*
3. Capernaum—Sermon on Bread of Life—questions on washings, *Matthew 15; Mark 7; John 6*
4. Phoenicia—Retires—heals Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter, *Matthew 15; Mark 7*
5. Decapolis—preaches and heals, *Matthew 15; Mark 7*
6. Near Sea of Galilee—feeding of 4000, *Matthew 15; Mark 8*
7. Magadan—Jews demand sign—no sign given but of Jonah, *Matthew 15; Mark 8*
8. Crossing Sea—warns against leaven of Jewish leaders, *Matthew 16; Mark 8*
9. Caesarea Philippi—Jesus's identity. Peter's confession. Jesus predicts His death, *Matthew 16; Mark 8; Luke 9*
10. High Mountain (Hermon?)—The Transfiguration, *Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9*
11. Heals epileptic boy, *Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9*
12. Capernaum—Peter & temple tax, *Matthew 17; Discussion as to who is greatest, Matthew 18; Mark 9; Luke 9; Unknown miracle worker, Mark 9; Luke 9; Discussion of stumbling blocks, forgiveness; Matthew 18; Mark 9; Advice of His brethren, John 7*
13. Samaria—on way to Feast of Tabernacles Samaritans reject Jesus—Sons of Thunder would call down fire from heaven, *Luke 9*



twelve of you? Yet one of you is a devil!" ⁷¹He was talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For Judas, even though he was one of the twelve disciples, was going to betray him.

devil!" (He meant Judas, the 71 son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

Jesus and His Brothers

7 After this, Jesus traveled in Galilee; he did not want to travel to Judea, because the Jewish authorities there were wanting to kill him. ²The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, ³so Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave this place and go to Judea, so that your disciples will see the works you are doing. ⁴No one hides what he is doing if he wants to be well known. Since you are doing these things, let the whole world know about you!" ⁵(Not even his brothers believed in him.)

⁶Jesus said to them, "The right time for me has not yet come. Any time is right for you. ⁷The world cannot hate you, but it hates me, because I keep telling it that its ways are bad.

Jesus Goes to the Feast of Tabernacles

7 After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life. But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, Jesus' brothers said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify

1. **After this, Jesus traveled in Galilee.** After the events of the last chapter. About six months time passed between the feeding of the Five Thousand and the Feast of Tabernacles.

2. **The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles.** One of the three feasts all Jews were expected to attend. It celebrated the time the Jews lived in tents during their travels through the wilderness. It lasted for a week, and came about October 6th.

3. **So Jesus' brothers said to him.** It takes nothing away from the character of Mary the human mother of Jesus, for her to be a wife to Joseph and bear him children. See *John 2:12*. Alford (Greek Testament) finds strong evidence that these were really and literally brothers [half-brothers] of Jesus, and cites *Psalms 69:8* ("I am like a stranger to my brothers, like a foreigner to my family"). **Leave this place and go to Judea.** It had been some time since Jesus was at Jerusalem. These brothers of his thought he ought to demonstrate whatever powers he had to the crowds at Jerusalem for the feast.

4. **No one hides what he is doing.** He was so different from their idea of the Messiah that they could not understand him.

5. **(Not even his brothers believed in him.)** This verse destroys the theory that the "brothers" of Jesus were the sons of Alphaeus, therefore cousins to Jesus. The sons of Alphaeus had long been apostles, while these "brothers" were still unbelievers. Compare note on *Mark 3:21*.

6. **The right time for me has not yet come.** Passover was still six months in the future, and he could not yet fulfill Gods purpose by dying in Jerusalem. His brothers had no such mission, and they could go there at any time.

7. **But it hates me.** The world has always hated those who expose its sins. But the world cannot hate itself, and does not hate those who live its life (See *1 Pet. 4:3-5*).

⁸You go on to the feast. I am not going to this feast, because the right time has not come for me.” ⁹He said this, and then stayed on in Galilee.

Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles

¹⁰After his brothers went to the feast, Jesus also went; however, he did not go openly, but went secretly. ¹¹The Jewish authorities were looking for him at the feast. “Where is he?” they asked.

¹²There was much whispering about him in the crowd. “He is a good man,” some people said, “No,” others said, “he fools the people.”

¹³But no one talked about him openly, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities.

¹⁴The feast was nearly half over when Jesus went to the temple and began teaching. ¹⁵The Jewish authorities, greatly surprised, said, “How does this man know so much when he has never been to school?”

¹⁶Jesus answered, “What I teach is not my teaching, but comes from God, who sent me. ¹⁷Whoever is willing to do what God wants will know whether what I teach comes from God or

that what it does is evil. You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast, because for me the right time has not yet come.” Having said this, he stayed in Galilee. 8
9

However, after his brothers had left for the Feast, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. Now at the Feast the Jews were watching for him and asking, “Where is that man?” 10
11

Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, “He is a good man.” 12

Others replied, “No, he deceives the people.” But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews. 13

Jesus Teaches at the Feast

Not until halfway through the Feast did Jesus go up to the temple court and begin to teach. The Jews were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having studied?” 14
15

Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If a man chooses to do God’s will, he will find out 16
17

8. **I am not going to this feast.** That is, he is not going just now. He did go after the crowds were already there.

10. **But went secretly.** After everyone else was already there, Jesus left Galilee and went to the feast at Jerusalem. But he did not make a display of himself as his brothers wanted him to do. Six months later in the Triumphant Entry, he did as they would have wanted him to do.

11-13. **The Jewish authorities were looking for him.** The authorities hated Jesus even more because he was popular with the people. See *Matt. 10:34*. People “sort themselves out” by their belief or unbelief in Jesus.

14. **The feast was nearly half over.** The feast lasted eight days. Jesus “came out of hiding” and began to teach openly in the temple. What he did was *unexpected* by the authorities.

15. **How does this man know so much?** They knew he had not attended their theological schools. But it was plain he knew what he was talking about.

16. **What I teach is not my teaching.** This answers the question of *verse 15*. His knowledge was from the Father who sent him.

17. **Whoever is willing to do.** The basic reason why the Jewish authorities would not accept the teaching of Jesus as *divine*, was that they did not want to do God’s *will*. Most unbelief originates in the heart, not the head. The great German poet, Heine, was an unbeliever until aged and tortured with chronic disease. Then he said: “I have discarded my proud philosophy and learned to trust in the consolations of religion.” He had no more evidence than before, but his heart had changed.

whether I speak on my own authority. ¹⁸A person who speaks on his own is trying to gain glory for himself. He who wants glory for the one who sent him, however, is honest and there is nothing false in him. ¹⁹Moses gave you the Law, did he not? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

²⁰The crowd answered, "You have a demon in you! Who is trying to kill you?"

²¹Jesus answered, "I did one great work and you were all surprised. ²²Because Moses ordered you to circumcise your sons (although it was not Moses but your ancestors who started it), you will circumcise a boy on the Sabbath. ²³If a boy is circumcised on the Sabbath so that Moses' Law will not be broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? ²⁴Stop judging by external standards, and judge by true standards."

Is He the Messiah?

²⁵Some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Isn't

whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

"You are demon-²⁰ possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?"

Jesus said to them, "I did ²¹one miracle, and you are all astonished. Yet, because ²²Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. Now if a child can ²³be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? Stop judging by ²⁴mere appearances, and make a right judgment."

Is Jesus the Christ?

At that point some of the ²⁵people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man

18. **For the one who sent him.** Christianity is extrinsic [something external, not part of self] in its outlook, because it teaches people to honor God. They do not look within themselves for strength, but raise their eyes to God's act in Jesus Christ. They do not try to get glory for themselves, but they try to bring honor to God by the life they live and the words which they speak.

19. **Moses gave you the Law.** They ignored the Law, yet wanted to kill him on a charge of breaking the Law. The fact they are trying to kill him, is proof they do not obey the Law.

20. **The crowd answered.** Did they know the authorities were trying to kill Jesus? Johnson thinks they did not. They say Jesus is possessed by a demon to have such ideas.

21. **I did one great work.** The healing of the man at the pool, eighteen months before this (*John 5:18*). This was the source of their hatred.

22-24. **You will circumcise a boy on the Sabbath.** His reasoning goes like this: "You are angry with me because I healed a man on the Sabbath; yet you yourself violate the Sabbath to circumcise a boy when the eighth day falls on the Sabbath. You say because circumcision came from Abraham, it has priority over the Sabbath. The law of love and mercy is older yet; why be angry if it is obeyed on the Sabbath?" **External standards.** They went by how things looked, not by how they really were.

25-29. **Some of the people of Jerusalem said.** The visitors did not know this, but some of the local residents did. **Can it be that the authorities really know?** Had the authorities changed their minds? **Why didn't they seize him? No one will know where he is from.** The Jews believed that when the

this the man they are trying to kill? ²⁶Look! He is talking in public, and nobody says anything against him! Can it be that the authorities really know that he is the Messiah? ²⁷But when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from. And we all know where this man comes from."

²⁸As Jesus taught in the temple he said in a loud voice, "Do you really know me, and know where I am from? But I have not come on my own. He who sent me, however, is true. You do not know him, ²⁹but I know him, because I come from him and he sent me."

³⁰Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. ³¹But many in the crowd believed in him, and said, "When the Messiah comes, will he do more mighty works than this man has done?"

Guards Are Sent to Arrest Jesus

³²The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering these things about him, so they and the chief priests sent some guards to arrest Jesus. ³³Jesus said, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I shall go away to him who sent me. ³⁴You will look for me, but you will not find me, because where I shall be you cannot go."

³⁵The Jewish authorities said among themselves. "Where is he about to go so that we shall not find him? Will he go to the Greek cities where the Jews live, and teach the Greeks?

they are trying to kill? Here ²⁶ he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ?

But we know where this ²⁷ man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from."

Then Jesus, still teaching ²⁸ in the temple court, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, but I know him because I ²⁹ am from him and he sent me."

At this they tried to seize ³⁰ him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come. Still, ³¹ many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"

The Pharisees heard the ³² crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

Jesus said, "I am with you ³³ for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me. You will look for me, ³⁴ you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."

The Jews said to one an- ³⁵ other, "Where does this man intend to go that we cannot find him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks,

Messiah came, no one would know his origin, and they thought they knew Jesus' origin. **Do you really know me?** They knew his earthly origin, but they refused to know his supernatural origin. He was God, the Eternal Logos, come in human form! They did not know God; how could they know whom God had sent?

30. Then they tried to arrest him. Johnson thinks this was the action of the citizens of Jerusalem, rather than an official act by the authorities.

31. But many in the crowd believed in him. They believed he was a teacher sent by God, and that he might be the Messiah. Compare *John 3:1-2*.

33-36. I shall be with you a little while longer. He predicts his death and his return to heaven. **Because where I shall be you cannot go.** They cannot go with him, either on earth, or after death, if they die in

³⁶He says, 'You will look for me but you will not find me,' and, 'You cannot go where I shall be.' What does he mean?"

Streams of Living Water

³⁷The last day of the feast was the most important. On that day Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice, "Whoever is thirsty should come to me and drink. ³⁸As the scripture says, 'Whoever believes in me, streams of living water will pour out from his heart.' " ³⁹Jesus said this about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were going to receive. At that time the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not been raised to glory.

Division among the People

⁴⁰Many of the people in the crowd heard him say this and said, "This man is really the Prophet!"

⁴¹Others said, "He is the Messiah!"

But others said, "The Messiah will not come

teach the Greeks? What did 36 he mean when he said, 'you will look for me, but you will not find me,' and 'Where I am, you cannot come?'"

On the last and greatest 37 day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as 38 the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

By this he meant the 39 Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

On hearing his words, 40 some of the people said, "surely this man is the Prophet."

Others said, "He is the 41 Christ."

Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from

their sins (*John 8:21-24*). What he said is clear to us, because we look back in time.

37. **Whoever is thirsty should come to me and drink.** Jewish writers tell us that each of the first seven days, there was a jubilant procession to the pool of Siloam, from which water was brought in a gold jar, to be poured out on the altar in the temple. This honored the water which Moses brought from the rock in the wilderness, which was symbolic of Christ himself (*1 Cor. 10:4*).

38. **Whoever believes in me.** "Come," "believes," all point to *faith* as the *means* which brings us to Christ. See note on *Acts 2:38*. [The exact wording of this quotation is not found, but gives the "spirit" of *Isa. 58:11; Psalm 36:8-9*. Compare *John 4:14*.] **Will pour out from his heart.** Verse 39 gives the inspired interpretation of this.

39. **Jesus said this about the Spirit.** This makes *Acts chapter two* the best explanation of this section of verses. The fountain of living water which *each* Christian has, is the Holy Spirit (*Eph. 2:22; 1 Cor. 6:19-20*). [The one indispensable condition of receiving the Holy Spirit is perfect obedience to God's Law. Christ has fulfilled that condition *for us* (*Rom. 8:4*). The sacrifice of Christ which makes us God's friends (the atonement) fulfilled *every condition* for God to pour out his Spirit upon all men. Therefore, Christ has *qualified* everyone for the Holy Spirit as a gift. But we must reach out through faith to seize his sacrifice and make ourselves part of it. See *John 3:3-8* and notes.] **The Spirit had not yet been given.** First, Jesus had to die, be raised from death, and go back to the Father. Then, as he sits at the right side of the Father, he sent the Spirit to his disciples on the day of Pentecost. This was the official beginning of the preaching of the Good News.

40-44. **Others said.** Who is he??? On their thinking, compare the questions they asked John the Baptist (*John 1:19-25*). They thought he was a native of Galilee. **Will be born in Bethlehem.** See notes on *Matt. 2:5-6*.

from Galilee! ⁴²The scripture says that the Messiah will be a descendant of David, and will be born in Bethlehem, the town where David lived." ⁴³So there was a division in the crowd because of him. ⁴⁴Some wanted to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him.

The Unbelief of the Jewish Authorities

⁴⁵The guards went back to the chief priest and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not bring him?"

⁴⁶The guards answered, "Nobody has ever talked the way this man does!"

⁴⁷"Did he fool you, too?" the Pharisees asked them. ⁴⁸"Have you ever known one of the authorities or one Pharisee to believe in him? ⁴⁹This crowd does not know the Law of Moses, so they are under God's curse!"

⁵⁰Nicodemus was one of them; he was the one who had gone to see Jesus before. He said to them, ⁵¹"According to our Law we cannot condemn a man before hearing him and finding out what he has done."

⁵²"Well," they answered, "are you also from Galilee? Study the Scriptures and you will learn that no prophet ever comes from Galilee."

Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David's family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?" Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

Unbelief of the Jewish Leaders

Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?"

"No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees put his trust in him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them."

Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, "Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?"

They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."

[Then they all left, each to his own home.

45. **The guards went back.** They had been sent to arrest Jesus (*verse 32*).

46. **Nobody has ever talked the way this man does!** McGarvey thinks the Council was in session, expecting them to bring in Jesus. The guards had not carried out their orders, and this is the only reason they can give.

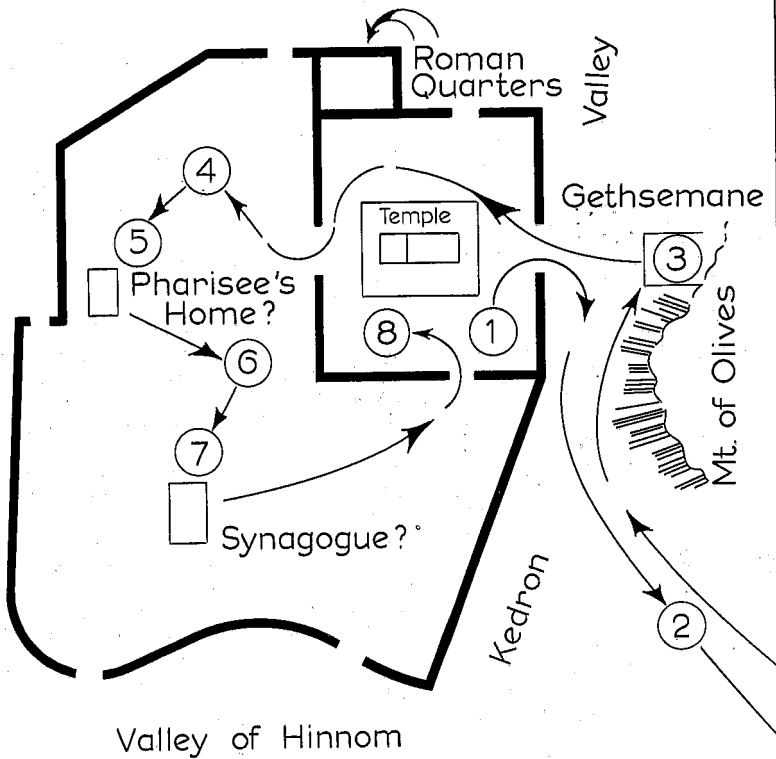
47-48. **Did he fool you, too?** The Jewish authorities think Jesus is a deceiver. **Have you ever known one?** What they believe, is made the standard. [At least two of the Council did believe: Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.]

49. **This crowd does not know the Law of Moses!** Their reasoning was: "it is only these ignorant people who believe in this Jesus. They are easily fooled, and they are cursed by God anyway."

50-52. **According to our Law.** The Law required justice. Nicodemus uses it to try to help Jesus. **No prophet ever comes from Galilee.** Their anger makes them tell a lie. Jonah, Elijah, and Nahum were all from Galilee.

MAP NO. 5—THIRD YEAR, LATER JUDEAN MINISTRY (about 3 months)

1. Temple; Feast of Tabernacles; Sermons on Light of World; Freedom; Abraham's Children; Man born blind healed; Good Shepherd; 70 sent out to evangelize, *John 7-8-9-10 & Luke 10*
2. Bethany; Jesus, Mary & Martha, *Luke 10*
3. Place of Prayer; Discourse on Prayer, *Luke 11*
4. Place unknown; charged with being in league with Satan, *Luke 11*
5. Dining in Pharisee's home; denounces Pharisaism, *Luke 11*
6. Before multitudes of 1000's; Great evangelistic appeals on Hypocrisy, Anxiety, Covetousness, *Luke 12-13*
7. In a Synagogue; heals woman bowed double; controversy over healing on the Sabbath, *Luke 13*
8. Feast of Dedication (December); Jews seek to kill Jesus, *John 10*



The Woman Caught in Adultery

8 [Then everyone went home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early the next morning he went back to the temple. The whole crowd gathered around him, and he sat down and began to teach them. ³The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and made her stand before them all. "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. ⁵In our Law Moses gave a commandment that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say?" ⁶They said this to trap him, so they could accuse him. But Jesus bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. ⁷As they stood there asking him questions, he straightened up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." ⁸Then he bent

The Woman Caught in Adultery

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn he appeared again in the temple court, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him begin stoning her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

1. **Then everyone went home.** [This section about the Woman Caught in Adultery is omitted by most ancient manuscripts, and some that contain it place it in chapter 21. However, it is in both the Old Latin and the Vulgate; and is accepted as authentic.] After the conversation with the Jewish Authorities in chapter 7. **Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.** He often spent the night there.

2-3. **Brought in a woman.** They expect to trap him and make him incriminate himself. [This is like the question of paying taxes, *Matt. 22:17*.]

4-5. **Teacher.** They call him this, but they do not mean it. **This woman was caught in the very act.** These men were acting as private individuals, and came to Jesus claiming to be so shocked by this woman's conduct, that they wanted to revive the long-abandoned practice of death by stoning.

6. **They said this to trap him.** With cold-blooded impudence, they actually use her guilt to try to destroy Jesus. **But Jesus bent over and wrote.** As though he understood what they were trying to do, but would not accept their question. [This is the only time Jesus is described as writing.]

7. **As they stood there.** Do they think he is embarrassed? Do they think he has no answer? As they see him tracing figures on the ground, they "*close in*" for the *kill*, but Jesus is only giving them "enough rope to hang themselves!" **Whichever one of you has committed no sin.** What hope is there for the world, when the religious and righteous become even more detestable than the sin they intend to punish! There must be more to this than we are told. He does not declare the woman either guilty or innocent, but with a few words, it is the men on trial here, and not the woman. [Some think Jesus wrote words on the ground, which showed the men he knew their hidden secrets. But we are not told this. Perhaps *2 Pet. 2:14* describes their character. It could be they have *used* this woman themselves.]

8. **Then he bent over again.** By this, he dismisses them.

over again and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard this they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰He straightened up and said to her, "Where are they, woman? Is there no one left to condemn you?"

¹¹"No one, sir," she answered.

"Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."]

Jesus the Light of the World

¹²Jesus spoke to them again, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in the darkness."

¹³The Pharisees said to him, "Now you are testifying on your own behalf; what you say proves nothing."

¹⁴"No," Jesus answered, "even if I do testify on my own behalf, what I say is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going. You do not know where I came from or where I am going. ¹⁵You make judgments in a purely human

At this, those who heard ⁹ began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened ¹⁰ up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she said. ¹¹

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."]*

The Validity of Jesus' Testimony

When Jesus spoke again ¹² to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

The Pharisees challenged ¹³ him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

Jesus answered, "Even if I ¹⁴ testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. You judge by human ¹⁵ standards; I pass judgment

9. **When they heard this, they all left.** They do not argue with Jesus, because they cannot! They said too much about the woman's guilt, and they know it was they themselves who tried to evade the Law. Compare this with *verse 46*.

10. **Is there no one left to condemn you?** The "case" is withdrawn. No one is left to prove her guilty. [Compare *Rom. 8:33-35*.]

11. **I do not condemn you either.** Jesus gives her "grace." Even though she is guilty, he does not condemn her, but sets her free! **Go, but do not sin again.** One who is forgiven, must give up sin! He gives mercy, but does not *overlook* sin.

12. **I am the light of the world.** See notes on *Matt. 5:14; John 1:7-10*.

13-14. **What I say is true.** The Pharisees argued against this. If someone claimed to be from God, his own claim proved nothing. But Jesus did speak the truth, because he was the Truth! And there was other evidence which proved his claim (*verse 18*).

15. **You make judgments.** They judged by purely human standards. **I pass judgment on no one.** Jesus knows the complete truth about himself. Also, he allows the lives and consciences of men to show just what they are.

* The most reliable early MSS omit *John 7:53-8:11*.

way; I pass judgment on no one. ¹⁶But if I were to pass judgment, my judging would be true, because I am not alone in this; the Father who sent me is with me. ¹⁷It is written in your Law that when two witnesses agree, what they say is true. ¹⁸I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me also testifies on my behalf."

¹⁹"Where is your father?" they asked him.

"You know neither me nor my Father," Jesus answered. "If you knew me you would know my Father also."

²⁰Jesus said all this as he taught in the temple, in the room where the offering boxes were placed. And no one arrested him, because his hour had not come.

You Cannot Go Where I Am Going

²¹Jesus said to them again, "I will go away; you will look for me, but you will die in your sins. You cannot go where I am going."

²²So the Jewish authorities said, "He says, 'You cannot go where I am going.' Does this mean that he will kill himself?"

on no one. But if I do judge, ¹⁶ my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father who sent me.

In your own Law it is ¹⁷ written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one ¹⁸ who testifies for myself; my other witness is the one who sent me—the Father."

Then they asked him, ¹⁹ "Where is your father?"

"You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." He ²⁰ spoke these words while teaching in the temple area near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his time had not yet come.

Once more Jesus said to ²¹ them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come."

This made the Jews ask, ²² "Will he kill himself?" Is that why he says, 'Where I go, you cannot come?'"

16. **But if I were to pass judgment.** He came to be the world's Savior (*John 3:17*). But he is qualified to "judge," since he uses the Father's rules to measure by.

17. **It is written in your Law.** Notice he does not say, "our Law." The Law required *two* witnesses (*Deut. 19:15*).

18. **And the Father who sent me.** Here were the two witnesses. The Father gave his testimony by: the prophets; the mighty works that Jesus did; the Voice at Jesus' baptism; John the Baptist.

19. **Where is your father?** They challenge him to produce this unseen witness. They thought in terms of a human father (*verse 27*). **You know neither me nor my Father.** Those who reject Christ show that they are ignorant of the Father. If they believed in Jesus as the Messiah, they would have known who his Father was. See *John 14:6-10*.

20. **As he taught in the temple.** In the Women's Court. See notes on *Mark 12:41-44*. This was near where the Council met, but they did not arrest him.

21. **You cannot go where I am going.** Jesus will return to the Father, but they will be unable to follow, because they will die in their sins through *unbelief*. Compare *John 7:33-36*.

22. **That he will kill himself?** They are making fun of him. The Jews believed the darkest area of the "world of the dead" was reserved for suicides.

²³Jesus answered, "You come from here below, but I come from above. You come from this world, but I do not come from this world. ²⁴That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. And you will die in your sins if you do not believe that 'I Am Who I Am'."

²⁵"Who are you?" they asked him.

Jesus answered, "What I have told you from the very beginning. ²⁶There are many things I have to say and judge about you. The one who sent me, however, is true, and I tell the world only what I have heard from him."

²⁷They did not understand that he was talking to them about the Father. ²⁸So Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man you will know that 'I Am Who I Am'; then you will know that I do nothing on my own, but say only what the Father has taught me. ²⁹And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, because I always do what pleases him."

³⁰Many who heard Jesus say these things believed in him.

But he continued, "You ²³ are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you ²⁴ would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins." "Who are you, anyway?" ²⁵ they asked.

"Just what I have been claiming all along," Jesus replied. "I have much to say ²⁶ in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world."

They did not understand ²⁷ that he was telling them about his Father. So Jesus ²⁸ said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.

The one who sent me is ²⁹ with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." Even as he ³⁰ spoke, many put their faith in him.

23-24. **But I come from above.** Jesus had showed *their* sins to be the basis of separation, but they believed they could go anywhere he could go, unless he went to *some place* for self-murder. In response to this, Jesus tells them he is from heaven, and will return there after his death. They are part of this world that is taking men to their death (*Rom. 7:24*), and can only escape by believing in him! **I AM WHO I AM.** They would understand by this that Jesus is claiming to be God. This is the language of *Exod. 3:14* [The Septuagint has *HO ON*. *ON* is nom. sing. masc. part. pres. *ΕΙΜΙ*. Jesus says he is *ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΙ*, which identifies him as *HO ON*.]

25. **Who are you?** This is not a question, but a challenge! Jesus answers it by referring them to what he has already said.

26-27. **They did not understand.** Their minds were so filled with this world, that they had no interest in spiritual things. They would not believe that *their* God was *his* Father.

28. **When you lift up the Son of Man.** Lifting him up on the Cross would break down unbelief. Many things would happen to show that he was the Son of God. Fifty days after his raising from death, three thousand would be convinced and obey the Truth (*Acts 2:36-39*). **I AM WHO I AM.** See note on *verse 24*.

29. **He has not left me alone.** The Father was with him and in him. He was [and is] "the brightness of God's glory."

30. **Many who heard Jesus.** That he was a teacher sent from God.

Free Men and Slaves

³¹So Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him, "If you obey my teaching you are really my disciples; ³²you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

³³"We are the descendants of Abraham," they answered, "and we have never been anybody's slaves. What do you mean, then, by saying, 'You will be free'?"

³⁴Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: everyone who sins is a slave of sin. ³⁵A slave does not belong to the family always, but a son belongs there forever. ³⁶If the Son makes you free, then you will be really free. ³⁷I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are trying to kill me, because you will not accept my teaching. ³⁸I talk about what my Father has shown me, but you do what your father has told you."

The Children of Abraham

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

Jesus replies, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father."

31. **If you obey my teaching.** Following Jesus is an "either/or" proposition. The *test* of being a disciple of Jesus, is in obeying his teaching. "The Jews" would include some of the Jewish authorities, and they did believe he was a teacher sent from God. Yet as he teaches them further about the fact that he is the Messiah, they fail the test (*verse 59*).

32. **And the truth will make you free.** The *truth* is that God has acted in history through Jesus Christ. Those who believe this will reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make themselves part of it. But faith is built on truth, and without truth, there can be no faith. God's truth frees us from sin and death.

33. **We are the descendants of Abraham.** Their faith was in their ancestor, not in God. See note on *Matt. 3:9*. **We have never been anybody's slaves.** The Jews had been held as slaves over six hundred years to Babylon, Persia, Macedonia, and Rome.

34. **Everyone who sins is a slave of sin.** Christ does not argue with them, but states a fact. The one who makes a *НАВЪТ* of sin is a slave to Satan. [See *Rom. 7:9-24*.]

35. **But a son belongs there forever.** A slave has no legal claim on the family. The son is a permanent member of the family. The Jews, as slaves of sin, would soon be turned out of the Lord's household. *Matt. 23:37-39*.

36. **If the Son makes you free.** See *Gal. 4:19-31*.

37. **I know you are Abraham's descendants.** He implies they did not have the same attitude that Abraham had. Since they were Abraham's descendants, they should have acted as he did, and believed God.

38. **I talk about.** He was the Father's Son! In "spirit," they followed the Devil as their father.

³⁹They answered him, "Our father is Abraham."

"If you really were Abraham's children," Jesus replied, "you would do the same works that he did. ⁴⁰All I have ever done is to tell you the truth I heard from God. Yet you are trying to kill me. Abraham did nothing like this! ⁴¹You are doing what your father did."

"God himself is the only Father we have," they answered. "We are his true sons."

⁴²Jesus said to them, "If God really were your father, you would love me, because I came from God and now I am here, I did not come on my own, but he sent me. ⁴³Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to listen to my message. ⁴⁴You are the children of your father, the Devil, and you want to follow your father's desires. From the very beginning he was a murderer. He has never been on the side of truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie he is only doing what is natural to him, because he is a liar and the father of all lies.

⁴⁵I tell the truth, and that is why you do not

"Abraham is our father," ³⁹ they answered.

"If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you ⁴⁰ are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the ⁴¹ things your own father does."

"We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

The Children of the Devil

Jesus said to them, "If ⁴² God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my ⁴³ language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.

You belong to your ⁴⁴ father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I ⁴⁵ tell the truth, you do not be-

39-40. If you really were Abraham's children. The things which they did, disproved their claim to be the children of Abraham. The true "blood-line" is spiritual (*Gal. 3:26-29*).

41. You are only doing what your father did. They were *spiritually* the Devil's children. We are his true sons. They claim to be true sons of the living God. [Some versions translate this: "We were not born of fornication." This is misleading, because it sounds to us like an insult. It is rather their claim to be *legitimate* children of God.]

42. If God really were your father. The fact they hated the Son proved they were not God's children. Jesus bears down hard on them, because he wishes to save them from God's wrath. It isn't "make-believe," but a very serious matter! Only Jesus CAN save them (*Acts 4:12*).

43. Why do you not understand what I say? Minds filled with ideas from the Devil, find it hard to understand the ideas from God, no matter how plainly they are expressed.

44. You are the children. By their hate and their desire to kill Jesus (*John 7:25*), they show they are spiritual children of the Devil. From the very beginning he was a murderer. He was once "in truth," but rebelled (*2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6*). He "murdered" the human race, by introducing sin into the world (*Gen. 3*). Those who are trying to kill Jesus, have this same "spirit."

45. I tell the truth. If he told them a lie, they would believe it, because they hate the truth. Compare *John 5:43*.

believe me. ⁴⁶Which one of you can prove that I am guilty of sin? If I tell the truth, then why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷He who comes from God listens to God's words. You, however, are not from God, and this is why you will not listen."

Jesus and Abraham

⁴⁸The Jews replied to Jesus, "Were we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon in you?"

⁴⁹"I have no demon," Jesus answered. "I honor my Father, but you dishonor me. ⁵⁰I am not seeking honor for myself. There is one who is seeking it and who judges in my favor. ⁵¹I tell you the truth: whoever obeys my message will never die."

⁵²The Jews said to him, "Now we know for sure that you have a demon! Abraham died, and the prophets died, yet you say, 'Whoever obeys my message will never die.' ⁵³Our father Abraham died; you do not claim to be greater than Abraham, do you? And the prophets also died. Who do you think you are?"

lieve me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

He who belongs to God ⁴⁷ hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."

The Claims of Jesus About Himself

The Jews answered him, ⁴⁸ "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?"

"I am not possessed by a ⁴⁹ demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge.

I tell you the truth, if a ⁵¹ man keeps my word, he will never see death."

At this the Jews exclaimed, ⁵² "Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if a man keeps your word, he will never taste death. Are you greater than ⁵³ our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?"

46. **Which one of you can prove?** Compare notes on *verses 7-9*. He points to his sinless life as proof there is nothing false in his words. They all knew he was a "holy man" (*John 3:2*).

47. **You, however, are not from God.** See notes on *John 3:19-21*.

48. **Were we not right?** This is an insult! Samaritans were hated (see notes on *John 4:5-9*). Demon (see notes on *Matt. 4:24; 8:29-32*).

49. **I honor my Father.** He ignores the charge he is a Samaritan. He shows he could not have a demon, because he honors the Father. They dishonored him by their charges. Compare notes on *Matt. 12:24-34*.

50. **I am not seeking honor for myself.** He was not sent to honor himself, but to do what God wanted him to do. He does not need to defend himself (*John 5:32*).

51. **Will never die.** The real death is spiritual death. Death of the body is not "real," in the sense that it is a *door* that leads to the Eternal World, where the believer finds the "Feast in Heaven." Notice it is **WHOEVER** - Jew or Gentile - obeys Christ's message.

52-53. **Now we know for sure.** They think this is proof of their charge against him. God had given his word to Abraham and the prophets, yet they had all died. How can Jesus claim his words will prevent death??? Compare *John 4:12*.

⁵⁴Jesus answered, "If I were to honor myself, my own honor would be worth nothing. The one who honors me is my Father—the very one you say is your God. ⁵⁵You have never known him, but I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar, like you. But I do know him, and I obey his word. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad."

⁵⁷The Jews said to him, "You are not even fifty years old—and you have seen Abraham?"

⁵⁸"I tell you the truth," Jesus replied. "Before Abraham was born, 'I Am'."

⁵⁹They picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself and left the temple.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

9 As Jesus walked along he saw a man who had been born blind. ²His disciples asked him, "Teacher, whose sin was it that caused him to be born blind? His own or his parents' sin?"

Jesus replied, "If I glorify 54 myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. 55 Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word. Your 56 father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

"You are not yet fifty 57 years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"

"I tell you the truth," 58 Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up 59 stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

9 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked 2 him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

54. **The one who honors me is my Father.** They had just asked: "Who do you think you are?" The Father will answer this by raising Jesus from death. This is the real proof, and the basis for our hope (1 Cor. 15:20).

55. **You have never known him.** "This very one you say is your God." They should have "known" God from the Scriptures, but they did not. Jesus **KNEW** God personally!

56. **Your father Abraham.** God made the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; Gal. 3:16). By faith, he looked forward to God's act in Christ to set men free. **My day.** This refers to the First Coming of Christ to be the world's Savior. See John 3:16, 25-27, and notes there.

57. **You are not even fifty years old?** Fifty years old was the "prime of life," and anyone under that was "young" (1 Tim. 4:12; Timothy was about thirty-five). They know it has been 2,000 years since Abraham was alive, and ask how he could have seen him.

58. **Before Abraham was born, 'I AM.'** This is an *official declaration*. "I Was" would have shown priority, "I AM" shows *timeless existence!* This identifies him with the "I AM" of the Old Testament. See notes on verse 24.

59. **They picked up stones to throw at him.** To them, what he just said was blasphemy. It would have been - if he was *only* human. But he was the Logos (John 1:1-3)! He hid himself, because it was not yet the right time for him to die. His death would be to fulfill God's purpose (Luke 9:31).

1. **He saw a man who had been born blind.** Blindness was a *disaster* in that society. One who was born blind would be thought more difficult to heal than one who went blind in later years.

2. **Whose sin was it?** They think all such trouble as this, comes as a "judgment" for sin. It is true that we bring many things on ourselves. But read what Jesus said in Luke 13:1-5.

³Jesus answered, "His blindness has nothing to do with his sins or his parents' sins. He is blind so that God's power might be seen at work in him. ⁴We must keep on doing the works of him who sent me, as long as it is day; the night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵While I am in the world I am the light for the world."

⁶After he said this, Jesus spat on the ground and made some mud with the spittle; he rubbed the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷and told him, "Go wash your face in the Pool of Siloam." (This name means "Sent.") So the man went, washed his face, and came back seeing.

⁸His neighbors, then, and the people who had seen him begging before this, asked, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?"

⁹Some said, "He is the one," but others said, "No he isn't, he just looks like him."

So the man himself said, "I am the man."

¹⁰"How were your eyes opened?" they asked him.

¹¹He answered, "The man named Jesus made some mud, rubbed it on my eyes, and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash your face.' So I went, and as soon as I washed I could see."

¹²"Where is he?" they asked.

"I do not know," he answered.

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, ³
⁴but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Having said this, he spit ⁶
⁷on the ground, made some mud with saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

His neighbors and those ⁸
⁹who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

"How then were your eyes ¹⁰
¹¹opened?" they demanded.

He replied, "The man ¹¹
¹²they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

"Where is this man?" ¹²
¹³they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

3. **Jesus answered.** He states that neither this man's sins nor his parent's sins have anything to do with his blindness. Pain and trouble is part of the *curse* placed on this world (*Gen. 3:16-19; Rom. 8:20-21*). This man's blindness was part of the Decree by which God rules the Universe. Such men as Job, Paul, Christ himself, and all the martyrs, show us that the one who suffers is not always a "sinner." Pain and trouble are also part of God's Plan to bless us (*Acts 14:22; 1 Thess. 3:3; Rev. 7:14-17*). This man's healing would help to show the power of God.

4. **The night is coming.** All work stops when darkness comes. Jesus had a mission to fulfill during the "day" of his human life. That "day" would terminate with his death. So will ours!

5. **I am the light for the world.** He opens the blind eyes of both body and spirit! We see Truth, because he gives us light!

6-7. **Go wash your face.** Christ requires an *act of faith*. The man must *reach out through faith to seize the promise*. When he does this, he can see! [The pool is dug in the rock: 53 feet long, 18 feet wide, 19 feet deep, fed by a spring.]

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

¹³Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴The day that Jesus made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵The Pharisees, then, asked the man again how he had received his sight. He told them, "He put some mud on my eyes, I washed my face, and now I can see."

¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "The man who did this cannot be from God, because he does not obey the Sabbath law."

Others, however, said, "How could a man who is a sinner do such mighty works as these?" And there was a division among them.

¹⁷So the Pharisees asked the man once more, "You say he opened your eyes—well, what do you say about him?"

"He is a prophet," he answered.

¹⁸The Jewish authorities, however, were not willing to believe that he had been blind and could now see, until they called the man's parents ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son? You say that he was born blind; well, how is it that he can see now?"

²⁰His parents answered, "We know that he is our son, and we know that he was born blind.

²¹But we do not know how it is that he is now able to see, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is old enough, and he can answer

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

They brought the man 13 who had been blind to the Pharisees. Now the day on 14 which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. There- 15 fore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

Some of the Pharisees 16 said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided.

Finally they turned again 17 to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

The man replied, "He is a prophet."

The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" 19 they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

"We know he is our son," 20 the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or 21 who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for

13. **To the Pharisees.** This is such an amazing thing, that they take him to the religious authorities.

14. **Was a Sabbath.** That is, Saturday. Compare *John 5:16-17* and notes.

15-16. **Because he does not obey the Sabbath law.** Not the Law, but their Tradition. See note on *Matt. 15:2*.

17. **He is a prophet.** He is a "man named Jesus" in *verse 11*; a "prophet" here; and in *verse 38* the formerly blind man declares his faith in Jesus as Lord!

for himself!" ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, who had already agreed that anyone who professed that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³That is why his parents said, "He is old enough; ask him!"

²⁴A second time they called back the man who had been born blind and said to him, "Promise before God that you will tell the truth! We know that this man is a sinner."

²⁵"I do not know if he is a sinner or not," the man replied. "One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see."

²⁶"What did he do to you?" they asked. "How did he open your eyes?"

²⁷"I have already told you," he answered, "and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Maybe you, too, would like to be his disciples?"

²⁸They insulted him and said, "You are that fellow's disciple; we are Moses' disciples. ²⁹We know that God spoke to Moses; as for that fellow, we do not even know where he comes from!"

³⁰The man answered, "What a strange thing this is! You do not know where he comes from, but he opened my eyes! ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners; he does listen to people who respect him and do what he wants them to do. ³²Since the beginning of the world it has never been heard of that someone opened the

himself." His parents said ²² this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents ²³ said, "He is of age; ask him."

A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner."

He replied, "Whether he ²⁵ is a sinner or not, I don't know. I do know one thing: I was blind but now I see!"

Then they asked him, ²⁶ "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

He answered, "I have told ²⁷ you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

Then they hurled insults ²⁸ at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."

The man answered, "Now ³⁰ that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does ³¹ not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ³² ever heard of opening the

22. Because they were afraid. They believed what their son had told them, but they say nothing that will cause them trouble with the authorities. The synagogue was the center of Jewish life. To be expelled made you an outcast who had few rights in the community.

24. We know that this man is a sinner. Because he healed on the Sabbath day.

30. What a strange thing this is! That a man who can open blind eyes would be unknown to the defenders of the faith! It is also strange that a man who was a blind beggar just a few hours before would "teach" the teachers of the Law.

31. We know that God does not listen to sinners. The Old Testament Scriptures say this (Prov. 15:29; Isa. 1:15; Micah 3:4; compare James 5:16-17).

eyes of a man born blind; ³³unless this man came from God, he would not be able to do a thing."

³⁴They answered back, "You were born and raised in sin—and you are trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue.

Spiritual Blindness

³⁵Jesus heard that they had thrown him out. He found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

³⁶The man answered, "Tell me who he is, sir, so I can believe in him!"

³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have already seen him, and he is the one who is talking with you now."

³⁸"I believe, Lord!" the man said, and knelt down before Jesus.

³⁹Jesus said, "I came to this world to judge, so that the blind should see, and those who see should become blind."

⁴⁰Some Pharisees, who were there with him, heard him say this and asked him, "You don't mean that we are blind, too?"

⁴¹Jesus answered, "If you were blind, then you would not be guilty; but since you say, 'We can see,' this means that you are still guilty."

eyes of a man born blind. If ³³this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

To this they replied, "You ³⁴were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

Spiritual Blindness

Jesus heard that they had ³⁵thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

"Who is he, sir?" the man ³⁶asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."

Jesus said, "You have ³⁷now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

Then the man said, ³⁸"Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Jesus said, "For judgment ³⁹I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will turn out to be blind."

Some Pharisees who were ⁴⁰with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

Jesus said, "If you were ⁴¹blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

34. **You were born and raised in sin?** This is the Jewish answer [their answer] to question in *verse 2*. If they can't dispute what he says, they can expel him, and they do!

35. **Do you believe in the Son of Man?** The man is *cut off* from all that comes through Moses. Jesus offers him all that comes through the Messiah! [**Son of Man:** this title is used more than 80 times in the New Testament, and it is Jesus who calls himself this (except *Acts 7:56; Rev. 1:13*). On the meaning of this title, see *Luke 22:69-70; John 5:27* and notes there. The Latin Vulgate has "Son of God" here.]

36-38. **Tell me who he is, sir.** The way he asks this shows he thinks *knowing* the Son of Man is such a privilege that he has no right to hope for it. **I believe, Lord!** The man had lost the world, but found the Messiah! He *acts out his faith* by kneeling down before Jesus.

39. **I came to this world to judge.** Not as a "judge on the bench," but to force people to "sort themselves out." Compare notes on *Matt. 11:25; John 6:37*. Those who "become blind," refuse to see Truth. 40-41. **You don't mean that we are blind too?** They knew this was what he had implied. **If you were blind.** That is, "If you were aware of your spiritual blindness and tried to see, you would either find *light*, or not be held responsible for failing to try." They could *see* if they would *open their eyes*, therefore they were still guilty.

The Parable of the Sheepfold

10 "I tell you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. ²The man who goes in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gate-keeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. ⁴When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from him, because they do not know his voice."

⁶Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

⁷So Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth: I

The Shepherd and His Flock

10 "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.

1. **By the door.** The sheepfold is a symbol of the Kingdom/church [see note on Matt. 16:18], and Christ is the one door into it. A sheepfold was a roofless enclosure with walls made of loose stone or thornbushes, with only one door opening into it. The sheep are led into the sheepfold at night, to protect them.

2. **Who goes in by the door.** The door is for the shepherd and the sheep. One who climbs over the wall is a thief and a robber.

3. **The gatekeeper opens the gate for him.** The shepherd led the sheep into the sheepfold through the door, and the gatekeeper fastened the door from the inside and stayed with the sheep all night as a "night-watchman." [Some make this "gatekeeper" symbolize God.] In the morning, the shepherd comes to get his sheep, the gatekeeper opens the gate [door], and the shepherd calls his sheep to come. [More than one flock of sheep were sometimes kept together in a sheepfold, and each knew the voice of their own shepherd and would come only at his call.] **And he leads them out.** Shepherds "make pets" of their sheep, giving them names as we do our dogs, etc. When they are called by name, they come playfully. The shepherd calls his sheep by name, and leads them out into the hills and meadows, where they eat the green grass.

4-5. **They will not follow someone else.** Jesus is saying that the Pharisees are thieves and robbers who have seized control of the sheepfold. The people ran away from them, because they did not recognize their voice (see note on Matt. 9:36). [The Jewish authorities fulfilled the prophecies about the false shepherds (Ezek. 34:1-6; Jer. 33:1-6; Zech. 11:4-11). Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the True Shepherd (Psalm 23; 77:20; 80:1; 95:7; Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 34:31; Micah 7:14; Isa. 43:11).]

6. **But they did not understand.** Because the idea of *loving care* was so *alien* to them.

7. **I am the door for the sheep.** He is the **ONE DOOR** for all, both sheep and shepherds.

am the door for the sheep. ⁸All others who came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the door. Whoever comes in by me will be saved; he will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that they might have life, life in all its fulness.

¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd is willing to die for the sheep. ¹²The hired man, who is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep, leaves them and runs away when he sees a wolf coming; so the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³The hired man runs away because he is only a hired man and does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵I am the good shepherd. As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them. ¹⁶There are other sheep that belong to me that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them, too; they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

All who ever came before me ⁸ were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; who- ⁹ ever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pas- ¹⁰ ture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

“I am the good shepherd. ¹¹ The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the ¹² shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The ¹³ man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

“I am the good shepherd; ¹⁴ I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the ¹⁵ Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this flock. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and

8. **All others who came before me.** The false messiahs of the past. They could not fulfill the prophecies about the Messiah. Rather than coming in through the *door*, they climbed over the wall!

9. **Whoever comes in by me will be saved.** The “door” allows the sheep to enter, and therefore is symbolic of *coming in* to protection and shelter; and *going out* to freedom and life. [Christ is *at the same time* the door, the shepherd and the pasture. He is the bread of life and the water of life.]

10. **The thief comes.** All who refuse to come in through the door, have a *bad purpose* in mind. **I have come.** Jesus came to be the Life-giver! He promises *life in all its fulness* in this world and in the world to come! Compare *Psalms 23; Phil. 4:4-9*.

11. **I am the good shepherd.** This title is applied to Jehovah in *Psalms 23; Ezek. 34:11-12*. The shepherd often had to defend his flock from enemies. He is willing to die for his sheep!

12. **The hired man.** Both a shepherd and a hired man take care of sheep for a profit. The difference is in attitude!

13. **And does not care for the sheep.** When danger threatens, he is willing to sacrifice the sheep to try to save himself! Compare note on *Matt. 10:39*.

14-16. **There are other sheep.** The Gentiles. People “sort themselves out” by responding to Christ’s *call* which comes through the Gospel. See note on *John 6:37*.

¹⁷"The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. ¹⁸No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do."

¹⁹Again there was a division among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰Many of them were saying, "He has a demon! He is crazy! Why do you listen to him?"

²¹But others were saying, "A man with a demon could not talk like this! How could a demon open the eyes of blind men?"

Jesus Rejected by the Jews

²²The time came to celebrate the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem; it was winter. ²³Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch in the temple, ²⁴when the Jews gathered around him and said, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? Tell us the plain truth: are you the Messiah?"

²⁵Jesus answered, "I have already told you, but you would not believe me. The works I do by my Father's authority speak on my behalf; ²⁶but you will not believe because you are not my

one shepherd. The reason ¹⁷ my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one ¹⁸ takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

At these words the Jews ¹⁹ were again divided. Many of ²⁰ them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?"

But others said, "These ²¹ are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. How can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

The Unbelief of the Jews

Then came the Feast of ²² Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in ²³ the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The ²⁴ Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I did tell ²⁵ you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe be- ²⁶ cause you do not belong to

17-18. **I give it up of my own free will.** This destroys the idea that Jesus came to set up a political kingdom, but was *frustrated* by being crucified. Jesus *gave himself* for man of his own free will! This does not take away the guilt of those who murdered him (*Acts 2:36*). God chose this way to rescue man from sin and make them his friends (*Luke 9:31; Col. 1:20*). This is the basis of the Good News (*1 Cor. 1:18-25; 15:1-4*). He gave his life on the Cross; he took it back when he raised from death. [In these first 18 verses; Christ first is the door, through whom the true shepherds must enter. Then he is the good shepherd, whose praises both David and Isaiah sung, who gives his life for his sheep.]

19. **Again there was a division.** See notes on *Matt. 10:34-39*.

22. **The Feast of Dedication.** Two months have passed. This feast celebrated the restoration and rededication of the Temple by the Jewish patriot Judas Maccabeus in 165 B.C. It lasted eight days, and began about December 10th.

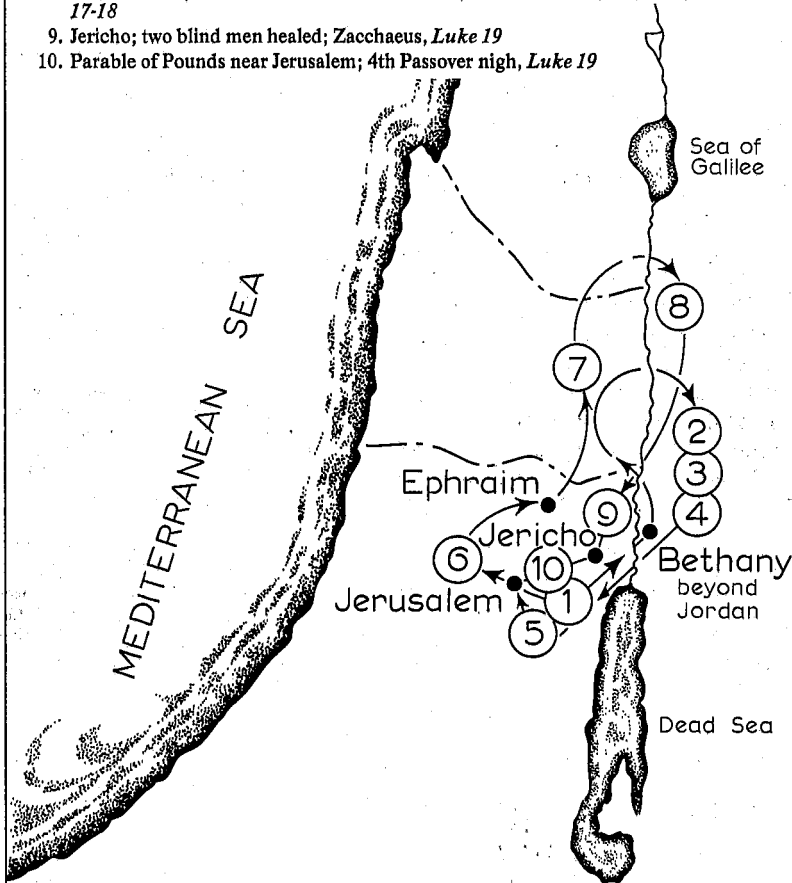
23-24. **When the Jews gathered around him.** The Jewish authorities. They do not ask this for information, but to try to incriminate him.

25. **I have already told you.** See *John 5:19; 8:36, 56, 58; 9:39*.

26. **But you will not believe.** There is plenty of evidence to make them believe! Failure to be Christ's sheep was the evidence, not the cause, of their unbelief.

MAP NO. 6—THIRD YEAR, LATER PEREAN MINISTRY (about 3 months)

1. Feast of Dedication, Jerusalem; attempts to kill Jesus; retires to Bethabara (place of His baptism), *John 10*
2. Perea; journey through cities and villages; few saved, *John 10*
3. Home of a Pharisee; rules for feasting, *Luke 14*
4. Place unknown; parables of lost sheep; lost coin; lost son; Lazarus and rich man; Lawyer's question, *Luke 15 & 16*
5. Receives call to come to Bethany; raises Lazarus; Jews seek to kill both, *John 11*
6. Retirement to Ephraim with 12 disciples, *John 11*
7. Journey through borders of Samaria; Galilee, Perea; heals ten lepers, *Luke 17*
8. Sermon on time of Kingdom; teaching on Divorce; little children; Pharisee and publican; rich young ruler; parable of laborers in vineyard; plainest prediction of crucifixion; James & John seek chief honors, *Matthew 19-20, Mark 10, Luke 17-18*
9. Jericho; two blind men healed; Zacchaeus, *Luke 19*
10. Parable of Pounds near Jerusalem; 4th Passover night, *Luke 19*



sheep. ²⁷My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never die; and no one can snatch them away from me. ²⁹What my Father has given me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them away from the Father's care.

³⁰The Father and I are one."

³¹Then the Jews once more picked up stones to throw at him. ³²Jesus said to them, "I have done many good works before you which the Father gave me to do; for which one of these do you want to stone me?"

³³The Jews answered back, "We do not want to stone you because of any good works, but because of the way in which you insult God! You are only a man, but you are trying to make yourself God!"

³⁴Jesus answered, "It is written in your own Law that God said, 'You are gods.' ³⁵We know that what the scripture says is true forever; and God called them gods, those people to whom his message was given. ³⁶As for me, the Father chose me and sent me into the world. How, then, can you say that I insult God because I said that I am the Son of God? ³⁷Do not believe me, then,

my flock. My sheep listen to ²⁷ my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them ²⁸ eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given ²⁹ them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I ³⁰ and the Father are one."

Again the Jews picked up ³¹ stones to stone him, but ³² Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

"We are not stoning you ³³ for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

Jesus answered them, "Is ³⁴ it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken—what about the ³⁵ one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'? Do not believe me unless I do what my Father

27-28. **I give them eternal life.** Not just eternal existence, but eternal happiness! All will live forever, but not all will share God's promise (see *John 5:28-29* and notes).

29. **And no one can snatch them away.** That is, those sheep who hear his voice and follow him. So long as they remain under his grace, they are safe, (see *Rom. 8:33-39; Heb. 6:4-6; 2 Pet. 1:10*).

30-31. **The Father and I are one.** Jesus declares a UNITY exists between he and the Father [and the Holy Spirit], without limitations or restrictions. **Picked up stones.** [Herod had rebuilt the temple, but it was not yet finished. There would be plenty of stones lying around.] See note on *John 8:59*.

33. **But because of the way.** Because he said: "The Father and I are one." Jesus declared that his good works proved his calm; they declared he was only a man, nothing more.

34-36. **It is written in your own Law.** *Psalms 82:6*. [Note Jesus includes the Psalms in the Law.] **You are gods.** Their own judges [rulers] had been called "gods" in the Scriptures. This was because God's message [commission] was given to them. **The Father chose me and sent me.** If the purely human judges can be called "gods," Jesus has a much better right to be called "God." [Sanctify = to chose, set apart.]

37-38. **But if I do them.** "Actions speak louder than words."

if I am not doing my Father's works. ³⁸But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, you should at least believe my works, in order that you may know once and for all that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father."

³⁹Once more they tried to arrest him, but he slipped out of their hands.

⁴⁰Jesus went back again across the Jordan River to the place where John had been baptizing, and stayed there. ⁴¹Many people came to him. "John did no mighty works," they said, "but everything he said about this man was true." ⁴²And many people there believed in him.

The Death of Lazarus

11 A man named Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, became sick. Bethany was the town where Mary and her sister Martha lived. ²(This Mary was the one who poured the perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was sick.) ³The sisters sent Jesus a message, "Lord, your dear friend is sick."

⁴When Jesus heard it he said, "The final result of this sickness will not be the death of Lazarus; this has happened to bring glory to God, and will be the means by which the Son of God will receive glory."

does. But if I do it, even ³⁸ though you do not believe me, believe the evidence of the miracles, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." Again they ³⁹ tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

Then Jesus went back a- ⁴⁰ cross the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed and many people ⁴¹ came to him. They said, "Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true." And in that ⁴² place many believed in Jesus.

The Death of Lazarus

11 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose ² brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word ³ to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified

39. **Once more they tried to arrest him.** Their "violence" is cooled down by the quiet words of Jesus, and they drop their stones. But they still reject him and intend to arrest him.

40-42. **Jesus went back again.** See *John 1:28*. Jesus had spent nearly three months in Jerusalem in a stormy ministry. Twice they attempted to "mob" him (*John 8:59; 10:31*). Twice they attempted to arrest him (*John 7:32; 10:39*). His time to die would not come for about three months, the time for the next Passover. The other Gospels tell something of Jesus' work across the Jordan.

1. **A man named Lazarus.** The other Gospels mention Mary and Martha, but not their brother Lazarus. Bethany was on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles east of Jerusalem.

2. **(This Mary.)** John clearly identifies which Mary he means. Remember he writes as a historian. He tells about the anointing in *John 12:1-8*. [Five Marys stand out in the New Testament: those from Nazareth, Magdala, Bethany; the mother of John Mark, and the wife of Clopas.]

3. **The sisters sent Jesus a message.** Jesus is across the Jordan. They expect Jesus' love for his dear friend will bring him to their home. They believe Jesus can heal their brother.

4. **Will not be the death.** As we look backward from our point in time, we see he spoke about God being glorified through the raising of this man from death.

⁵Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶When he received the news that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days. ⁷Then he said to the disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

⁸"Teacher," the disciples answered, "just a short time ago the Jews wanted to stone you; and you plan to go back there?"

⁹Jesus said, "A day has twelve hours, has it not? So if a man walks in broad daylight he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰But if he walks during the night he stumbles, because there is no light in him."
¹¹Jesus said this, and then added, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I will go wake him up."

¹²The disciples answered, "If he is asleep, Lord, he will get well."

¹³But Jesus meant that Lazarus had died; they thought he meant natural sleep. ¹⁴So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead; ¹⁵but for your sake I am glad that I was not with him, so you will believe. Let us go to him."

¹⁶Thomas (called the Twin) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us all go along with the Teacher, so that we may die with him!"

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Martha and her sister and 6
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he sees by this world's light.
It is when he walks by night 10
that he stumbles, for he has
no light."

After he had said this, he
went on to tell them, "Our
friend Lazarus has fallen a-
sleep; but I am going there
to wake him up."

His disciples replied, 12
"Lord, if he sleeps, he will
get better." Jesus had been 13
speaking of his death, but
his disciples thought he
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So then he told them 14
plainly. "Lazarus is dead,
yet for your sake so that you 15
may believe, I am glad I was
not there. But let us go to
him."

Then Thomas, called 16
Didymus, said to the rest of
the disciples, "Let us also
go, that we may die with
him."

5-6. **Jesus loved.** AGAPE = divine love. In *verses 3 & 36* it is PHILOS = friendship, brotherly love. For two more days. Both to finish what he was doing there, and to allow enough time for things to be ready for the miracle he will do. Love is mentioned to show he was not indifferent to his friend's sickness and death. And this is not to bring selfish fame to Jesus, but to honor God and to show Jesus as the Messiah (*verse 4*).

8. **And you plan to go back there?** They think only of the danger to Jesus.

9-10. **A day has twelve hours.** He is walking in the light of day, because he knows what he is doing. See notes on *John 7:6; 9:4*.

11-16. **Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep.** Jesus called death "sleep" more than once, because it is only temporary. Compare *Matt. 9:24* and note. **So that we may die with him.** The Jewish authorities were so hostile that they expect this to end in death.

Jesus the Resurrection and the Life

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days before. ¹⁸Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹and many Jews had come to see Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother's death.

²⁰When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went out to meet him; but Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died! ²²But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask of him."

²³"Your brother will rise to life," Jesus told her.

²⁴"I know," she replied, "that he will rise to life on the last day."

²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

²⁷"Yes, Lord!" she answered. "I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

Jesus Comforts the Sisters

On his arrival, Jesus ¹⁷ found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Bethany was less ¹⁸ than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had ¹⁹ come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When ²⁰ Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

"Lord," Martha said to ²¹ Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even ²² now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your ²³ brother will rise again."

Martha answered, "I ²⁴ know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am ²⁵ the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and ²⁶ believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

"Yes, Lord," she told ²⁷ him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

19. **And many Jews had come.** Since John uses "Jews" to mean Jewish authorities, it shows us that the family of Lazarus ranked high. These came to sit and talk with the family. [Death was "mourned" as long as thirty days time. See note on *Matt. 9:23*.]

21. **If you had been here, Lord.** She believed Jesus could have prevented the death of her brother, but even she does not expect Jesus to raise him from death.

23. **Your brother will rise to life.** But she thinks Jesus speaks about the final Resurrection.

25. **I am the resurrection and the life.** If Christ were only a "good man," he could not have said this! He declares he has power over death and the grave! He demonstrates this in the miracle, but especially in his own raising from death. Compare *Matt. 27:52-53* and notes.

26. **And whoever lives and believes.** Death will be a *graduation* to a better world (2 *Pet. 3:13*).

27. **I do believe.** This declaration of her faith is the only **CREED** of the Kingdom/church which Jesus built. Compare *Matt. 16:16* and note there.

Jesus Weeps

²⁸After Martha said this she went back and called her sister Mary privately. "The Teacher is here," she told her, "and is asking for you."

²⁹When Mary heard this she got up and hurried out to meet him. ³⁰(Jesus had not arrived in the village yet, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.) ³¹The Jews who were in the house with Mary comforting her followed her when they saw her get up and hurry out. They thought that she was going to the grave, to weep there.

³²When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet. "Lord," she said, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died!"

³³Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping also; his heart was touched, and he was deeply moved. ³⁴"Where have you buried him?" he asked them.

"Come and see, Lord," they answered.

³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶So the Jews said, "See how much he loved him!"

³⁷But some of them said, "He opened the blind man's eyes, didn't he? Could he not have kept Lazarus from dying?"

And after she had said ²⁸ this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard ²⁹ this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had ³⁰ not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had ³¹ been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the ³² place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her ³³ weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" ³⁴ he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept. ³⁵

Then the Jews said, "See ³⁶ how he loved him!"

But some of them said, ³⁷ "Could not he who opened eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

28-30. **And called her sister Mary privately.** So that she could speak with Jesus as her sister had done.

31. **That she was going to the grave.** That would be the custom. Note the Jews follow her.

33-34. **His heart was touched and he was deeply moved.** His sympathy with the weeping sister and the wailing crowd causes this deep emotion. [The Expositor's Greek Testament says: "To refer His strong feeling to His indignation at the 'hypocritical' lamentations of the crowd is a groundless and unjust fancy contradicted by His own 'weeping' (verse 35) and by the remark of the Jews (verse 36)."]

35. **Jesus wept.** This is the shortest verse in the Bible. Here, as a friend, his quiet tears are shed with the two sisters. See *Heb. 4:15*.

36-37. **See how much he loved him!** Some of the Jews see evidence of his love in the tears. Others, as they remember his mighty works, ask why he did not save Lazarus from death.

Lazarus Brought to Life

³⁸Deeply moved once more, Jesus went to the tomb, which was a cave with a stone placed at the entrance. ³⁹"Take the stone away!" Jesus ordered.

Martha, the dead man's sister, answered, "There will be a bad smell, Lord. He has been buried four days!"

⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believed?" ⁴¹They took the stone away. Jesus looked up and said, "I thank you, Father, that you listen to me. ⁴²I know that you always listen to me, but I say this because of the people here, so they will believe that you sent me." ⁴³After he had said this he called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped in grave cloths, and a cloth around his face. "Untie him," Jesus told them, "and let him go."

The Plot against Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.1-5; Mark 14.1-2; Luke 22.1-2*)

⁴⁵Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

Jesus, once more deeply ³⁸ moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take ³⁹ away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

Then Jesus said, "Did I ⁴⁰ tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

So they took away the ⁴¹ stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear ⁴² me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, ⁴³ Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The ⁴⁴ dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

The Plot to Kill Jesus

Therefore many of the ⁴⁵ Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in

38. Jesus went to the tomb. [Tomb: compare note on *Matt. 27:60*]

39-40. **Take the stone away!** It would take more than one person to move the heavy stone. Martha's words show how little she expected a resurrection.

41-42. **Jesus looked up and said.** He looked up at the sky. His purpose was always to honor God and to show that the Father had sent him (compare *verse 4*). **I thank you, Father.** No incantation, no frenzied prayer! Just a few quiet words of thanks, as if Lazarus were already raised to life. **I know that you always listen to me.** Even in Gethsemane, when the "cup" was not taken from him.

43. **Lazarus, come out!** Lazarus *dead*, had neither the ability to come nor to refuse to come. But at the shout of command, Lazarus is dead no more!

44. **The dead man came out.** This is the third time Jesus invades the world of the dead to rescue someone. This time no one could doubt that a dead man had been raised to life! It is part of the miracle that Lazarus came out tied up hand and foot, and John puts special emphasis on this fact.

45-46. **Many of the Jews.** They were convinced by this demonstration of divine power. **But some returned to the Pharisees.** This is a hostile action, since John separates them from those who believed.

saw what Jesus did, and believed in him. ⁴⁶But some of them returned to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷So the Pharisees and the chief priests met with the Council and said, "What shall we do? All the mighty works this man is doing! ⁴⁸If we let him go on in this way everyone will believe in him, and the Roman authorities will take action and destroy the temple and our whole nation!"

⁴⁹One of them, named Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, said, "You do not know a thing! ⁵⁰Don't you realize that it is better for you to have one man die for the people, instead of the whole nation being destroyed?" ⁵¹Actually, he did not say this of his own accord; rather, as he was High Priest that year, he was prophesying that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish people, ⁵²and not only for them, but also to bring together into one body all the scattered children of God.

⁵³From that day on the Jewish authorities made plans to kill Jesus. ⁵⁴So Jesus did not travel openly in Judea, but left and went to a place near the desert, to a town named Ephraim, where he stayed with the disciples.

him. But some of them went ⁴⁶ to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and ⁴⁷ the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

"What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing, many miraculous signs. If we let ⁴⁸ him go on like this, everyone will put their trust in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

Then one of them, named ⁴⁹ Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man ⁵⁰ die for the people than that the whole nation perish."

He did not say this on his ⁵¹ own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. So from that ⁵² day on they plotted to take his life.

Therefore Jesus no longer ⁵³ moved about publicly among ⁵⁴

47. **Met with the Council.** They do not deny the miracles which Jesus has done, but they think they must do something to stop him.

48. **And the Roman authorities will take action.** Perhaps they expect Jesus to use his popularity to proclaim himself King, and raise an army to fight against Rome. A generation later, the Jewish authorities themselves rebelled against Rome and just what they are afraid of, happened (see note on *Matt. 24:21*). But it happened because they rejected Christ!

49. **One of them, named Caiaphas.** John intends to call attention to this fact. Caiaphas was high priest from A.D. 18 to 36. **You do not know a thing!** That is, you do not understand what this crisis makes necessary.

50. **To have one man die for the people.** He is saying it will be better to have one man die [to kill him], rather than have the Romans destroy the whole nation for making Jesus their King.

51-52. **He did not say this of his own accord.** God was speaking through him, even though he did not know it. [The Expositor's Greek Testament says: "In the irony of events he unconsciously used his high-priestly office to lead forward that one sacrifice which was for ever to take away sin and so make all further priestly office superfluous."]

53. **From that day on.** The official decree was that Jesus would die.

54. **So Jesus did not travel openly.** He would die at Passover time, just as the passover lamb was being killed. **Ephraim.** Sixteen miles northeast of Jerusalem, on the edge of the desert.

⁵⁵The Jewish Feast of Passover was near, and many people went up from the country to Jerusalem, to perform the ceremony of purification before the feast. ⁵⁶They were looking for Jesus, and as they gathered in the temple they asked one another, "What do you think? Surely he will not come to the feast, will he?" ⁵⁷The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where Jesus was he must report it, so they could arrest him.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

(Also *Matt. 26.6-13; Mark 14.3-9*)

12 Six days before Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, the man Jesus had raised from death. ²They prepared a dinner for him there, and Martha helped serve it, while Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus. ³Then Mary took a whole pint of a very expensive perfume made of pure nard, poured it on Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The sweet smell of the perfume filled the whole

the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple area they asked one another, "What do you think? Isn't he coming to the Feast at all?" But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might arrest him.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

55. Passover was near. It was just a few weeks before Passover when he had gone to Ephraim. The ceremony of purification. See *2 Chron. 30:17; John 18:28; Exod. 19:10-11*. This may have included shaving the whole head and washing their clothes, plus other ritual which lasted as much as a week.

56. They were looking for Jesus. Jesus was in the thoughts of everyone just now!

57. The chief priests and the Pharisees. The Council [Sanhedrin]. The hostility that began three years before this, had come to its climax!

1. Six days before the Passover. The other Gospels tell us that Jesus went from Ephraim across the Jordan and came back through Jericho with the large crowd of Galileans who came to Jerusalem for Passover. This dinner at Bethany would be on Saturday [the Sabbath], six days before he would die on Friday.

2-9. They prepared a dinner for him. For notes on this dinner and the anointing, see *Matt. 26:6-16*. **For the day of my burial.** Before the week ended, he would be in the grave. It was the custom to anoint bodies for burial. **A large crowd of the Jews.** People from Jerusalem.

house. ⁴One of Jesus' disciples, Judas Iscariot—the one who was going to betray him—said, ⁵“Why wasn't this perfume sold for three hundred dollars and the money given to the poor?” ⁶He said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief; he carried the money bag and would help himself from it.

⁷But Jesus said, “Leave her alone! Let her keep what she has for the day of my burial. ⁸You will always have poor people with you, but I will not be with you always.”

The Plot against Lazarus

⁹A large crowd of the Jews heard that Jesus was in Bethany, so they went there; they went, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from death. ¹⁰So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus too; ¹¹because on his account many Jews were leaving their leaders and believing in Jesus.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also Matt 21.1-11; Mark 11.1-11;
Luke 19.28-40)

¹²The next day the large crowd that had come to the Passover Feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the King of Israel!”

¹⁴Jesus found a donkey and sat on it, just as the scripture says,

¹⁵“Do not be afraid, city of Zion!
Here comes your king,
riding on a young donkey.”

But one of his disciples, ⁴Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵“Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.” He did not say ⁶this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

⁷“Leave her alone,” Jesus replied. “It was meant that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.” ⁸

Meanwhile a large crowd ⁹of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the ¹⁰chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on ¹¹account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

The Triumphant Entry

The next day the great ¹²crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches ¹³and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!
Blessed is he who comes in
the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the King of
Israel!”

Jesus found a young donkey ¹⁴and sat upon it, as Scripture says,

¹⁵“Do not be afraid, O Zion; ¹⁵see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt.”

10-11. So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus too. Lazarus was living proof of the divine power of Jesus.

12-15. The next day. McGarvey says this would be Sunday, April 2, 30 A.D. [by the corrected calendar]. For notes on the Triumphant Entry, see *Matt. 21:1-11*.

¹⁶His disciples did not understand this at the time; but when Jesus had been raised to glory they remembered that the scripture said this about him, and that they had done this for him.

¹⁷The crowd that had been with Jesus when he called Lazarus out of the grave and raised him from death had reported what had happened. ¹⁸That was why the crowd met him—because they heard that he had done this mighty work. ¹⁹The Pharisees then said to each other, “You see, we are not succeeding at all! Look, the whole world is following him!”

Some Greeks Seek Jesus

²⁰Some Greeks were among those who went to Jerusalem to worship during the feast. ²¹They came to Philip (he was from Bethsaida, in Galilee) and said, “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

²²Philip went and told Andrew, and the two of them went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, “The hour has now come for the Son of Man to be given great glory. ²⁴I tell you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains.

At first his disciples did ¹⁶ not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

Now the crowd that was ¹⁷ with him had continued to spread the word that he had called Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead. Many people, because ¹⁸ they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. So the ¹⁹ Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

Jesus Predicts His Death

Now there were some ²⁰ Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. They came to Philip, ²¹ who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” Philip ²² went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. Jesus replied, “The hour ²³ has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the ²⁴ truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground

17-18. **That was why the crowd met him.** John explains both the crowd and their attitude as they meet Jesus in the Triumphant Entry.

19. **Look, the whole world is following him.** At this point, Jesus could have proclaimed himself King, and the people would have followed him! But see *John 6:15* and note there. The whole city was in an uproar (*Matt. 21:10-11*).

20. **Some Greeks.** These are Gentiles who have converted to Judaism. [Not Greek-speaking Jews, as in *Acts 6:1*.] They had come to worship in Passover.

21. **Sir, we want to see Jesus.** They want an interview with the one whom all Jerusalem is talking about! [Philip probably spoke the Greek language.]

22. **Philip went and told Andrew.** They were close friends.

23. **Jesus answered them.** He speaks to the two disciples, but likely the Greeks were there also and heard his answer. **The hour has now come.** When he is *lifted up*, he will draw all men, Greeks, Gentiles, as well as Jews, to himself. See *verse 32*; and compare note on *John 8:28*.

24. **If it does die.** A grain of wheat may be preserved for centuries in a storage bin, but is useless there. When it is dropped into the ground, it *dies*, but in the process, it produces many grains. It is a paradox that the *death* of Christ is the source of *life* to the whole world! There is also a lesson here for those who follow him.

²⁵Whoever loves his own life will lose it; whoever hates his own life in this world will keep it for life eternal. ²⁶Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. My Father will honor him who serves me."

Jesus Speaks about His Death

²⁷"Now my heart is troubled—and what shall I say? Shall I say, 'Father, do not let this hour come upon me'? But that is why I came, to go through this hour of suffering. ²⁸Father, bring glory to your name!"

Then a voice spoke from heaven, "I have brought glory to it, and I will do so again."

²⁹The crowd standing there heard the voice and said, "It thundered!"

Others said, "An angel spoke to him!"

³⁰But Jesus said to them, "It was not for my

and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

"Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not

25. **Whoever loves his own life will lose it.** Christ gave his life and was given great glory. The grain of wheat dies, and lives a hundred grains. Those who hate [*love less*, see note on *Luke 14:26*] their own lives for *Jesus' sake*, will live eternally [and reproduce many new Christians].

26. **Whoever wants to serve me.** This is his direct answer to the Greeks. To *serve Jesus* is to give yourself to him as a living sacrifice (*Rom. 12:1-2*), adopt his methods and goals, and *follow him* even to the point of death! God will honor those who do this.

27. **Now my heart is troubled.** The best explanation of this is the account of Gethsemane (*Matt. 26:38-46* and notes there). **Shall I say?** His whole life on earth has been preparation for this hour. His death will fulfill God's purpose (*Luke 9:31*). Without his death, he would be a seed preserved but not planted, *fruitless!*

28. **Father, bring glory to your name!** In Gethsemane, an angel came to help him (*Luke 22:43*); here it is God who speaks. Three times God spoke from heaven during Christ's life: *first*, as Jesus is buried in baptism, symbolic of his own burial in the grave; *second*, at Transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah talk with him about his death; *third*, as his heart is troubled as he views the death he must die, and he honors God (compare *verses 23-24*). **And I will do so again.** What Jesus has said means this: "Father, complete the demonstration of Your holiness and love, which you are making through me; complete it even at the cost of my agony (compare *Heb. 5:7-8*)." God's answer is that he has brought glory to his name through Christ already, and that he will complete this visible demonstration, by the Cross, the Resurrection, the Ascension, Pentecost, and the victory of the messianic community!

29. **An angel spoke to him.** All heard the sound of the voice, but could not identify it. They knew only that it was something supernatural!

30. **But for yours.** The Expositor's Greek Testament says: "It was of immense importance that the disciples, and the people generally, should understand that the sudden transition from the throne offered by the triumphal acclamation of the previous day to the cross, was not a defeat but a fulfillment of the Divine purpose." The fact that the voice spoke would give them courage in the days to come.

sake that this voice spoke, but for yours. ³¹Now is the time for the world to be judged; now the ruler of this world will be overthrown. ³²When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to me." ³³(In saying this he indicated the kind of death he was going to suffer.)

³⁴The crowd answered back, "Our Law tells us that the Messiah will live forever. How, then, can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

³⁵Jesus answered, "The light will be among you a little longer. Continue on your way while you have the light, so the darkness will not come upon you; because the one who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. ³⁶Believe in the light, then, while you have it, so that you will be the people of the light."

The Unbelief of the Jews

After Jesus said this he went off and hid himself from them. ³⁷Even though he had done all these mighty works before their very eyes they

mine. Now is the time for ³¹ judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I ³² am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind ³³ of death he was going to die.

The crowd spoke up, "We ³⁴ have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up?' Who is this 'Son of Man?'"

Then Jesus told them, ³⁵ "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put ³⁶ your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

The Jews Continue in Their Unbelief

Even after Jesus had done ³⁷ all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.

31. Now is the time for the world to be judged. The Cross became his throne, and he received the Crown! See *Phil. 2:5-11*. Now the ruler of this world. It must be frustrating to be the Devil! He never can win, and the Cross turned out to be his greatest defeat! See *Heb. 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8; Rev. 5:9-10*.

32. When I am lifted up. Lifted up: *first*, to the Cross; *second*, from the grave; *third*, to heaven and the Throne. See notes on *John 6:37; 1 Cor. 1:23-25*.

34. That the Messiah will live forever. They do not see how his death will fit in with their idea of an eternal king. Who is this Son of Man? They begin to think that perhaps "Son of Man" is not the same as "Messiah." Two distinct lines of prophecy in the Old Testament spoke of a Messiah who would be KING, and a Messiah who would SUFFER. They ignored the part about "suffering," because it did not fit in with what they wanted to believe.

35. The light will be. This is their only answer. Use the opportunity you now have, before it is taken away from you.

36. Believe in the light. To be "people of the light" is to find life in the truth of Jesus.

37. They did not believe in him. Mighty works do not produce faith in one whose heart is wicked and bitter.

did not believe in him, ³⁸so that what the prophet Isaiah had said might come true,

“Lord, who believed the message we told?
To whom did the Lord show his
power?”

³⁹For this reason they were not able to believe, because Isaiah also said,

⁴⁰“God has blinded their eyes,
and closed their minds,
so that their eyes would not see,
and their minds would not understand,
and they would not turn to me, says God,
for me to heal them.”

⁴¹Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory, and spoke about him.

⁴²Even then, many Jewish authorities believed in Jesus; but because of the Pharisees they did not talk about it openly, so as not to be put out of the synagogue. ⁴³They loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

Judgment by Jesus’ Word

⁴⁴Jesus said in a loud voice, “Whoever believes in me, believes not only in me but also in him who sent me. ⁴⁵Whoever sees me, also sees him who sent me. ⁴⁶I have come into the world as light, that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness. ⁴⁷Whoever hears my message and does not obey it, I will not judge him. I came, not to judge the world, but to

This was to fulfill the word ³⁸ of Isaiah the prophet:

“Lord, who has believed our message,
and to whom has the
arm of the Lord
been revealed?”

For this reason they could ³⁹ not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere:

“He has blinded their eyes ⁴⁰
and deadened their
hearts,
so they can neither see
with their eyes,
nor understand with
their hearts,
nor turn—and I would
heal them.”

Isaiah said this because he ⁴¹ saw Jesus’ glory, and spoke about him.

Yet at the same time ⁴² many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

Then Jesus cried out, ⁴⁴ “When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the ⁴⁶ world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

“As for the person who ⁴⁷ hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save

38. **What the prophet Isaiah had said.** God’s law is that those who refuse to see will not be allowed to see (compare *2 Thess. 2:10-12*).

42. **Many Jewish authorities believed in Jesus.** We know two of the Council who did: Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. **Did not talk about it openly.** Those who did would be expelled (*John 9:22*)! **47-48. I will not judge him.** The word which he has spoken will measure everyone! God sent the Son into the world to be the world’s Savior. God acted in history through Jesus. Because this is true, we may be changed (*2 Cor. 5:17*) from enemies into friends of God. He is the source of Eternal Life, and the Father offers this to all through him!!!

save it. ⁴⁸Whoever rejects me and does not accept my message, has one who will judge him. The word I have spoken will be his judge on the last day! ⁴⁹Yes, because I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has commanded me what I must say and speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his command brings eternal life. What I say, then, is what the Father has told me to say."

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

13 It was now the day before the Feast of Passover. Jesus knew that his hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. He had always loved those who were his own in the world, and he loved them to the very end.

²Jesus and his disciples were at supper. The Devil had already decided that Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, would betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had given him complete power; he knew that he had come from God and was going to God. ⁴So Jesus rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around

it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

13 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The evening meal was ² being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew ³ that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, so he got up from the ⁴ meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

1. **It was now the day before.** McGarvey says this is Thursday, April 6, 30 A.D. [by the corrected calendar]. This was to be the last night of Jesus' life. *Jesus knew that his hour had come.* This introduces the remaining part of John's Gospel. John emphasizes the LOVE which motivated Christ.

2. **Were at supper.** The supper has just been served, and they are ready to begin eating. The Expositor's Greek Testament says: "Feet-washing, pleasant and customary before a meal, would have been disagreeable and out of place in the course of it." Jesus rose from the table, washed the feet, then sat down again to the supper. [Supper = feast, banquet, main meal.] **The Devil had already decided.** But Judas had volunteered for the job.

3. **Complete power.** John mentions this to point out that Jesus fully knew who and what he was, as he washes their feet.

4-5. **So Jesus rose from the table.** No word of explanation! Something is unusual here! This is not some new *rite*, but a deep spiritual lesson. (1) The disciples expected the immediate creation of the Kingdom. That is, they thought Jesus would declare himself King, and they would be high ranking government officials. Each wanted to be the most important (see *Luke 22:24-30*). (2) They had removed their sandals, and sat at the table with dry and dusty feet. But no one of them would volunteer to wash their feet, because in their self-pride, each thought he was *better* than the other. (3) While they sit, full

his waist. ⁵Then he poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?"

⁷Jesus answered him, "You do not know now what I am doing, but you will know later."

⁸Peter declared, "You will never, at any time, wash my feet!"

"If I do not wash your feet," Jesus answered, "you will no longer be my disciple."

⁹Simon Peter answered, "Lord, do not wash only my feet, then! Wash my hands and head, too!"

¹⁰Jesus said, "Whoever has taken a bath is completely clean and does not have to wash himself, except for his feet. All of you are clean—all except one." ¹¹(Jesus already knew who was going to betray him; that is why he said, "All of you, except one, are clean.")

¹²After he had washed their feet, Jesus put his outer garment back on and returned to his place at the table. "Do you understand what I have just done to you?" he asked. ¹³"You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so,

After that, he poured water ⁵ into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, ⁶ who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, ⁷ "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

"No," said Peter, ⁸ "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus answered, ¹⁰ "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he ¹¹ knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

When he had finished ¹² washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You ¹³ call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for

of pride and envy, obsessed with their desire to be *number one*: Jesus, the Son of God, their Lord, gets up and does for them what they will not do for each other. Jesus *acted out* what he had already told them: "*The leader must be like the servant.*" [Remember that they are already *ritually pure* (John 11:55).]

6. **Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?** You??? The others sit in amazed silence!

8. **You will never!** He cannot allow his Lord to do such a thing! **If I do not.** This implies a deeper spiritual meaning. Compare *Rev. 1:5-6*.

10. **Whoever has taken a bath.** Compare note on *John 11:55*. They had all made themselves *ritually clean*. Except for his feet. Their feet were dusty from walking. [Johnson sees in this: "He who is once cleansed by the blood of Christ only needs, after this, to come to Christ for partial cleansing; for the forgiveness of the special sins that make him unclean." Compare *1 John 1:7-10*.]

12. **Do you understand?** Jesus had used an ordinary thing, a custom, to teach them. He asks this question to point out the fact that they must look for some unusual meaning in what he has just done.

13-14. **You call me Teacher and Lord.** The disciple should not be ashamed to do what his Lord has done. **Should wash each other's feet.** "*Be eager to show respect for one another*" (*Rom. 12:10*).

because I am. ¹⁴I am your Lord and Teacher, and I have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash each other's feet. ¹⁵I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. ¹⁶I tell you the truth: no slave is greater than his master; no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now you know this truth; how happy you will be if you put it into practice!

¹⁸"I am not talking about all of you; I know those I have chosen. But the scripture must come true that says, 'The man who ate my food turned against me.' ¹⁹I tell you this now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that 'I Am Who I Am.' ²⁰I tell you the truth: whoever receives anyone I send, receives me also; and whoever receives me, receives him who sent me."

Jesus Predicts His Betrayal

(Also *Matt. 26:20-25; Mark 14:17-21; Luke 22:21-23*)

²¹After Jesus said this, he was deeply troubled, and declared openly, "I tell you the truth: one of you is going to betray me."

²²The disciples looked at one another, completely puzzled about whom he meant. ²³One of the disciples, whom Jesus loved, was sitting next to Jesus. ²⁴Simon Peter motioned to him and said, "Ask him who it is that he is talking about."

that is what I am. Now that 14 I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you 15 an example that you should do as I have done for you. I 16 tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Once you know these things, 17 you will be blessed if you do them.

Jesus Predicts His Betrayal

"I am not referring to all 18 of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'"

"I am telling you now 19 before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. I tell 20 you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

After he had said this, 21 Jesus was deeply troubled and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me."

His disciples stared at one 22 another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of them, the disciple 23 whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. Simon 24 Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means."

15. **I have set an example for you.** Not a *rite*, but an example! They are to be eager to show respect to each other, in a humble, loving spirit. To be the *greatest*, forget yourself and serve others!

17. **If you put it into practice!** That is, if you understand the lesson I have acted out for you, and will always show this *spirit* in your conduct.

18. **I am not talking about all of you.** One is a traitor! He does not share in the blessing of *verse 17*.

19. **Before it happens.** That is, do not let this traitor's action destroy your faith in me. **I Am Who I Am.** See note on *John 8:58*.

21-28. **He was deeply troubled.** Because one of his friends was a traitor. See *Psalms 41:9*, which is considered a prophecy of this. On this prediction, see notes on *Matt. 26:20-25*. **One of the disciples.** This is John himself. **Whom Jesus loved.** John, not Peter, was the closest friend to Jesus. **Who is it, Lord?**

²⁵So that disciple moved closer to Jesus' side and asked, "Who is it, Lord?"

²⁶Jesus answered, "I will dip the bread in the sauce and give it to him; he is the man." So he took a piece of bread, dipped it, and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan went into him. Jesus said to him, "Hurry and do what you must!" ²⁸None of those at the table understood why Jesus said this to him. ²⁹Since Judas was in charge of the money bag, some of the disciples thought that Jesus had told him to go and buy what they needed for the feast, or else that he had told him to give something to the poor.

³⁰Judas accepted the bread and went out at once. It was night.

The New Commandment

³¹After Judas had left, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man's glory is revealed; now God's glory is revealed through him. ³²And if God's glory is revealed through him, then God will reveal the glory of the Son of Man in himself, and he will do so at once. ³³My children, I shall not be with you very much longer. You will look for me; but I tell you now what I told the Jews, 'You cannot go where I am going.' ³⁴A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

Leaning back against 25
Jesus, he asked him, "Lord,
who is it?"

Jesus answered, "It is the 26
one to whom I will give this
piece of bread when I have
dipped it in the dish."
Then, dipping the piece of
bread, he gave it to Judas
Iscariot, son of Simon. As
soon as Judas took the
bread, Satan entered into
him.

"What you are about to
do, do quickly," Jesus told
him, but no one at the meal 28
understood why Jesus said
this to him. Since Judas had
charge of the money, some
thought Jesus was telling
him to buy what was needed
for the Feast, or to give
something to the poor. As 30
soon as Judas had taken the
bread, he went out. And it
was night.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

When he was gone, Jesus 31
said, "Now is the Son of
Man glorified and God is
glorified in him. If God is 32
glorified in him, then God
will glorify the Son in him-
self, and will glorify him at
once.

"My children, I will be 33
with you only a little longer.
You will look for me, and
just as I told the Jews, so I
tell you now: Where I am
going, you cannot come.

"A new commandment I 34
give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you

No one knew the identity of the traitor. **I will dip.** When John saw Jesus dip the piece of bread in the sauce of bitter herbs [horseradish is commonly used], and give it to Judas, he knew who it was. **Hurry up and do what you must.** These events must come to their climax. Even John does not understand why Jesus says this [at that moment].

30. And went out at once. Matthew gives this order of events: (1) the Passover supper; (2) Judas revealed; (3) the Lord's Supper. John does not tell us about the Lord's Supper, but simply mentions Judas going out.

31. Now the Son of Man's glory is revealed. His mission on earth is almost complete. God would be glorified in the events of the Cross.

34. A new commandment. *So you must love one another.* This is *new* because the love of Christ's friends for Christ's sake was [and is] a new thing in the world. It is new in *kind*, rather than *degree*. It is the *kind* of love which Christ has for his people.

³⁵If you have love for one another, then all will know that you are my disciples."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also *Matt. 16.31-35; Mark 14.27-31; Luke 22.31-34*)

³⁶"Where are you going, Lord?" Simon Peter asked him.

"You cannot follow me now where I am going," answered Jesus; "but later you will follow me."

³⁷"Lord, why can't I follow you now?" asked Peter. "I am ready to die for you!"

³⁸Jesus answered, "Are you really ready to die for me? I tell you the truth: before the rooster crows you will say three times that you do not know me."

Jesus the Way to the Father

14 "Do not be worried and upset," Jesus told them. "Believe in God, and believe also in me. ²There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. ³And after I go and prepare a place for you. I will come back and take you to myself, so that

must love one another. All ³⁵ men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another."

Simon Peter asked him, ³⁶ "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

Peter asked, "Lord, why ³⁷ can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

Then Jesus answered, ³⁸ "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times?"

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. There are many rooms ² in my Father's house; otherwise, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go ³ and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

35. Then all will know. Love [AGAPE] will identify those who are in fact his disciples! In the early centuries, unbelievers would say: "See how those Christians love one another!"

36-38. Simon Peter asked him. For notes on Peter's denial of Christ, see *Matt. 26:31-35*.

1. Do not be worried and upset. He knows what will happen to him this night, and that he will die on the Cross the next day. But Jesus does not ask for help, he gives it! And believe also in me. They were confused by the thought of his death. He asks them to believe in him as they believe in God.

2. There are many rooms. [Mansion = a room or apartment in a large building.] He is going home to his Father's house, which has enough rooms for every one of the saved. And I am going to prepare a place for you. He will not leave them "orphans." This time of sorrow and sadness is only a step toward a much better home than earth can give. If it were not so. He speaks the truth to them! His very purpose in leaving them, is to prepare for them to be with him in Eternity. [The preparation is the Cross including the ascension to sit at the Father's right side. Compare *Matt. 25:34; Col. 1:20; Rev. 1:5-6; 5:9-10*.]

3. I will come back. He speaks here of his Second Coming, when the dead are raised to life, and all who belong to Christ will be taken to the "Wedding Feast in Heaven." Compare *1 Thess. 4:17*.

you will be where I am. "You know how to get to the place where I am going."

⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way to get there?"

⁶Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me. 'Now that you have known me,' he said to them, "you will know my Father also; and from now on you do know him, and you have seen him."

⁸Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father; that is all we need."

⁹Jesus answered, "For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Why, then, do you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Do you not believe, Philip, that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I have spoken to you," Jesus said to his disciples, "do not come from me. The Father, who remains in me, does his own works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. If not, believe because of these works. ¹²I tell you the truth: whoever believes in me will do the works I do—yes, he will do even greater ones, because I

You know the way to the place where I am going." 4

Jesus the Way to the Father

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" 5

Jesus answered, "I am the way—and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." 6

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." 8

Jesus answered, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." 9

4-6. **Thomas said to him.** "Lord, we expected you to be our King in Jerusalem. We do not understand." **I am the way, the truth, and the life.** No one can come to God; either in heaven or on earth, except through Jesus Christ the Son of God! Compare *Eph. 1:21-23; Acts 4:12*.

7. **You will know my Father also.** To see Jesus is to see the Father. Jesus had been leading them to the Father. Now they are to deliberately come to the Father.

8. **Show us the Father.** Philip wants something visible, so he can know God in the same way he knows people.

9. **Whoever has seen me.** Jesus himself is the "SOMETHING VISIBLE!"

10. **Do you not believe?** Jesus is God in human form! See *Col. 1:15; 2:9*.

11-12. **Will do even greater ones.** Not greater miracles, but to bring about moral and spiritual revolution in this world. See note on *1 Thess. 1:9*.

am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father's glory will be shown through the Son. ¹⁴If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it."

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

¹⁵"If you love me, you will obey my commandments. ¹⁶I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, The Spirit of truth, to stay with you forever. ¹⁷The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and lives in you.

¹⁸"I will not leave you alone; I will come back to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live. ²⁰When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father, and that you are in me, just as I am in you.

²¹"Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. My Father will love him who loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him."

And I will do whatever ¹³ you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to to the Father. You may ask ¹⁴ me for anything in my name, and I will do it. If you ¹⁵ love me, you will do what I command.

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

"I will ask the Father, ¹⁶ and he will give you another Counselor, the Spirit of ¹⁷ truth, to be with you forever. The world cannot accept this Counselor, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will ¹⁸ leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, ¹⁹ the world will not see me any more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

On that day you will ²⁰ realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever ²¹ has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my

13-14. **Whatever you ask for in my name.** Everyone who has been united to Christ (*Gal. 3:26-27*) has the authority to use Christ's name in their prayer to the Father! The Holy Spirit is our "prayer-partner" (*Rom. 8:26*). Because of Christ, Christians come BRAVELY to God's throne (*Heb. 4:16*).

15. **If you love me.** Obedience grows out of love!

16. **I will ask the Father.** See notes on Acts 1:4-5. **Another Helper.** Jesus himself is the means by which our sins are forgiven (*1 John 2:2*), and only he is the one who brings God and man together [the "go-between" (mediator)]. *Another* means "a second one of the same kind." Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit plead with God for us [intercede for us], as we see from *Rom. 8:26*; *1 John 2:1*. **To stay with you forever.** Johnson says: "Through this agency he will be with his people "always." Compare *Eph. 2:22*.

17. **The world cannot receive him.** He is the Spirit of truth. The Spirit comes to men in the Word of God, and whoever receives and believes the Good News, receives the Holy Spirit. Compare *John 3:3-6*; *1 Cor. 2:13-14*; *Acts 2:38* and notes there.

18-19. **I will not leave you alone.** [Orphans.] He will ask the Father to send another Helper. **But you will see me.** He uses the present continuous verb which implies a continual seeing. He does not speak of the post-resurrection appearances, which terminated after forty days. They will share his life through the Spirit (*Gal. 4:6-7*).

20. **When that day comes.** "That day" began at Pentecost! They would be jubilant when they came to know the full meaning of God's act in Christ! See *1 Cor. 2:9-10*.

21-23. **Whoever accepts my commandments.** To accept Christ is to accept the obligation which he places on you. (1) You must love Christ. (2) This love will cause you to obey him. (3) God will love you,

²²Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "Lord, how can it be that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³Jesus answered him, "Whoever loves me will obey my message. My Father will love him, and my Father and I will come to him and live with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not obey my words. The message you have heard is not mine, but comes from the Father, who sent me.

²⁵"I have told you this while I am still with you. ²⁶The Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and make you remember all that I have told you.

²⁷"Peace I leave with you; my own peace I give you. I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, 'I am leaving, but I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, because he is greater than I. ²⁹I have told you this now, before it all happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. ³⁰I cannot talk with you much longer, because the ruler of this world

Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

Then Judas (not Judas 22 Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

Jesus replied, "If anyone 23 loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and he will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not 24 love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

"All this I have spoken 25 while still with you. But the 26 Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with 27 you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

"You heard me say, 'I am 28 going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

I have told you now before 29 it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not speak with 30 you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no effect on me,

because you love Christ. (4) Both the Father and the Son will live with you. (5) They will live with you through the Holy Spirit (*Eph. 2:22; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 6:19-20*).

26. **Will teach you everything.** This is a special promise to the apostles. Read what Paul said in *1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 3:4; and 2 Pet. 1:15*. They recorded this *knowledge* in permanent form as the New Testament. It would be incredible to believe they omitted anything of importance in their writings.

27. **Peace I leave with you.** This is his blessing to both they and the messianic community (*Phil. 4:6-7*).

28. **If you loved me.** He gives them a gentle scolding. They do love him, but they are in part *selfish* in their wish to keep him there. **Because he is greater than I.** [*Phil. 2:6-7*.] The point is that the blessings of the Holy Spirit would be sent by the Father *only after* Jesus had returned to heaven.

30. **Because the ruler of this world.** Satan, working through wicked men. See note on *Rev. 13:2*.

is coming. He has no power over me, ³¹but the world must know that I love the Father; that is why I do everything as he commands me.

"Come, let us go from this place."

Jesus the Real Vine

15 "I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit. ³You have been made clean already by the message I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.

but the world must learn ³¹ that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now; let us leave."

The Vine and the Branches

15 "I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener.

He cuts off every branch ² in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already ³ clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain ⁴ in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

"I am the vine; you are ⁵ the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart

31. **But the world must know.** He acted out this love in the Cross! **Let us go.** Jesus said all these things while they were still in the "upstairs room." *McGarvey* thinks chapters 15-17 contain things which were spoken after they rose from the table and were getting ready to leave, and that *John 18:1* shows them leaving the "upstairs room" and crossing the brook Kidron. The Expositor's Greek Testament thinks this is most probable.

1. **I am the real vine.** They have gotten up from the table, on which was the wine [fruit of the grape vine], and Jesus has said he will never drink it again on this earth. As they are still standing there, Jesus begins this lesson. Christ has been planted by the Father as the Real Vine.

2. **He breaks off every branch in me.** Individual believers are the branches (see *verse 7*). Vines have two kinds of branches: the fruitless, which the gardener cuts off and discards; the fruitful, which he prunes [trims] to make it bear more fruit. Judas had just been cut away from the group.

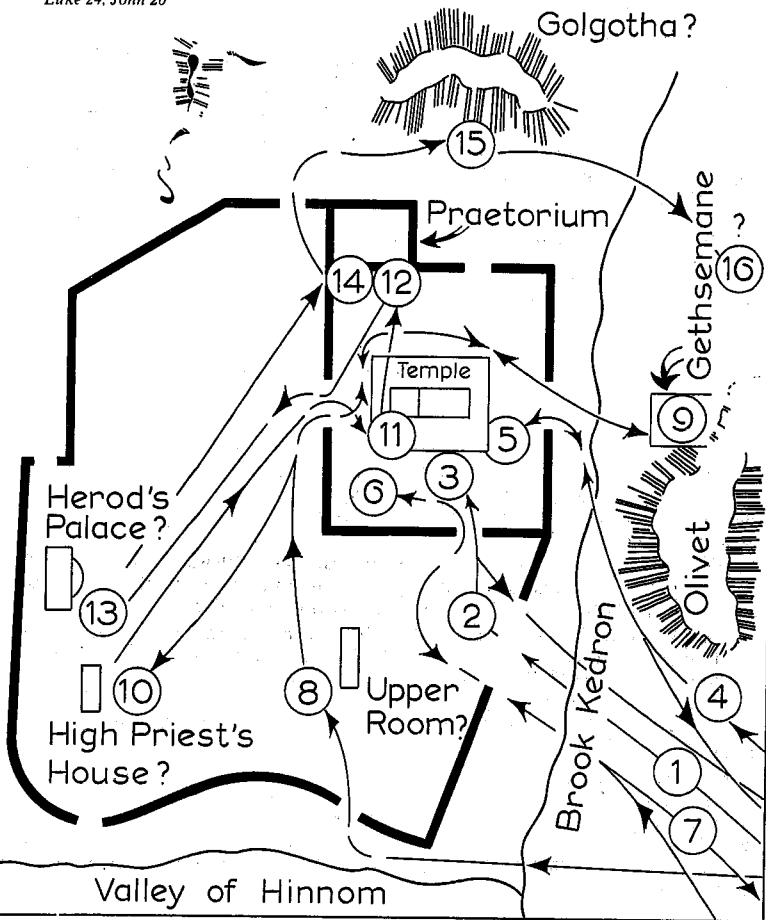
3. **You have been made clean already.** The message [all Jesus had taught them] had made them clean, given them spiritual life, and prepared them to *bear fruit*. [The message tells us how to reach out to seize Christ's cleansing and saving *ACT*.]

4. **Remain united to me.** *Luther* says: "Faith is a *living, daring confidence in the grace of God*, of such assurance that it would risk a thousand deaths." Faith, then, is expected to be a continuous action. Compare *Phil, 3:12* and note. **Unless you remain in me.** We are dead branches, without fruit, *EXCEPT* as we reach out through faith to seize Christ and be united with him!

5. **You are the branches.** He is the Real Vine (*verse 1*). Now he declares that each disciple is a branch on the Real Vine.

MAP NO. 7—LAST WEEK

1. Bethany—Feast, Mary anoints Jesus, *Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 13:3-9; John 12*
2. Jerusalem—Triumphal entry (Sunday) *Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12*
3. Temple, enters, looks around, says nothing, leaves, *Mark 11:11*
4. Curses fig tree (Monday), *Matthew 21; Mark 11*
5. Temple—cleanses 2nd time (Monday), *Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19*
6. Temple courts?—Great day of discussions (Tuesday)—*Matthew 21-22-23-24-25; Mark 11-12-13-14; Luke 20-21-22*
7. Retirement to Rest?—(Wednesday), Judas plots to betray Jesus, *Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22*
8. Upper Room—(Thursday), 4th Passover, Lord's Supper, *Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13-14*
9. Gethsemane—(Thursday night), Parting discourses, agony, betrayal and arrest, *John 15-16-17; Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22*
10. Trial before Annas and Caiaphas, *Matthew 26-27; Mark 14-15; Luke 22-23*
11. Trial before Sanhedrin, *John 18*
12. Trial before Pilate
13. Trial before Herod
14. Trial before Pilate (2nd)
15. Golgotha—(Friday, Crucifixion, *Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19*
16. Garden—(Sunday), Resurrection, appears to Mary, other women, *Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20*



⁶Whoever does not remain in me is thrown out, like a branch, and dries up; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, where they are burned. ⁷If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it. ⁸This is how my Father's glory is shown: by your bearing much fruit; and in this way you become my disciples. ⁹I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

¹¹"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. ¹³The greatest love a man can have for his friends is to give his life for them. ¹⁴And you are my friends, if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father.

from me you can do nothing. ⁶
If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. ⁷ ⁸

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ⁹ ¹⁰ ¹¹

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹²

No one has greater love than the one who lays down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹³ ¹⁴ ¹⁵

6. **Is thrown out.** Faith can be lost (*Heb. 6:4-6*), and with it the ability to bear fruit. This whole parable shows us the relationship of Christ to: (1) *The Father* - gardener and vine; (2) *Man* - vine and branches; (3) *actions* - vine, branches and fruit; (4) *negative action* - vine, branches cut away, fire.

7-8. **Then you will ask for anything.** The contingency is "if you remain in me." This implies both possibility and action. **This is how my Father's glory is shown.** This shows the role of "works." See what Jesus said in *Matt. 5:16*.

9-10. **If you obey my commands.** Obeying his commands gives you the right to claim his love. [He loved us in our rebellious condition (*Rom. 5:8*).] We cannot love him and be rebellious at the same time.

11. **So that my joy may be in you.** He says this as he faces the Cross!!! It gives him great joy to obey the Father's commands. They also will find great joy in obeying his commands. So will we!

12-14. **Just as I love you.** All of Christ's commands are contained in this, and grow out of this seed! They may have expected detailed instructions, but instead, his love was to be their guide. **Is to give his life for them.** This is the **EXAMPLE**. **And you are my friends.** All are to obey his commands, not as slaves, but as friends! See *Rom. 8:15*.

15. **Instead, I call you friends.** Compare *James 2:21-24*.

¹⁶You did not choose me; I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures. And so the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name. ¹⁷This, then, is what I command you: love one another."

The World's Hatred

¹⁸"If the world hates you, you must remember that it has hated me first. ¹⁹If you belonged to the world, then the world would love you as its own. But I chose you from this world, and you do not belong to it; this is why the world hates you. ²⁰Remember what I told you: 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you too; if they obeyed my message, they will obey yours too. ²¹But they will do all this to you because you are mine; for they do not know him who sent me. ²²They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not come and spoken to them; as it is, they no longer have any excuse for their sin. ²³Whoever hates me hates my Father also. ²⁴They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not done the works among them that no one else ever did; as it is, they have seen what I did and they hate both me

You did not choose me, but ¹⁶
I chose you to go and bear
fruit—fruit that will last.
Then the Father will give
you whatever you ask in my
name.

This is my command: ¹⁷
Love each other.

The World Hates the Disciples

"If the world hates you, ¹⁸
keep in mind that it hated
me first. If you belonged to ¹⁹
the world, it would love you
as its own. As it is, you
do not belong to the world,
but I have chosen you out of
the world. That is why the
world hates you. Remember ²⁰
the words I spoke to you:
'No servant is greater than
his master.' If they per-
secuted me, they will per-
secute you also. If they
obeyed my teaching, they
will obey yours also. They ²¹
will treat you this way be-
cause of my name, for they
do not know the one who
sent me. If I had not come ²²
and spoken to them, they
would not be guilty of sin.
Now, however, they have no
excuse for their sin.

He who hates me hates ²³
my Father as well. If I had ²⁴
not done among them what
no one else did, they would
not be guilty of sin. But now
they have seen these mir-
acles, and yet they have
hated both me and my

16. **You did not choose me; I chose you.** Each of the Eleven [Judas is *cut away*] had been chosen from the group of disciples. The King has chosen his ambassadors! [APOSTLE = one sent, ambassador.]

17. **Love one another.** Love is the mortar which builds living stones into the church of Christ!

18. **If the world hates you.** The world is "natural man," unbelieving, who have Satan as their ruler.

20. **They will persecute you too.** They hated Christ and killed him. You must expect the same treatment.

21. **Because you are mine.** Compare Rev. 1:9. [For my name's sake means because you are mine. A Christian is one who has been bought for God by Christ.]

22. **If I had not come.** Opportunity equals responsibility. Those who reject Christ will die in their sins, because they refuse to escape from them.

23. **Hates my Father also.** It is impossible to love God and hate Christ!!!

24-25. **They hated me for no reason at all.** The "sin of sins" is to reject Jesus. Because he came, he could be rejected. Those who rejected Christ would find no way to escape from the guilt of their rejection.

and my Father. ²⁵This must be, however, so that what is written in their Law may come true, 'They hated me for no reason at all.'

²⁶"The Helper will come—the Spirit of truth, who comes from the Father. I will send him to you from the Father, and he will speak about me. ²⁷And you, too, will speak about me, because you have been with me from the very beginning.

16 "I have told you this so that you will not fall away. ²They will put you out of their synagogues. And the time will come when anyone who kills you will think that by doing this he is serving God. ³They will do these things to you because they have not known either the Father or me. 'But I have told you this, so that when the time comes for them to do these things, you will remember that I told you.'

The Work of the Holy Spirit

"I did not tell you these things at the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' ⁶And now that I have told you, sadness has filled your hearts. ⁷But I tell you the truth: it is better for you that I go away, because if I do not go, the Helper will not come to you. But if I do go away, then I will

Father. But this is to fulfil ²⁵ what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'

"When the Counselor ²⁶ comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me; but you ²⁷ also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

16 "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray.

They will put you out of ² the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things ³ because they have not known the Father or me. I have told ⁴ you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

"Now I am going to him ⁵ who sent me, yet none of you even asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have ⁶ said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell ⁷ you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to

26. **The Helper will come.** The Holy Spirit. See *chapter 14*. He will speak about me. [He will not speak about himself] This is explained in *John 16:13-15*.

27. **And you, too, will speak about me.** As *eyewitnesses*, they would speak about Christ and tell the Good News of what God had done through him. Compare *1 John 1:1-4*; *1 Cor. 2:6-12*.

1. **I have told you this.** The things in *chapters 14 & 15*. The next few days would severely burden their faith, as would the persecutions in the coming years.

2-4. **Because they have not known.** Fanatics believe it is God's will to kill "heretics." If they had known [and loved] the Father and the Son, they could not act that way!

5-6. **But now I am going.** To the Father, by the Cross, the Grave, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. **Yet none of you asks me.** They had asked a similar question (*John 13:36; 14:5*): "What will your going mean to us?" Jesus implies they should have asked: "What will your going mean to you?"

7. **Because if I do not go.** The work which the Holy Spirit would do, is based on Christ's death and resurrection. Jesus had to go, so the Helper could come! See *Acts 2:33*.

send him to you. ⁸And when he comes he will prove to the people of the world that they are wrong about sin, and about what is right, and about God's judgment. ⁹They are wrong about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about what is right, because I am going to the Father and you will not see me any more; ¹¹about judgment, because the ruler of this world has already been judged.

¹²"I have much more to tell you, but now it would be too much for you to bear. ¹³But when the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak of what he hears and tell you of things to come. ¹⁴He will give me glory, because he will take what I have to say and tell it to you. ¹⁵All that my Father has is mine; that is why I said that the Spirit will take what I give him and tell it to you."

you. When he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment; about sin, because men do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

8. **He will prove.** New ideas are to be *proved* to the human mind by the Spirit. "The Word and the Spirit agree. They cannot be separated. That which the Spirit does He does through the instrument of God's Word." *Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; John 6:63; etc. Acts chapter 2* illustrates this: the Spirit proved: (1) *sin*, in those who had rejected Christ; (2) *what is right*, by showing Jesus raised to God's right side; (3) *God's judgment*, by showing the wrath to come.

9. **Because they do not believe in me.** This is the *sin of sins!* This is the sin which leads to death (*1 John 5:16-17; Matt. 12:31-32* and notes). *Degrees of sin* are meaningless, when compared to this *ultimate sin*. The work of the Spirit is to destroy unbelief through the Word.

10. **Because I am going to the Father.** Jesus was convicted of blasphemy and put to death. He is now alive, raised to God's right side, *proved* to be the Messiah. See *Acts 2:22 & 33*.

11. **Has already been judged.** The *resurrection* of Christ is proof of this. See *Acts 17:31; Heb. 2:14-15; Col. 2:14-15*.

12. **Too much for you to bear.** They could not fully understand, until the Cross was fact. Then, with the aid of the Helper, all the pieces would fall into place.

13. **He will lead you into all truth.** "The life of God is in His Word. Through His Word God communicates His Spirit to men." The Spirit would teach no *new* things, but would help them remember and understand all that Jesus had taught them during the three and a half years of his public ministry. Not until Pentecost could these men abandon their dreams of a political kingdom and conquest!

14-15. **He will give me glory.** Not by taking the Church *beyond* Christ, but by showing the *fulness* of Christ! Guided by the spirit, the apostles lived totally for Christ. **All that my Father has is mine.** Christ on his throne has all authority and power! To say "the Spirit will take what I give him," is to say the Spirit has the unlimited fullness of the Godhead [Father, Son, Holy Spirit] to draw from.

Sadness and Gladness

¹⁶“In a little while you will not see me any more; and then a little while later you will see me.”

¹⁷Some of his disciples said to the others, “What does this mean? He tells us, ‘In a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me’; and he also says, ‘It is because I am going to the Father.’ ¹⁸What does this ‘a little while’ mean?” they asked. “We do not know what he is talking about!”

¹⁹Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “I said, ‘In a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me.’ Is this what you are asking about among yourselves? ²⁰I tell you the truth: you will cry and weep, but the world will be glad; you will be sad, but your sadness will turn into gladness. ²¹When a woman is about to give birth to a child she is sad, because her hour of suffering has come; but when the child is born she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. ²²That is the way it is with you: now you are sad, but I will see you again, and your hearts will be filled with gladness, the kind of gladness that no one can take away from you.

²³“When that day comes you will not ask me for anything. I tell you the truth: the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name.

“In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.”

The Disciples' Grief Will Turn to Joy

Some of his disciples said ¹⁷ to one another, “What does he mean by saying, ‘In a little while you will see me no more,’ and ‘Then after a little while you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father?’” They kept ¹⁸ asking, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand what he is saying.”

Jesus saw that they ¹⁹ wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, “Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, ‘In a little while you will see me no more,’ and ‘Then after a little while you will see me’? I tell you the ²⁰ truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A ²¹ woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now ²² is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. In that ²³ day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

16-19. **In a little while.** The next day he would die and be buried. For a little while they would not see him. He would rise from death the third day, and they would see him again for a little while. When he went up to his Father, they would [in a spiritual sense] see him “coming on the clouds of heaven.” **20. You will cry and weep.** How sad they were at the Cross and at the Grave. **But your sadness will turn to gladness.** The Lord is raised from death!

21-22. **That is the way it is with you.** Birth involves pain. But the pain is forgotten in the happiness that follows!

23-24. **When that day comes.** After the Kingdom comes on Pentecost. **In my name.** We do not need the name of any human being, “saint,” or angel! We [who are Christians] have the NAME of Jesus!!! See note on *John 14:13-14*.

²⁴“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete.”

Victory over the World

²⁵“I have told you these things by means of parables. But the time will come when I will use parable no more, but I will speak to you in plain words about the Father. ²⁶When that day comes you will ask him in my name; and I do not say that I will ask him on your behalf, ²⁷because the Father himself loves you. He loves you because you love me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸I did come from the Father and I came into the world; and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

²⁹Then his disciples said to him, “Look, you are speaking very plainly now, without using parables. ³⁰We know now that you know everything; you do not need someone to ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

³¹Jesus answered them, “Do you believe now? ³²The time is coming, and is already here, when all of you will be scattered, each one to his own home, and I will be left all alone. But I am not really alone, because the Father is with me. ³³I have told you this so that you will have peace by being united to me. The world will make you suffer. But be brave! I have defeated the world!”

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

“Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

Then Jesus’ disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

“You believe at last!” Jesus answered. “But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

25. **By means of parables.** Because they were not yet “spiritual.” Compare what Paul says in *1 Cor. 2:14*.

26-28. **When that day comes.** To guard us against the error of thinking we have need of human help, or even angels, he shows us, that if the love the Father has for sons and daughters were the only consideration, there would be no need for him to plead with God for us at all!

29-32. **Do you believe now?** They thought they did, but the next day they would be scattered, and Jesus would stand alone.

33. **I have defeated the world!** We still have battles to fight, but the victory is ALREADY won! CHRIST WON IT! This is the source of peace. Compare *1 John 5:4-5*.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

17 After Jesus finished saying this, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son, that the Son may give glory to you. ²For you gave him authority over all men, so that he might give eternal life to all those you gave him. ³And this is eternal life: for men to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, whom you sent. ⁴I showed your glory on earth; I finished the work you gave me to do. ⁵Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made.

⁶"I have made you known to the men you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me. They have obeyed your word, ⁷and now they know that everything you gave me comes from you. ⁸I gave them the message that you gave me, and they received it; they know that it is true that I came from you, and they believe that you sent me.

Jesus Prays for Himself

17 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all men that he might give eternal life to all those you have given to him. Now this is eternal life: that men may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. They know now that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you

1. **After Jesus finished saying this.** The things in the last few chapters. McGarvey says this is still in the upstairs room. **Father, the hour has come.** [People commonly prayed standing with their arms raised above their head, looking "up" to heaven.] This is the real "Lord's Prayer." He turns his thoughts from the disciples to the Father. Jesus stands "at the foot of the Cross," and with full knowledge of what he must experience, and why he is doing it, he prays these words. This forms the climax to the teaching that begins in *chapter 13*. At its conclusion, they will go to Gethsemane. John alone records these important words for us.

2. **So that he might give eternal life.** McGarvey says: "All humanity was given into his hands that he might give life to that part of it which yielded itself to him in true discipleship."

3. **And this is eternal life.** See *1 John 5:20*. As we actually live "God's life," we *know* him; and the New Testament shows us how to live "God's life."

4. **I showed your glory on earth.** There was no longer any reason for him to stay on earth. He had finished the work leading up to the Cross.

5. **Father! Give me glory.** Verses 4 & 5 are explained by *Phil. 2:5-11*. This shows the continuity of the historical Christ with the Logos (see *John 8:58*).

6. **I have made you known.** Now he prays for his disciples. The apostles are the ones he especially singles out.

9 "I pray for them, I do not pray for the world, but for the men you gave me, because they belong to you. 10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine; and my glory is shown through them. 11 And now I am coming to you; I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world. Holy Father! Keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so they may be one just as you and I are one. 12 While I was with them I kept them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me. I protected them, and not one of them was lost, except the man who was bound to be lost—that the scripture might come true. 13 And now I am coming to you, and I say these things in the world so that they might have my joy in their hearts, in all its fullness. 14 I gave them your message and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but I do ask you to keep them safe from the Evil One. 16 Just as I do not belong to the world, they do not belong to the world. 17 Dedicate them to yourself, by means of the truth; your word is truth. 18 I sent them into the world just as you

sent me. I pray for them. I 9
am not praying for the
world, but for those you
given me, for they are yours.
All I have is yours, and all
you have is mine. And glory
has come to me through
them. I will remain in the 10
world no longer, but they
are still in the world, and I
am coming to you. Holy
Father, protect them by the
power of your name—the
name you gave me—so that
they may be one as we are
one. While I was with them, 11
I protected them and kept
them safe by that name you
gave me. None has been lost
except the child of hell so
that Scripture would be ful-
filled.

"I am coming to you now, 12
but I say these things while
I am still in the world, so
that they may have the full
measure of my joy within
them. I have given them 13
your word and the world has
hated them, for they are not
of the world any more than I
am of the world. My prayer 14
is not that you take them out
of the world but that you
protect them from the evil
one. They are not of the 15
world, even as I am not of it.
Sanctify them by the truth; 16
your word is truth. As you 17
sent me into the world, I
have sent them into the 18

9. **I pray for them.** His prayer from *verse 9 to 19* is for the apostles. **I do not pray for the world.** He sets the world aside for the present, to pray specifically for his apostles. *Luther* says: "To pray for the world, and not to pray for the world, must both be right and good. For soon after He says Himself: 'Neither pray I for those alone, but for them also who shall believe on me'."

10. **And my glory is shown through them.** By their holy lives and the work they would do in his name.

11. **But they are in the world.** "Christ has no hands but our hands, to do his work today." **So they may be one.** See *verse 21*.

12. **Except the man who was bound to be lost.** Judas had made himself fit the prediction (*Psalms 41:9*).

15-16. **To take them out of the world.** The world is blessed by the Christian being in it. The Christian is blessed by the battle to defeat the world and bring it to Christ. See *1 Pet. 1:6-10*.

17-18. **Dedicate them to your self.** [SANCTIFY = to chose, set apart, dedicate, make holy.] Truth is the means; God's word is truth. Compare *1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Thess. 2:13*.

sent me into the world. ¹⁹And for their sake I dedicate myself to you, in order that they, too, may be truly dedicated to you.

²⁰"I do not pray only for them, but also for those who believe in me because of their message. ²¹I pray that they may all be one. Father! May they be in us, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they be one, so that the world will believe that you sent me. ²²I gave them the same glory you gave me, so that they may be one, just as you and I are one: ²³I in them and you in me, so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that you sent me and that you love them as you love me.

²⁴"Father! You have given them to me, and I want them to be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory, the glory you gave me; because you loved me before the world was made. ²⁵Righteous Father! The world does not know you, but I know you, and these know that you sent me. ²⁶I made you known to them and I will continue to do so, in order that the love you have for me may be in them, and I also may be in them."

Jesus Prays for All Believers

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that ²¹ all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given ²² them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and ²³ you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

"Father, I want those you ²⁴ have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

"Righteous Father, ²⁵ though the world does not know you, I know you, and these men know that you have sent me. I have revealed you to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be theirs and that I myself may be in them."

19. **And for their sake.** The purpose of Christ dedicating himself to the Father, was to bring the truth by and in which the disciples might be dedicated to the Father.

20. **I do not pray only for them.** For all who will be disciples down through the future until time ends. **21. I pray that they may all be one.** This is a prayer for the UNITY [not union] of all disciples. The "spirit" that divides "Christians" into warring factions, is CONTRARY to this prayer. Christians should be ONE in intent and purpose. **So that the world will believe you sent me.** It must be a *unity* which the world can see and recognize. [Some think the prime force of what he says was directed to the apostles. See notes on *John 13:4-5.*] Church quarrels and sectarian division causes unbelief!

22-23. **The same glory you gave me.** The work of Christ is accomplished when men are ONE in Christ. See *John 1:12; 1 John 3:1; Gal. 3:26-29. Just as you and I are one. All who are guided by the *one* Spirit will be *one* with each other! See *Eph. 4:3, 13.**

24-26. **And I will continue to do so.** By his death and by sending the Spirit of truth. The purpose of this, is so that the love the Father has for the Son will be *in* the disciples from that time on, to the end of time!

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.47-56; Mark 14.43-50; Luke 22.47-53*)

18 After Jesus had said this prayer he left with his disciples and went across the brook Kidron. There was a garden in that place, and Jesus and his disciples went in. ²Judas, the traitor, knew where it was, because many times Jesus had met there with his disciples. ³So Judas went to the garden, taking with him a group of soldiers and some temple guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees; they were armed, and carried lanterns and torches. ⁴Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him; so he stepped forward and said to them, "Who is it you are looking for?"

⁵"Jesus of Nazareth," they answered.

"I am he," he said.

Judas, the traitor, was standing there with them. ⁶When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they moved back and fell to the ground. ⁷Jesus asked them again, "Who is it you are looking for?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

⁸"I have already told you that I am he," Jesus said. "If, then, you are looking for me, let these others go." ⁹(He said this so that what he had said might come true, "Father, I have not lost even one of those you gave me.")

¹⁰Simon Peter had a sword; he drew it and struck the High Priest's slave, cutting off his right ear. The name of the slave was Malchus.

Jesus Arrested

18 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it.

Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

"I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

"I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

1. After Jesus had said this prayer. *McGarvey* says that now they leave the upstairs room, cross the brook Kidron, into Gethsemane. [This ends the session that began at *John 13:1*.]

2-14. Judas, the traitor, knew where it was. For notes on the Arrest, see *Matt. 26:47-58*. 6. They moved back and fell to the ground. Only John tells us this. This might fulfill *Psalms 27:2*. It shows us that Jesus had the option of avoiding the Cross, and that he did it of his own free will. Compare *John 10:17-18* and notes.

¹¹Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back in its place! Do you think that I will not drink the cup of suffering my Father has given me?"

Jesus before Annas

¹²The group of soldiers with their commanding officer and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus, tied him up, ¹³and took him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year. ¹⁴It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it was better that one man die for all the people.

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.69-70; Mark 14.66-68; Luke 22.55-57*)

¹⁵Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That other disciple was well known to the High Priest, so he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the High Priest's house. ¹⁶Peter stayed outside by the gate. The other disciple, who was well known to the High Priest, went back out, spoke to the girl at the gate and brought Peter inside. ¹⁷The girl at the gate said to Peter, "Aren't you one of the disciples of that man?"

"No, I am not," answered Peter.

¹⁸It was cold, so the servants and guards had built a charcoal fire and were standing around it, warming themselves. Peter went over and stood with them, warming himself.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

(Also *Matt. 26.59-66; Mark 14.55-64; Luke 22.66-71*)

¹⁹The High Priest questioned Jesus about his

Jesus Taken to Annas

Jesus commanded Peter, ¹¹
"Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Then the detachment of ¹²
soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him and brought him first to ¹³
Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas ¹⁴
was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people.

Peter's First Denial

Simon Peter and another ¹⁵
disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, but Peter had to wait ¹⁶
outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there, and brought Peter in.

"Surely you are not an- ¹⁷
other of this man's disciples?" the girl at the door asked Peter.

He replied, "I am not."
It was cold, and the ser- ¹⁸
vants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

15-27. Into the courtyard of the High Priest's house. For notes on the trial before Caiaphas and Peter's denial, see *Matt. 26:57-75*.

disciples and about his teaching. ²⁰Jesus answered, "I have always spoken publicly to everyone; all my teaching was done in the synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have never said anything in secret. ²¹Why, then, do you question me? Question the people who heard me. Ask them what I told them—they know what I said."

²²When Jesus said this, one of the guards there slapped him and said, "How dare you talk like this to the High Priest!"

²³Jesus answered him, "If I have said something wrong, tell everyone here what it was. But if I am right in what I have said, why do you hit me?"

²⁴So Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the High Priest.

Peter Denies Jesus Again

(Also *Matt. 26. 71-75; Mark 14. 69-72; Luke 22. 58-62*)

²⁵Peter was still standing there keeping himself warm. So the others said to him, "Aren't you one of the disciples of that man?"

Buy Peter denied it, "No, I am not," he said.

²⁶One of the High Priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, spoke up. "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" he asked.

²⁷Again Peter said "No"—and at once a rooster crowed.

Jesus before Pilate

(Also *Matt. 27. 1-2, 11-14; Mark 15. 1-5; Luke 23. 1-5*)

²⁸They took Jesus from Caiaphas' house to the governor's palace. It was early in the morning.

world. For them I sanctify 19 myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

"I have spoken openly to 20 the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. Why 21 question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said."

When Jesus had said this, 22 one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. "Is that any way to answer the high priest?" he demanded.

"If I said something 23 wrong," Jesus replied, "speak up about it. But if I spoke the truth, why did you hit me?" Then Annas sent 24 him, still bound, to Caiaphas, the high priest.

Peter's Second and Third Denials

As Simon Peter stood 25 warming himself, he was asked, "Surely you are not another of his disciples?"

He denied it, saying, "I am not."

One of the high priest's 26 servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" Again Peter 27 denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

Jesus Before Pilate

Then the Jews led Jesus 28 from Caiaphas to the place of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning,

28-40. To the governor's palace. For notes on Jesus before Pilate, see *Matt. 27:1-26*. The order of events is given in the notes on Matthew. To keep themselves ritually clean. They would do anything to have Jesus killed, yet would not go inside the palace! See notes on *John 11:55; Matt. 23:23-28* [The Jews had not yet eaten their Passover.]

The Jews did not go inside the palace because they wanted to keep themselves ritually clean, in order to be able to eat the Passover meal.

²⁹So Pilate went outside to them and asked, "What do you accuse this man of?"

³⁰Their answer was, "We would not have brought him to you if he had not committed a crime."

³¹Pilate said to them, "You yourselves take him and try him according to your own law."

The Jews replied, "We are not allowed to put anyone to death." ³²(This happened to make come true what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he would die.)

³³Pilate went back into the palace and called Jesus. "Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked him.

³⁴Jesus answered, "Does this question come from you or have others told you about me?"

³⁵Pilate replied, "Do you think I am a Jew? It was your own people and their chief priests who handed you over to me. What have you done?"

³⁶Jesus said, "My kingdom does not belong to this world; if my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. No, my kingdom does not belong here!"

³⁷So Pilate asked him, "Are you a king, then?"

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. I was born and came into the world for this one purpose, to speak about the truth. Whoever belongs to the truth listens to me."

³⁸"And what is truth?" Pilate asked.

and to avoid ceremonial uncleanliness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charges are you bringing against this man?"

³⁰"If he were not a criminal," they replied, "we would not have handed him over to you."

³¹Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

³²"But we have no right to execute anyone," the Jews objected. This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

³³Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

³⁴"Is that your idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

³⁵"Do you think I am a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

³⁶Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

³⁷Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

³⁸"What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said,

32. To make come true. *John 12:32; Matt. 20:18-19* and notes. If the Jews had authority to kill him, they would have stoned him as they did Stephen (*Acts 7:57-58*). 36. My kingdom does not belong to this world. Even though his claims were offensive to the Jews, they were no threat to Rome. No armed resistance of rescue had been attempted. 37. Are you a king, then? If Christ has a kingdom, he must be a King. You say that I am a king. This affirms the truth of what he has said. 38. And what is truth? Scorn? Mockery? His conduct through the trial shows he was deeply impressed by this Teacher who was a King.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also *Matt. 27.15-31; Mark 15.6-20; Luke 23.13-25*)

Then Pilate went back outside to the Jews and said to them, "I cannot find any reason to condemn him. ³⁹But according to the custom you have, I always set free a prisoner for you during the Passover. Do you want me to set the king of the Jews free for you?"

⁴⁰They answered him with a shout, "No, not him! We want Barabbas!" (Barabbas was a bandit.)

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. ²The soldiers made a crown of thorny branches and put it on his head; they put a purple robe on him, ³and came to him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they went up and slapped him.

"Pilate went back out once more and said to the crowd, "Look, I will bring him out here to you, to let you see that I cannot find any reason to condemn him." ⁵So Jesus went outside, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look! Here is the man!"

⁶When the chief priests and the guards saw him they shouted, "Nail him to the cross! Nail him to the cross!"

"I find no basis for a charge against him. But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release 'the king of the Jews'?"

They shouted back, "No, 40 not him! Give us Barabbas!" Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion.

Jesus Sentenced to be Crucified

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, O king of the Jews!" and they struck him in the face. 2
3

Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 4
5

As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" 6

39-40. **But according to the custom you have.** See notes on *Matt. 27:15-17*. Note that Pilate made some attempt to set Jesus free. **Barabbas.** See note on *Mark 15:7*.

1-16. **Then Pilate took Jesus.** For notes on these verses, see *Matt. 27:19-31*. John gives a few more details. 5. **Look! Here is the man.** Jesus had been lacerated in the whipping, and wore the crown of thorns and the purple robe (see note on *Matt. 27:28*). Pilate may think pity will make them agree to allow Jesus to go free. 6. **Nail him to the cross!** The mob is angry and savage! **You take him, then.** That

Pilate said to them, "You take him, then, and nail him to the cross. I find no reason to condemn him."

⁷The Jews answered back, "We have a law that says he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

⁸When Pilate heard them say this, he was even more afraid. ⁹He went back to the palace and asked Jesus, "Where do you come from?"

But Jesus did not answer. ¹⁰Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Remember, I have the authority to set you free, and also to have you nailed to the cross."

¹¹Jesus answered, "You have authority over me only because it was given to you by God. So the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a worse sin."

¹²When Pilate heard this he tired to find a way to set Jesus free. But the Jews shouted back, "If you set him free that means you are not the Emperor's friend! Anyone who claims to be a king is the Emperor's enemy!"

¹³When Pilate heard these words, he took Jesus outside and sat down on the judge's seat in the place called "The Stone Pavement." (In Hebrew the name is "Gabbatha.") ¹⁴It was then almost noon of the day before the Passover. Pilate said to the Jews, "Here is your king!"

But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?"

Jesus answered, "You have no power over me that was not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar's. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."

When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as The Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour.

is, "If he is to be nailed to the cross, it is you who must do it." ⁷ **We have a law.** That is, "He may be innocent under Roman law, but our law says he is guilty." ⁹ **Where do you come from?** "He claimed to be the Son of God?" Fear strikes deep into the heart of Pilate! ¹¹ **Only because it was given to you by God.** Suddenly, Jesus is the judge, and Pilate is on trial! What Jesus says are really words of kindness and mercy. ¹² **If you set him free.** Pilate wants to set Jesus free! Tiberias is Emperor, suspicious and cruel. If the Jews accuse him to the Emperor, Pilate's career will be over. He would rather sacrifice an innocent man, than sacrifice himself. ¹⁴ **It was almost noon of the day before the Passover.** John carefully notes the time when Pilate gave in to them. Mark says it was nine o'clock, but this is not really a problem, since the Jews divided the day into quarters which they called hours, and both nine o'clock [the third hour] and almost noon [the sixth hour] would fall into the same quarter. This small detail shows that each writer wrote independent of the others. Compare *Luke 1:1-4*; *2 Tim. 3:16*. (1) Jesus ate a Passover in the upstairs room. (2) The Jews had not yet eaten their Passover (*John 18:28*). (3) Jesus wanted so much to eat this Passover (*Luke 22:15*) that he ate it a day early, so that he, the True Lamb of God ["Our Passover feast" (*1 Cor. 5:6-8*)], could die at the time the Jews were killing their passover lambs.

¹⁵They shouted back, "Kill him! Kill him! Nail him to the cross!"

Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to nail your king to the cross?"

The chief priests answered, "The only king we have is the Emperor!"

¹⁶Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be nailed to the cross.

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also *Matt. 27.32-44; Mark 15.21-32; Luke 23.26-43*)

So they took charge of Jesus. ¹⁷He went out, carrying his cross, and came to "The Place of the Skull," as it is called. (In Hebrew it is called "Golgotha.") ¹⁸There they nailed him to the cross; they also nailed two other men to crosses, one on each side, with Jesus between them. ¹⁹Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," is what he wrote. ²⁰Many Jews read this, because the place where Jesus was nailed to the cross was not far from the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. ²¹The Jewish chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am the King of the Jews.'"

²²Pilate answered, "What I have written stays written."

²³After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took the robe, which was made on one piece of

"Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews.

But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to The Place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, and with him two others—one on either side and Jesus in the middle.

Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

15. **The only king we have is the Emperor!** They had rejected their True king. Now they claim the Emperor, Tiberias, as their king. [*Caesar* = Emperor.] This choice seals their doom, and in about forty years, the Roman Emperor will crush their nation and destroy Jerusalem.

17-30. **So they took charge of Jesus.** See notes on *Matt. 27:32-66*. John gives a few details. 25. **His mother's sister.** *Matt. 27:56* identifies Salome as one of the four women ["the mother of Zebedee's sons"]. Since John does not give his own name, it would not be unusual for him to omit any mention of his mother's name as well. Therefore, John's mother was a sister to Mary, the Human mother of Jesus.

woven cloth, without any seams in it. ²⁴The soldiers said to each other, "Let us not tear it; let us throw dice to see who will get it." This happened to make the scripture come true,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,

and gambled for my robe."

So the soldiers did this.

²⁵Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."

²⁷Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

The Death of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 27.45-56; Mark 15.33-41; Luke 23.44-49*)

²⁸Jesus knew that by now everything had been completed; and in order to make the scripture come true he said, "I am thirsty."

²⁹A bowl was there, full of cheap wine; they soaked a sponge in the wine, put it on a branch of hyssop, and lifted it up to his lips. ³⁰Jesus took the wine and said, "It is finished!"

Then he bowed his head and died.

"Let's not tear it," they ²⁴said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it."

This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said,

"They divided my garments among themselves and cast lots for my clothing."

So this is what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus ²⁵stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw ²⁶his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is ²⁷your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

The Death of Jesus

Later, knowing that all ²⁸was now completed, and so that the scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had ²⁹received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave ³⁰up his life.

[Compare note on *Matt. 10:2-4.*] ²⁶. **Woman, here is your son.** [This is not harsh, as it sounds to our ears. See note on *John 2:4.*] In the agony of death, Jesus places his human mother in John's care. The fact that John is her nephew, helps explain this. Some think this act implies that Joseph was dead at this time. And, her sons and daughters were likely still unbelievers (*John 7:5*), although after the Resurrection, they are mentioned with the believers (*Acts 1:14*).

Jesus' Side Pierced

³¹Then the Jews asked Pilate to allow them to break the legs of the men who had been put to death, and take them down from the crosses. They did this because it was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses on the Sabbath day, since the coming Sabbath was especially holy. ³²So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been put to death with Jesus. ³³But when they came to Jesus they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. ³⁴One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water poured out. ³⁵(The one who saw this happen has spoken of it, so that you also may believe. What he said is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.) ³⁶This was done to make the scripture come true, "Not one of his bones will be broken." ³⁷And there is another scripture that says, "People will look at him whom they pierced."

Now it was the day of 31
Preparation, and the next
day was to be a special Sab-
bath. Because the Jews did
not want the bodies left on
the crosses during the Sab-
bath, they asked Pilate to
have the legs broken and the
bodies taken down. The sol- 32
diers therefore came and
broke the legs of the first
man who had been crucified
with Jesus, and then those of
the other. But when they 33
came to Jesus and found
that he was already dead,
they did not break his legs.
Instead, one of the soldiers 34
pierced Jesus' side with a
spear, bringing a sudden
flow of blood and water. The 35
man who saw it has given
testimony, and his testimony
is true. He knows that he
tells the truth, and he testi-
fies so that you also may
have faith. These things 36
happened so that the scrip-
ture would be fulfilled: "Not
one of his bones will be
broken," and, as another
scripture says, "They will 37
look on the one they have
pierced."

31. **They did this because it was Friday.** Friday was "the preparation day" for the Sabbath [Saturday]. This would be a "double Sabbath," because it was the Passover. Victims were usually left on the cross until the bodies rotted away. But the Jews want to get it all over, to prevent ritually defiling the Sabbath and Passover. The soldiers take sledge-hammers and crush the legs of the criminals (*Luke 23:39-43*) who were crucified with Jesus. This would make them die very quickly!

34. **Plunged his spear into Jesus' side.** They did not break Jesus' legs, since he was already dead. Just to make sure, the spear is plunged into his side. **At once blood and water poured out.** *Johnson* thinks this shows Jesus died of a bursted heart. The fact that John clearly identifies *blood and water* shows there is some special meaning here. Compare *1 John 5:6-8*. [The ancient writers thought of BAPTISM as the point of *contact* with the blood of Christ. *J.F. Bethune-Baker*, in *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, says about *baptism*: "It was the medium by which the power of the life and death of Christ was made effective to the individual experience." Compare *1 Pet. 3:20-21*.] 36-37. **To make the scripture come true.** The prophecies about the Messiah were so complex that only the One who was the Son of God could fulfill them all! Compare *Psalms 34:20; Exod. 12:46; Psalm 22:16; Zech. 12:10*.

The Burial of Jesus

(Also *Matt. 27.57-61; Mark 15.42-47; Luke 23.50-56*)

³⁸After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. (Joseph was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was afraid of the Jewish authorities.) Pilate told him he could have the body, so Joseph went and took it away. ³⁹Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes. ⁴⁰The two men took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices; for this is how the Jews prepare a body for burial. ⁴¹There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried. ⁴²Since it was the day before the Jewish Sabbath, and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus there.

The Empty Tomb

(Also *Matt. 28.1-8; Mark 16.1-8; Luke 24.1-12*)

20 Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken

The Burial of Jesus

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

The Empty Tomb

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

38-42. Asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. For notes on the Burial, see *Matt. 27:57-66*. Nicodemus. Only John tells that he helped with the burial. [This is the third time Nicodemus is mentioned. See *John 3:1; 7:50*.] Where no one had ever been buried. This is important, because of Jewish ideas about demons. See note on *Matt. 27:60*.

1. Early on Sunday morning. See notes on *Matt. 28:1-8*. Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and Salome start off toward the tomb, and Mary Magdalene evidently goes on ahead to the tomb, arriving there first. She sees the stone taken away, and runs back to the city a different way, to tell the apostles. The other women arrive at the tomb, see the angels, etc., and go back to the city. Peter and John, followed by Mary Magdalene, run to the tomb, and then return to the city. Mary Magdalene stays, and sees the angels and Jesus. A few minutes later, Jesus appears to the other women before they reach the homes of the apostles.

away from the entrance. ²She ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb and we don't know where they have put him!"

³Then Peter and the other disciple left and went to the tomb. ⁴The two of them were running, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent over and saw the linen cloths, but he did not go in. ⁶Behind him came Simon Peter, and he went straight into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there ⁷and the cloth which had been around Jesus' head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in; he saw and believed. ⁹(They still did not understand the scripture which said that he must rise from death.) ¹⁰Then the disciples went back home.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

(Also *Matt. 28.9-10; Mark 16.9-11*)

¹¹Mary stood crying outside the tomb. Still crying, she bent over and looked in the tomb, ¹²and saw two angels there, dressed in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet. ¹³"Woman, why are you crying?" they asked her.

She answered, "They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have put him!"

So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" 2

So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter, and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Jesus Appears to Mary of Magdala

Then the disciples went back to their homes, but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. 10 11 12

They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" 13

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they

6. He saw the linen cloths lying there. This argues against anyone having stolen the body. It would take time to carefully fold the linen cloths and the cloth that had been around Jesus' head.

11-18. Mary stood crying. She thought the body had been stolen. And saw two angels there. Angels point to something supernatural. Saw Jesus standing there. The first human to see the risen Lord was a woman. Do not hold on to me. The other women did hold on to him (*Matt. 28:9*). The meaning must be: "I haven't gone back yet! Don't hold on to me, but go tell my disciples about this!"

¹⁴When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there; but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵“Woman why are you crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who is it that you are looking for?”

She thought he was the gardener, so she said to him, “If you took him away, sir, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.”

¹⁶Jesus said to her, “Mary!”

She turned toward him and said in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (This means “Teacher.”)

¹⁷“Do not hold on to me,” Jesus told her, “because I have not yet gone back up to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them for me, ‘I go back up to him who is my Father and your Father, my God and your God.’”

¹⁸So Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had told her this.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

(Also *Matt. 28.16-20; Mark 16.14-18; Luke 24.36-49*)

¹⁹It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus came and stood among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. ²⁰After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing

have put him.” At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

“Woman,” he said, “why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

Jesus said to her, “Mary.” ¹⁶ She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).

Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Mary of Magdala went to the disciples with the news that she had seen the Lord and that he had told her this.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

On the evening of that 19 first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed ²⁰ them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

19. It was late that Sunday evening. [Whether John used Jewish time or Roman time would identify the exact hour of the day. If Jewish time it is before six o'clock, and just getting dusk.] This is the third or fourth time Jesus has been seen on this most unusual day. This is the first time to the group of apostles, and by comparing *Mark 16:14-16* and *Luke 24:33-36*, we learn they were talking about the Resurrection. *McGarvey* says the fact that they thought Jesus was a ghost (*Luke 24:37*) shows how little they believed Jesus had raised from death.

20. He showed them his hands and his side. To convince them he was in his body [resurrection body] and not a ghost. A week later he showed these wounds to Thomas. His resurrection body showed these proofs of his death and his love! Some sixty years later at Patmos, John saw “The Lamb” which appeared to have been killed. It may be that Jesus in Eternity continues in this body which shows the evidence of the Cross. If so, the Redeemed will be eternally reminded of God’s act in Christ which set them free!!!

the Lord. ²¹Then Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." ²²He said this, and then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive men's sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus and Thomas

²⁴One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We saw the Lord!"

Thomas said to them, "If I do not see the scars of the nails in his hands, and put my finger on those scars, and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later the disciples were together indoors again, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then stretch out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!"

²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Again Jesus said, "Peace 21
be with you! As the Father
has sent me, I am sending
you." And with that he 22
breathed on them and said,
"Receive the Holy Spirit. If 23
you forgive anyone his sins,
they are forgiven; if you do
not forgive them, they are
not forgiven."

Jesus Appears to Thomas

Now Thomas (called Did- 24
ymus), one of the Twelve
was not with the disciples
when Jesus came. When the 25
other disciples told him that
they had seen the Lord, he
declared, "Unless I see nail
marks in his hands and put
my finger where the nails
were, and put my hand into
his side, I will not believe
it."

A week later his disciples 26
were in the house again, and
Thomas was with them.
Though the doors were
locked, Jesus came and
stood among them, and
said, "Peace be with you!"
Then he said to Thomas, 27
"Put your finger here; see
my hands. Reach out your
hand and put it into my
side. Stop doubting and be-
lieve."

Thomas said to him, "My 28
Lord and my God!"

21. **As the Father sent me, so I send you.** This is the Great Commission, which he speaks more fully in Galilee (*Matt. 28:16-20*), and finally completed on the Mount of Olives, just before he was taken up to heaven (*Acts 1:8*). He had carefully trained these men for just this work.

23. **If you forgive men's sins.** From *Matt. 16:19*, we see that the "keys" were given to all the apostles. How they used these "keys" is seen from *Acts 3:26*. Jesus placed an *obligation* upon them [and the messianic community] to announce God's terms of salvation. "You are to open their eyes and turn them from the darkness to the light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that through their faith in me they will have their sins forgiven and receive their place among God's chosen people" (*Acts 26:18*).

24. **Thomas (called the Twin).** He had not seen Jesus up to this point, and was hesitant to believe the Resurrection. He demanded *concrete evidence!*

26. **And Thomas was with them.** This was the second Lord's day! [Christians quickly began calling Sunday the Lord's day, because he rose from death on that day of the week.]

27. **Put your finger here.** Jesus had just "passed through" locked doors, which would imply to them he was a ghost. Now he tells Thomas to "put him to the test" to see and feel the REALNESS of his Resurrection.

²⁹Jesus said to him, "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰Jesus did many other mighty works in his disciples' presence which are not written down in this book. ³¹These have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this faith you may have life in his name.

Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

21 After this, Jesus showed himself once more to his disciples at Lake Tiberias. This is how he did it. ²Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael (the one from Cana in Galilee), the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of Jesus were all together. ³Simon Peter said to the others, "I am going fishing."

"We will come with you," they told him. So they went and got into the boat; but all that night they did not catch a thing. ⁴As the sun was rising, Jesus stood at the water's edge, but the

Then Jesus told him, "Be- 29
cause you have seen me, you
have believed; blessed are
those who have not seen and
yet have believed."

Jesus did many other mir- 30
aculous signs in the presence
of his disciples, which are
not recorded in this book.
But these are written that 31
you may believe that Jesus is
the Christ, the Son of God,
and that by believing you
may have life in his name.

**Jesus and the Miraculous
Catch of Fish**

21 Afterward Jesus ap-
peared again to his dis-
ciples by the Sea of Tiberias.
It happened this way: Simon 2
Peter, Thomas (called Didy-
mus), Nathanael from Cana
in Galilee, the sons of Zebe-
dee, and two other disciples
were together. "I'm going 3
out to fish," Simon Peter
told them, and they said,
"We'll go with you." So they
went out and got into the
boat, but that night they
caught nothing.

Early in the morning, 4
Jesus stood on the shore, but
the disciples did not realize
that it was Jesus.

29. How happy are those who believe without seeing me! [Happy: see note on Matt. 5:3] Thomas believed by "seeing." Jesus blesses those who will believe without seeing him in person [on the evidence given by the eyewitnesses]. "For our life is a matter of faith, not of sight" (2 Cor. 5:7).

30. Jesus did many other mighty works. Compare John 21:25.

31. These have been written. This is the goal of the Gospels and the entire New Testament! Christ is REVEALED to all, to produce faith. [It is correct to say that the Holy Spirit produces (gives) faith through the witness of the Word (Bible). See John 16:8-11 and notes] Faith is not "something we believe, even though we know it isn't so." Faith is believing and responding to the Holy Spirit's testimony about God's act in Jesus Christ to set men free. Compare Rom. 10:17. Those who choose [follow] this faith of their own free will "have life in his name."

1. After this. Compare Matt. 28:7; Mark 16:7. Lake Tiberias. Another name for Lake Galilee. See John 6:1, 23 and notes.

2. Were all together. Seven are mentioned. Nathanael is the same as Bartholomew, and probably all are apostles. They cannot think their apostleship has terminated; so we understand that they are only waiting, until Jesus comes as he promised (Matt. 28:7).

3. I am going fishing. As usual, Peter takes the lead.

4. As the sun was rising. This is after they had fished all night without success.

disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Then he said to them, "Young men, haven't you caught anything?"

"Not a thing," they answered.

⁶He said to them, "Throw your net out on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw the net out, and could not pull it back in, because they had caught so many fish.

⁷The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken his clothes off) and jumped into the water. ⁸The other disciples came to shore in the boat, pulling the net full of fish. They were not very far from land, about a hundred yards away. ⁹When they stepped ashore they saw a charcoal fire there with fish on it, and some bread. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."

¹¹Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore, full of big fish, a hundred and fifty-three in all; even though there were so many, still the net did not tear. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and eat." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³So Jesus went over, took the bread, and gave it to them; he did the same with the fish.

¹⁴This, then, was the third time Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he was raised from death.

He called out to them, ⁵ "Friends, haven't you caught any fish?"

"No," they answered.

He said, ⁶ "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, ⁷ "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. When they landed, ⁹ they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

Jesus said to them, ¹⁰ "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."

Simon Peter climbed a ¹¹ board and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, ¹² "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus ¹³ came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was ¹⁴ now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

5. **Young men.** PAIDIA. He deliberately speaks as any stranger would who wanted to buy fish from fishermen.

7. **It is the Lord!** The miracle helps John recognize Jesus. Peter, as usual, is the first to act. He jumps into the water!

12-13. **None of the disciples dared ask him.** This implies there was something "different" which made them want to ask questions.

14. **The third time.** The third time to the disciples. [The first was to *ten* (John 20:19); the second to *eleven* (John 20:26).] A list of the appearances is given in the notes on *Matt. 28:9*.

Jesus and Peter

¹⁵After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he answered, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my lambs."

¹⁶A second time Jesus said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

"Yes, Lord," he answered, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep."

¹⁷A third time Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" and said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!"

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep."

¹⁸I tell you the truth: when you were young you used to fasten your belt and go anywhere you wanted to; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie them and take you where you don't want to go." ¹⁹(In saying this Jesus was indicating the way in

Jesus Reinstates Peter

When they had finished ¹⁵ eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Simon ¹⁶ son of John, do you truly love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time he said to ¹⁷ him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, ¹⁸ when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by ¹⁹

15-17. **Do you love me more than these?** Than these other disciples do? [Some think it means: "Than you love the boat and the fishing business?" *McGarvey* thinks this.] This incident with Peter is probably to show him that he is still an apostle and shares the *obligation* with the others. There is a subtle "play on words" in the original language. Jesus does not say *Peter* (a rock), but *Simon* (a hearing, *Gen. 29:33*). Twice Jesus asks: "Do you love me?" [*AGAPE*]; and Peter answers: "You know that I *like* you" [*PHILOS*]. The third time, Jesus asks: "Do you like me?" [*PHILOS*]. Peter becomes sad as he answers: "You know that I like you" [*PHILOS*]. *Alford* (*Greek Testament*), *McGarvey*, et. al., think this is the correct explanation. However, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, *Johnson*, *Lipscomb*, et. al., think there is no significance in using the two words. The Latin Vulgate does distinguish between them, though, using *DILIGIS* and *AMO*. But few English translations make the distinction. [Some see this as an "official reinstatement" of Peter as an apostle; that he denied three times, therefore must confess three times. But there is no proof Peter ever ceased to be an apostle, and his guilt is not greatly different from the others who also abandoned Jesus (compare *John 16:32*).] **Take care of my lambs.** Three times Jesus repeats this [in different forms], showing he places his trust in this man [who probably had a deep sense of guilt]. Peter was never the same after these things had happened to him (see *Luke 22:31-32*).

18. **I tell you the truth.** What Jesus now says is a prediction that Peter will die for his Lord. [All the apostles did die because of Christ, except John.]

19. **(In which Peter would die.)** Traditional history says Peter was crucified [upside down] at Rome, and Paul was beheaded there, both about the same time (around 68 A.D.), by Emperor Nero. [Paul was

which Peter would die and bring glory to God.) Then Jesus said to him, "Follow me!"

Jesus and the Other Disciple

²⁰Peter turned around and saw behind him that other disciple, whom Jesus loved—the one who had leaned close to Jesus at the meal and asked, "Lord, who is going to betray you?"

²¹When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?"

²²Jesus answered him, "If I want him to live until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!"

²³So a report spread among the followers of Jesus that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he said, "If I want him to live until I come, what is that to you?"

²⁴He is the disciple who spoke of these things, the one who also wrote them down; and we know that what he said is true.

Conclusion

²⁵Now, there are many other things that Jesus did. If they were all written down one by one, I suppose that the whole world could not hold the books that would be written.

which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

Peter turned and saw that ²⁰the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?") When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?"

Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." Because of this, the rumor spread among the brothers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?"

This is the disciple who ²⁴testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

Jesus did many other ²⁵things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

a Roman citizen, Peter was not.] **Follow me!** The future had a blessing for Peter, if he "kept the Faith." He did, from this time on!

22. If I want him to live until I come? Jesus is saying: "It's none of your business what the future holds for others. You follow me, and let the others take care of themselves!" *Johnson* sees in "until I come," a reference to John staying on earth longer than the others, and "*Christ coming*" to give John the Revelation message. John died about 100 A.D.

23. So a report spread. This shows how precisely John remembered what Jesus had said! There can be no question that John died. His grave at Ephesus was well known among the early Christians.

24. And we know that what he said is true. Many think these words were written by the church-elders at Ephesus, showing their "endorsement" of all that John writes. *McGarvey* thinks the "*I suppose*" of the next verse implies this verse is an "official statement" in formal language. Compare the introduction to *1 John*.

25. There are many other things that Jesus did. Only a small part of Jesus' life and actions are recorded for us. But the sacred historians had no intention of producing an "unabridged cyclopedia." We are given all the *facts* we need to make an accurate choice (*John 20:31*).

INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

This book of the New Testament begins where the first four come to a close. Luke, our historian, begins with the Lord being taken up into heaven, and shows us the apostles and the nucleus that would begin the church of Christ on this earth. We see them waiting in Jerusalem (*Acts 1:15*). The promised *signal* to begin would be the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" (*Acts 1:5*). [Note how Jesus applies what John the Baptist had said.] Luke shows us the day called Pentecost, and we see the Holy Spirit come down and fill the waiting disciples with spiritual power.

Over nineteen centuries ago, Joel's prophecy CAME TRUE, and the Holy Spirit came. Jesus called Him "ANOTHER Helper." Jesus would not leave his people to be ORPHANS when he went back to the Father! He sent *another* Helper to be with them forever!!! The world can never be the same! The world cannot go back to where it was before the Spirit came! Ground has been captured that can never be lost [since the facts of the past cannot change]! The existence of Christ's church is its own *credential!* This is *The Last Days*: they are swiftly running to their completion, and the saved in Eternity will be a "great crowd," so many that no one can count them (*Rev. 7:9*). The real power of Pentecost is not the miraculous gifts from the Spirit. The real power is in TRANSFORMED LIVES!!!

This book shows us the first time that God's terms for saving man are announced (*Acts 2:38*). It shows the spread of Christianity into Palestine, and then throughout the civilized Roman world. It was Peter who preached that Pentecost. But Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles, soon is the chief actor in the drama that unfolds.

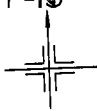
This book could not have been completed before Paul's release from prison in 62 A.D., nor can it be dated past 67 A.D., since it does not mention Paul's death. Luke probably wrote it during the two years at Rome with Paul (*Col. 4:14*), completing it as Paul is released. Traditional history says Paul did go to Spain after his release, and also preached in the East before he was recaptured in 66 A.D. at Nicopolis (Epirus) on the west coast of Greece. He was decapitated at Rome in 67 A.D., shortly after he completed the letter of 2 Timothy.

THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

Acts 1:1—7:60

Introduction

1:1 - 5



Calvary

Damascus Gate

Third Wall 40 A.D.

18 Stoning of Stephen
7:58-60

Prison

6 4:1-4

10 5:17-20

Olivet

Second Wall
(Hezekiah's)

1 1:5-11

First Wall (David and Solomon's)

Temple Apartment
2:1-47

Herod's Palace

Synagogue

4 Gate Beautiful
3:7-10

Pilate's Residence

16 6:9-12

15 Solomon's Porch
3:11-26

15 6:7,8 Word Spread

Upper Room

2 1:12-26

8 4:23-5:11

7 Sanhedrin
4:5-22

Houses of
Annas and Caiaphas

13 Word Spread
5:42

9 Solomon's Porch
5:12-16

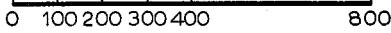
11 5:21a

12 5:21b-41

14 6:1-6

17 Sanhedrin
6:13-7:57

Scale of Yards



THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

1:1—7:60

INTRODUCTION. 1:1-5

- a. Former treatise. 1
- b. The day of ascension. 2a
- c. The twelve apostles commissioned. 2b
- d. Post resurrection appearances. 3
- e. The charge concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit. 4, 5
1. ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVET. 1:6-11
 - a. The inquiry of the apostles. 6-8
 - b. The ascension. 9-11
2. IN THE UPPER ROOM. 1:12-26
 - a. Their return. 12
 - b. The prayer meeting. 13, 14
 - c. The place of Judas filled. 15-26
3. IN AN APARTMENT OF THE TEMPLE. 2:1-47
 - a. The baptism in the Holy Spirit. 1-4
 - b. The result of the baptism. 5-13
 - c. The sermon of Peter. 14-36
 - d. The results of the sermon. 37-42
 - e. The unity of the church. 43-47
4. AT THE GATE BEAUTIFUL. 3:1-10
The healing of the lame man. 1-10
5. ON SOLOMON'S PORCH. 3:11-26
Peter's second sermon. 11-26
6. IN THE PRISON. 4:1-4
 - a. The arrest. 1
 - b. The reason for the arrest. 2
 - c. They are led away. 3
 - d. The results of the preaching. 4
7. BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. 4:5-22
 - a. The council gathered. 5, 6
 - b. The examination of the council and the defense of Peter. 7-12
 - c. The results of Peter's defense. 13-22
8. IN THE UPPER ROOM. 4:23—5:11
 - a. The praise and prayer of the disciples. 23-31
 - b. The unity of the believers. 32-37
 - c. The first church discipline. 5:1-11
9. ON SOLOMON'S PORCH. 5:12-16
Signs and wonders and the increase of the word. 12-16
10. IN THE PRISON. 5:17-20
 - a. Their arrest. 17, 18
 - b. The divine release. 19, 20
11. ON SOLOMON'S PORCH. 5:21a
The apostles teach in the Temple in the early morning. 21a
12. BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. 5:21-41
 - a. The assembling of the council and the apostles' trial. 21b-28
 - b. The answer of the apostles. 29-32
 - c. The result of the defense and the advice of Gamaliel. The release. 33-41
13. THE SPREAD OF THE WORD. 5:42
14. ON SOLOMON'S PORCH. 6:1-6
 - a. The murmuring of the Grecian Jews. 1
 - b. The action of the twelve and the church. 2-6
15. THE INCREASE OF THE WORD OF GOD. 6:7, 8
16. AT THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE LIBERTINES. 6:9-12
 - a. Those who opposed. 9
 - b. The evil means used by those who refused. 10-12
17. STEPHEN BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. 6:13—7:57
 - a. The testimony of the false witnesses. 6:13, 14
 - b. The glowing face of Stephen. 15
 - c. Stephen's defense. 7:1-53
 - d. The results. 54-57
18. OUTSIDE THE CITY WALL. 7:58-60
 - a. Stephen cast out. 58
 - b. His stoning and death. 59, 60

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Dear Theophilus:

1 In my first book I wrote about all the things that Jesus did and taught, from the time he began his work ²until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before he was taken up he gave instructions by the power of the Holy Spirit to the men he had chosen as his apostles. ³For forty days after his death he showed himself to them many times, in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive; he was seen by them, and talked with them about the Kingdom of God. ⁴And when they came together, he gave them this order, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, that I told you about. ⁵John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus Taken up into Heaven

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ²"Do not leave Jerusalem, but for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, ³but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." ⁴ ⁵

1. In my first book. That is, in the Gospel of Luke. The name "Theophilus" means *one who loves God*. No record of him exists other than Luke's mention of his name.

2. He gave instructions. The Great Commission (*Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47-49*). **By the power of the Holy Spirit.** Jesus was given the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit (*John 3:34*). The Spirit was "ANOTHER Helper" (*John 14:16*), and Jesus gave them a *pledge* of the Spirit (*John 20:22*), with the promise they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (see *verse 5*).

3. He showed himself to them. Jesus is LIVING SAVIOR! If his body "still slept on a Judean hill," he would be no different from Socrates, Buddha, Muhammad, or any other sage. **He was seen by them.** See note on *Matt. 28:9* Scripture records eleven times that he was seen after raising from death, but the language implies more times. [The event of *Matt. 27:52-53* can be taken to imply that he was also seen by the people and the Jewish leaders during the forty days time.] **About the Kingdom of God.** The church (messianic community) which would be officially set up on Pentecost.

4. Do not leave Jerusalem. It was "poetic justice" that the church of Christ would begin right in the same city where the enemies of Christ lived. A false religion would have begun hundreds of years later and thousands of miles distant. See note on *Acts 2:36-37*. But also, Isaiah had prophesied that Jerusalem would be the place where the Good News was first preached (*Isa. 2:3*). **But wait for the gift.** Note it is the Father who promised the gift. The terms of citizenship in the Kingdom must be spoken by the Spirit. [Note the command to "wait" applied only to *this* time of setting up of Christ's church.]

5. John baptized with water. Water was the only element in the baptism of John. They had received John's baptism [some think *John 4:1-2* implies that they (and John's disciples) had been re-baptized as Christ's disciples], and now they are going to receive "baptism with the Holy Spirit." This took place just ten days after Jesus told them this. [For a more complete discussion of John's baptism and "Christian baptism," see notes on *Acts 19:1-7*.

Jesus Is Taken up to Heaven

6 When the apostles met together with Jesus they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?"

7 Jesus said to them, "The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. 8 But you will be filled with power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him; and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven."

So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

6. **Lord, will you at this time?** They still held to their former ideas about a "golden age of Israel," with a political Messiah. Their only question was: "Will you give it *now*?" Not until the Holy Spirit was given, and they understood "all the truth" (*John 16:12-15*), would they give up this delusion and see that Christ's Kingdom is not "of this world."

7. **And it is not for you to know.** That is, "it's none of your business!" The "times and occasions" are not revealed (see *Rev. 10:3-4*).

8. **But you will be filled with power.** Not the political power they dreamed of having, but spiritual power! **And you will be witnesses for me.** A "witness" is one who *gives evidence or testimony, based upon personal knowledge or belief*. The apostles are "prime witnesses" about things in which they participated themselves (*1 John 1:1-4*). Every Christian can be a "witness" in a *secondary sense*, based upon the facts which he accepts as being true. **In Jerusalem.** Beginning in the religious capital of Judaism, and spreading out over the whole world (see note on *Col. 1:23*).

9. **He was taken up to heaven.** See *Luke 24:51-53* and notes there.

10. **They still had their eyes fixed on the sky.** In surprise at what has just happened! As they stand there, two men dressed in white (angels) suddenly are standing beside them.

11. **This Jesus . . . will come back in the same way.** A cloud hid him from their sight as he was taken up. He will come back with clouds (*Rev. 1:7; Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30*). [The nucleus of disciples were Galileans, *Acts 2:7*]

Judas' Successor

¹²Then the apostles went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is about half a mile away from the city. ¹³They entered Jerusalem and went up to the room where they were staying: Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Patriot, and Judas, the son of James. ¹⁴They gathered frequently to pray as a group, together with the women, and with Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵A few days later there was a meeting of the believers, about one hundred and twenty in all, and Peter stood up to speak. ¹⁶"My brothers," he said, "the scripture had to come true in which the Holy Spirit, speaking through David, predicted about Judas, who was the guide of those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷Judas was a member of our group, because he had been chosen to have a part in our work."

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. When they arrived, ¹³ they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

In those days Peter stood ¹⁵ up among the believers (a group numbering about one hundred and twenty) and ¹⁶ said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—he was one of our number ¹⁷ and shared in this ministry."

12. **Then the apostles went back.** Jesus was taken up from the Mount of Olives. [A shrine is built on the supposed spot.] Now they return to the city to wait.

13. **And went up to the room.** A room on the second floor. They both lived there, and used it for a meeting place. All the apostles are named except Judas Iscariot (see notes on *Matt. 10:1-4*).

14. **To pray as a group.** They were waiting for the Father's gift. Ten days time passed between Jesus being taken up, and the events of Pentecost. They spent much of this time in prayer. **With the women.** Especially those who had been with Jesus on his teaching tour (*Luke 8:1-3*) **Mary.** This is the last time Scripture speaks of her. Traditional history says she lived almost to the time Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. **And his brothers.** These are the natural sons of Mary and Joseph. Just six months before this, they had been unbelievers (*John 7:5*), but now they were among the nucleus of disciples. One of them was the James of Jerusalem (*Acts 15:13; 1 Cor. 15:7*), the writer of the Letter from James. [Brothers: see note on *John 2:12*.]

15. **About one hundred and twenty in all.** This is how many were at Jerusalem, but there were other disciples (*1 Cor. 15:6*). With the attitude of the apostles themselves (*verse 6*), it could be that many of the disciples of Jesus were indifferent until after the events of Pentecost.

16. **The scripture had to come true.** The scripture recorded David's prediction about what Judas would do of his own free will. (see *verse 20*.)

17. **A member of our group.** It was a paradox that one who shared in the work of Christ would be the one to betray him.

¹⁸(With the money that Judas got for his evil act he bought a field, where he fell to his death; he burst open and all his insides spilled out. ¹⁹All the people living in Jerusalem heard about it, and so in their own language they call that field Akeldama, which means "Field of Blood.")

²⁰"For it is written in the book of Psalms,
'May his house become empty;
let no one live in it.'

It is also written,

'May someone else take his place of service.'

²¹⁻²²"So then, someone must join us as a witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He must be one of those who were in our group during the whole time that the Lord Jesus traveled about with us, beginning from the time John preached his baptism until the day Jesus was taken up from us to heaven."

²³So they proposed two men: Joseph, who was called Barsabbas (he was also called Justus), and Matthias. ²⁴Then they prayed, "Lord, you know the hearts of all men. And so, Lord, show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take this place of service as an apostle which Judas left to go to the place where he belongs."

(With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

"For," said Peter, "it is written in the book of Psalms,

'May his place be deserted;
let there be no one to dwell in it,'

and,

'May another take his place of leadership.'

Therefore it is necessary ²¹to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."

So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas, also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they ²⁴prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this ²⁵apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he be-

18. **He bought a field.** The priests bought it in his name. Everyone here would understand that. See note on *Matt. 27:7*. **Where he fell to his death.** We are to "lump together" Matthew's account and this. Traditional history says Judas hanged himself on a tree overhanging the cliffs of the Valley of Hinnom, and either the rope or the tree limb breaking, fell with such force that his body burst open on the jagged rocks below.

19. **Field of Blood.** Both because of his bloody death, and being paid for the "blood money."

20. **In the book of Psalms.** The spirit, rather than the exact words, is quoted. The first quotation is from *Psalms 69:25*; the second from *Psalms 109:8*.

21-22. **Someone must join us.** A twelfth apostle must be chosen. He must be one who had been a disciple of John, left him to follow Jesus, had stayed with Jesus all during his teaching ministry, and had seen Jesus after he was raised from death. He must be an "eye witness" of all this, so he can join his voice to their's as they declare the Good News.

23. **So they proposed two men.** The whole group did this. The two men are mentioned only here.

24. **Then they prayed.** Likely one of the apostles led in prayer. They were asking God to show them the right thing to do. This is a good example.

done!" ¹²Amazed and confused they all kept asking each other, "What does this mean?"

¹³But others made fun of the believers, saying, "These men are drunk!"

Peter's Message

¹⁴Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles, and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd, "Fellow Jews, and all of you who live in Jerusalem, listen to me and let me tell you what this means. ¹⁵These men are not drunk, as you suppose, it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶Rather, this is what the prophet Joel spoke about,

¹⁷"This is what I will do in the last days, God says:

I will pour out my Spirit upon all men.
Your sons and your daughters will prophesy;
your young men will see visions,
and your old men will dream dreams.

Amazed and perplexed, ¹²they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Some, however, made fun ¹³of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Peter Addresses the Crowd

Then Peter stood up with ¹⁴the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd:

"Fellow Jews and all of you who are in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as ¹⁵you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is ¹⁶what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

12. **Amazed and confused.** They could not account for the cause of this they were hearing.

13. **These men are drunk.** In their attempt to "make fun" of what is happening, they accuse them of being drunk - as if that could account for it. [A very potent sweet wine was made by soaking raisins and fermenting the juice.]

14. **Then Peter stood up.** He speaks for the Twelve. He is about to use the "keys" (*Matt. 16:19*) to open the "door of grace." [He also used these "keys" at the house of Cornelius (*Acts 10*), and with Simon the magician (*Acts 8*).] **With the other eleven.** They now begin their *witness* to Christ.

15. **It is only nine o'clock in the morning.** This was the normal time for breakfast, and much too early to be drunk! [Breakfast was normally at this time during feast days.]

16. **This is what the prophet Joel spoke about.** Peter turns to Joel, who lived about 800 B.C., for an explanation of these things (*see Joel 2:28-32*).

17. **This is what I will do in the last days.** The Jews called the last age of time which would begin at the coming of the Messiah, the *last days* (*see Isa. 2:2*). Note that Peter clearly identifies the *last days* as **HAVING BEGUN!** **I will pour out my Spirit.** Symbolic of anointing. *See verse 4.* **Upon all men.** On all the races of men, not just Jews only. **Your sons and your daughters.** "To prophesy" in the New Testament means to speak God's truth through special power from God. It includes the idea of predicting the future, but this is only a part of it. Both the men and women in verse 4 were filled with the Spirit, also Philip's four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy (*Acts 21:9*). **Visions . . . dreams.** Such as Peter had at Joppa (*Acts 10:9-17*) Paul had a dream of special message (*Acts 16:9-10*).

<p>¹⁸Yes, even on my slaves, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.</p> <p>¹⁹I will perform miracles in the sky above, and marvels on the earth below. There will be blood, fire, and thick smoke;</p> <p>²⁰the sun will become dark, and the moon red as blood, before the great and glorious Day of the Lord arrives.</p> <p>²¹And then, whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'</p> <p>²²"Listen to these words, men of Israel! Jesus of Nazareth was a man whose divine mission was clearly shown to you by the miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through him; you yourselves know this, for it took place here among you. ²³God, in his own will and knowledge, had already decided that Jesus would be handed over to you; and you killed him, by letting sinful men nail him to the cross. ²⁴But God raised him from the dead; he set him free from the pains of death, because it was impossible that death should hold him prisoner.</p>	<p>Even on my servants, 18 both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy, And I will show wonders 19 in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to 20 darkness and the moon become as blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls 21 on the name of the Lord will be saved.'</p> <p>"Men of Israel, listen to 22 this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did a- mong you through him, as you yourselves know. This 23 man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God 24 raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was im- possible for death to keep its</p>
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18. **Even on my slaves.** God does not place "class limitations" on his Good News (See *Gal. 3:28*).

19-20. **I will perform miracles.** *Johnson* understands this to refer to the coming destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.). "Day of the Lord" is used by *Joel* to mean a *great disaster* (see *Joel 2*). Compare notes on *Matt. 24:29-31*. See also *1 Thess. 2:16; Col. 1:23*.

21. **Whoever calls on the name of the Lord.** Faith is more than knowledge (*James 2:19*). To "call on the name of the Lord" is to do more than say, "Lord, Lord, open to us." Faith is action (*Matt. 7:21*). See notes on *Acts 22:16*.

22. **Listen to these words!** He boldly declares Christ to them. They had been here long enough to have seen at least the events of Christ's final week, plus his crucifixion. They were "eye witnesses" to the miracles, wonders, and signs which proved his Messiahship. The Resurrection is proved by: (1) the prophecy of *David*; (2) the testimony of the apostles; (3) the earthquake, the darkness, and the raising of some dead (*Matt. 27:52-53*). They had first hand knowledge of all this.

23. **Had already decided.** God knew before Creation that man would sin, and he decreed that Jesus come and die as our "sin offering" (*Eph. 3:9-11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 1 Pet. 1:20*). **And you killed him.** The fact that God knew what they would do, does not take away their guilt. They acted of their own free will. These people had been part of the crowd who shouted: "nail him to the cross" (*Matt. 27:23*). [At least some of them had been.]

24. **It was impossible that death should hold him prisoner.** Because he was *life* (*John 1:4*); and because it was the Father's will that he should rise from death. This verse sums up the four Gospels.

²⁵For David said about him,
 'I saw the Lord before me at all times;
 he is by my right side, so that I will not
 be troubled.

²⁶Because of this my heart is glad
 and my words are full of joy;
 and I, mortal though I am,
 will rest assured in hope,

²⁷because you will not abandon my soul in
 the world of the dead;
 you will not allow your devoted servant
 to suffer decay.

²⁸You have shown me the paths that lead to
 life,
 any by your presence you will fill me
 with joy.'

²⁹"Brothers: I must speak to you quite plainly
 about our patriarch David. He died and was
 buried, and his grave is here with us to this
 very day. ³⁰He was a prophet, and he knew God's
 promise to him: God made a vow that he would
 make one of David's descendants a king, just
 as David was. ³¹David saw what God was going
 to do, and so he spoke about the resurrection of
 the Messiah when he said,
 'He was not abandoned in the world of the
 dead;
 his flesh did not decay.'

³²God has raised this very Jesus from the dead,

hold on him. David said 25
 about him:

'I saw the Lord always
 before me.

Because he is at my
 right hand, I will not
 be shaken.

Therefore my heart is 26
 glad and my tongue re-
 joices;

my body also will live in
 hope,

because you will not 27
 abandon me to the

grave,
 nor will you let your
 Holy One undergo
 decay.

You have made known 28
 to me the paths of life;
 you will fill me with joy
 in your presence.'

"Brothers, I can tell you 29
 confidently that the patri-
 arch David died and was

buried, and his tomb is here
 to this day. But he was a proph- 30

et and knew that God had
 promised with an oath that

he would place one of his
 descendants on his throne.

Seeing what was ahead, he 31
 spoke of the resurrection of

the Christ, that he was not
 abandoned to the grave, nor

did his body undergo decay.

God has raised this Jesus to 32
 life, and we are all witnesses

25-28. For David said about him. Psalm 16:8-11. The spirit, not the exact words, is quoted. In the world of the dead. He would not remain in the grasp of death. David did not say this about himself, but spoke of a descendant (verses 29-30). Devoted servant. The Lord Jesus.

29. He died and was buried. David's grave was inside the city walls, and they had all seen it.

30. God made a vow. Note Peter's reasoning. God had promised David that Christ would sit on his throne. [2 Sam. 7:11-16; Psalm 89:3-4, 35-37; 132:11.] Note what James says in Acts 15:15-18.

31. So he spoke about . . . the Messiah. Peter again emphasizes that David spoke of the Lord Jesus.

32. God has raised this very Jesus. "David prophesied it; we have all seen it." This is their testimony.

and we are all witnesses to this fact. ³³He has been raised to the right side of God and received from him the Holy Spirit, as his Father had promised; and what you now see and hear is his gift that he has poured out on us. ³⁴For David himself did not go up into heaven; rather he said,

‘The Lord said to my Lord:
Sit here at my right side,

³⁵until I put your enemies as a footstool
under your feet.’

³⁶“All the people of Israel, then, are to know for sure that it is this Jesus, whom you nailed to the cross, that God has made Lord and Messiah!”

³⁷When the people heard this, they were deeply troubled, and said to Peter and the other apostles, “What shall we do, brothers?”

³⁸Peter said to them, “Turn away from your sins, each one of you, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the

of the fact. Exalted to the ³³ right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David ³⁴ did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

‘The Lord said to my Lord:

Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.’ ³⁵

“Therefore, let all Israel ³⁶ be assured of this: God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.”

When the people heard ³⁷ this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied: “Repent ³⁸ and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy

33. He has been raised to the right side of God. See Phil. 2:6-11. He sits on a heavenly throne. What you now see and hear. These supernatural events are proof that Jesus is not king (verse 30). He has “poured out” this gift.

34. For David himself. On “where are the dead?” see notes on Luke 16:19-31. Rather he said. Psalm 110:1. (Jesus also quotes this and applies it to himself, Matt. 22:43-46) The Lord. God the Father. My Lord. Christ. Sit here at my right side. (See verse 33.) The “right side” is the place of honor, and implies being part of the Supreme Government. (See also Rev. 5:6-10.)

35. Until I put. Christ must rule until God defeats all enemies, and then give up the Kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

36. All the people of Israel. He has been building up to this. This is the climax! He has proved Jesus to be the Messiah!

37. They were deeply troubled. Peter has explained the meaning of the signs and wonders they have seen! Now it is clear to them that they are guilty of rejecting God’s Messiah and nailing him to the cross! What shall we do, brothers? This is both a cry of anguish over their guilt, and a confession of faith in Jesus! Will there be any forgiveness for such as they???

38. Peter said to them. They have already declared their faith in Christ (verse 37). Now, for the very first time, the terms of pardon under the New Covenant will be announced. Peter will tell them how to reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make themselves part of it. Turn away from your sins. That is, repudiate what you have done. Turn away from sin, and turn to God. [The technical term is; repent.] And be baptized. This act is a visible demonstration of both faith and turning from sin. [Repentance is a change of mind; baptism is a change of state.] In the name of Jesus Christ. By his authority. Without his authority, it would be only “water baptism.” With his authority, it becomes the new birth of John 3:5. So that your sins will be forgiven. This is the promise. When their faith became

Holy Spirit. ³⁹For God's promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away—all whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

⁴⁰Peter made his appeal to them and with many other words he urged them, saying, "Save yourselves from the punishment coming to this wicked people!" ⁴¹Many of them believed his message and were baptized; about three thousand people were added to the group that day. ⁴²They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers.

Spirit. The promise is for ³⁹ you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

With many other words ⁴⁰ he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who ⁴¹ accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

They devoted themselves ⁴² to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to

real through turning from sin and being baptized in the name of Jesus, they would be forgiven for their sins, including the sin of killing Jesus. The promise of forgiveness is to all who comply with these terms of salvation. **And you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit.** McGarvey says the meaning here is *the Holy Spirit as a gift*. The world cannot receive this Helper. [Note that here, the gift of the Spirit comes in connection with baptism. That is, forgiveness of sins and the Spirit as a gift, are two results of turning from sin and being baptized. See notes on *Matt. 28:19-20*; *Rom. 6:1-11*; *John 7:38-39*.]

39. For God's promise. The promise of pardon and the Spirit as a gift. **Was made to you and your children.** To these Jews who had rejected Christ, and to their descendants. **And to all who are far away.** To everybody in the whole world (the Gentiles). **All whom the Lord our God calls to himself.** "All men will be taught by God." See *John 6:44-45*. **EVERYONE MAY COME!**

40. Save yourselves. This was why he urged them with many other words. True, they could not **EARN** their salvation [only Jesus could do that for them], but their faith was to *reach out* through turning from sin and being baptized. This was an act of their **FREE WILL** (compare the "looking" of *John 3:14*). **This wicked people.** Those of the Jewish nation who had rejected Christ [and would continue to reject him (*Matt. 23:36, 24:21; Deut. 28:52-57*)].

41. Many of them believed. Those who believed, were baptized immediately! [Those who did not believe had no reason to be baptized.] **About three thousand people.** The Twelve could have done the baptizing themselves. Chrysostom, assisted by the church elders, immersed 3,000 in one day in 404 A. D. There were plenty of deep pools in Jerusalem. Certainly the Seventy-two would be there, and perhaps others of the disciples. **Group.** Messianic community. **The one church exists in a locality as a group.**

42. They spent their time. A *group* implies *companionship, solidarity*. In contrast to "saving souls," the Good News makes disciples to Christ! A disciple wants to learn and live the message, and to be part of the **COMMUNITY**. The very worst calamity for a Christian, was to be excluded from the life of the **COMMUNITY** (*1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11*). **Taking part in the fellowship.** *Johnson* sees in this the pooling of their money and resources to take care of the needy among their group. It may include the complete *life* of the community. **Fellowship meals.** For some centuries, the Lord's Supper (Holy Meal) was eaten in the setting of a fellowship meal. See note on *Acts 20:7*. **Prayers.** In the Jewish religion, the priests did the praying. In Christ, every believer is a priest (*Rev. 1:6*)! *Johnson* thinks this entire verse speaks of their public worship. But there was not the *sharp line* at this time between public worship and everyday life.

Life among the Believers

⁴³Many miracles and wonders were done through the apostles, and this caused everyone to be filled with awe. ⁴⁴All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. ⁴⁵They would sell their property and possessions and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet as a group in the temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating the food with glad and humble hearts, ⁴⁷praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

The Lame Man Healed

3 One day Peter and John went to the temple at three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour for

prayer. Everyone was filled ⁴³with awe, and many wonders and miracles were done by the apostles. All the ⁴⁴believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and ⁴⁵goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day ⁴⁶they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying ⁴⁷the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Peter Heals the Crippled Beggar

3 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the after-

43. **To be filled with awe.** Especially the unbelievers. Compare verse 22.

44-45. **And shared their belongings.** Remember that many of the group did not live here, but had come to Jerusalem for Passover and Pentecost. Alford (Greek Testament) points out that this situation was unique to the "Church at Jerusalem." It was not done with the idea of bringing all to the same economic level, but to meet the need of the poor among their group. Both Jew and Gentile ignored their own poor. What we see here was something NEW! See notes on Acts 4:32; 6:1-4.

46. **Every day.** They met in the temple to be instructed by the apostles. Probably there were "outsiders" there as well. **They had their meals together.** Compare verse 44. Lipscomb says: "It is probable that they met at their homes in companies [small groups] and each company engaged in worship." This would not be as a substitute for public worship, but the same principle as the "Ladies' class." Most Christians today are weak in regular devotion and natural witness to those outside. In the Jerusalem church, we see a spirit of ENTHUSIASM - so full of their new found love for Jesus Christ that they cannot get enough of him!!!

47. **The Lord added to their group.** We commonly use "church" in a specialized sense [Methodist church; Catholic church, etc.]. The ONE CHURCH which Jesus built on the rock foundation of his DIVINITY exists in a locality as a group. It is correct to say that the same reaching out through faith that make you part of Christ, also makes you part of Christ's church (see verse 38). In other words, you do not JOIN the church, salvation makes you a member. Pentecost was the birth-day of the Lord's church (Acts 1:8; Col. 1:13; Eph. 2:19-22).

1. **One day Peter and John.** These two worked together. The Jewish Christians naturally made the temple the center of their worship, and continued to keep many of the rituals (Acts 21:20-21). They also made new disciples among the crowds in the temple court.

prayers. ²There, at the "Beautiful Gate," as it was called, was a man who had been lame all his life. Every day he was carried to this gate to beg for money from the people who were going into the temple. ³When he saw Peter and John going in, he begged them to give him something. ⁴They looked straight at him and Peter said, "Look at us!" ⁵So he looked at them, expecting to get something from them. ⁶Peter said to him, "I have no money at all, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth I order you to walk!" ⁷Then he took him by his right hand and helped him up. At once the man's feet and ankles became strong; ⁸he jumped up, stood on his feet, and started walking around. Then he went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God. ⁹The whole crowd saw him walking and praising God; ¹⁰and when they recognized him as the beggar who sat at the temple's "Beautiful Gate," they were all filled with surprise and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter's Message in the Temple

¹¹As the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were amazed and ran to them in

noon. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

Then Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter Speaks to the Onlookers

While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's

2. **There at the "Beautiful Gate."** Thought to be the gate which opens toward the Mount of Olives. Charity was nonexistent, and the man was forced to beg. Beggars had their best prospects at the temple.

6. **I have no money at all.** Peter had not made himself rich. [Compare *1 Tim. 6:3-5.*] **In the name of Jesus Christ.** The miracles were done in the name of Christ. Note the incident in *Acts 19:14-17.*

7. **And helped him up.** Faith is action! Note *when* the man's feet and ankles became strong.

8. **He jumped up.** This shows his happiness!

9-10. **They were all filled with surprise and amazement.** The beggar was well known by the people, and they saw him "walking and jumping and praising God."

11. **And ran to them.** The healing draws a crowd!

“Solomon’s Porch,” as it was called. ¹²When Peter saw the people, he said to them, “Men of Israel, why are you surprised at this, and why do you stare at us? Do you think that it was by means of our own power or godliness that we made this man walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has given divine glory to his Servant Jesus. You handed him over to the authorities, and you rejected him in Pilate’s presence, even after Pilate had decided to set him free. ¹⁴He was holy and good, but you rejected him and instead you asked Pilate to do you the favor of turning loose a murderer. ¹⁵And so you killed the one who leads men to life. But God raised him from the dead—and we are witnesses to this. ¹⁶It was the power of his name that gave strength to this lame man. What you see and know was done by faith in his name; it was faith in Jesus that made him well like this before you all.

¹⁷“And now, my brothers, I know that what you and your leaders did to Jesus was done because of your ignorance. ¹⁸God long ago announced by means of all the prophets that his Messiah had to suffer; and he made it come true

Colonnade. When Peter saw ¹² this, he said to them:

“Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the ¹⁴ Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You ¹⁵ killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of ¹⁶ Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

“Now, brothers, I know ¹⁷ that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this ¹⁸ is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his

12. When Peter saw the people. Here was an opportunity to proclaim the Good News of God’s act in Christ.

13. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The God whom they and their ancestors worshiped. To his Servant Jesus. Peter sees in Jesus, the fulfilled promise of God to Abraham. God has given glory to Jesus. But these people had killed him (verse 15).

15. But God raised him from the dead. Peter and the others were chosen witnesses of this fact. See Acts 10:41; 1 Cor. 15:6.

16. It was the power of his name. On the basis of faith in his name. His name is not a charm for driving out evil spirits (Acts 19:13). When nine of his apostles could not drive out a demon, Jesus said: “It was because you do not have enough faith” (Matt. 17:19-20).

17. Because of your ignorance. “Forgive them, Father! They don’t know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

18. God long ago announced. It is a paradox that God knows before it happens and announces through the prophets, yet gives every man free will and allows him to choose.

in this way. ¹⁹Repent, then, and turn to God, so that he will wipe away your sins, ²⁰so that times of spiritual strength may come from the Lord's presence, and that he may send Jesus, who is the Messiah he has already chosen for you. ²¹He must remain in heaven until the time comes for all things to be made new, as God announced by means of his holy prophets of long ago. ²²For Moses said, "The Lord your God will send you a prophet, just as he sent me, who will be of your own people. You must listen to everything that he tells you. ²³Anyone who does not listen to what that prophet says will be separated from God's people and destroyed." ²⁴And the prophets, including Samuel and those who came after him, all of them who had a message, also announced these present days. ²⁵The promises of God through his prophets are for you, and you share in the covenant which God made with your ancestors. As he said to Abraham, "Through your descendants I will bless all the people on earth." ²⁶And so God chose and sent his Servant to you first, to bless you by making all of you turn away from your wicked ways."

Christ would suffer. Repent; ¹⁹ then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing ²⁰ may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. He must remain in heaven ²¹ until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. For ²² Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not ²³ listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people."

"Indeed, all the prophets ²⁴ from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days. And you are heirs ²⁵ of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, "Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed." When God ²⁶ raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from his wicked ways."

19-20. **Repent, then, and turn to God.** Both verbs are *active* [not passive] and are to be understood as requiring action on their part. Compare *James 4:8*; *John 3:14-15*. This verse is the counterpart of *Acts 2:38*. *Repent* is an act of the mind [heart] in which you turn *from* sin to God. **Turn to God.** This is the act of baptism (compare *Acts 22:16*) where the sinner seizes the sacrifice of Christ and makes himself part of it! [Baptism does not stand alone, but is part of faith. Compare *Titus 3:5*; *Acts 19:3-5* and notes.] **So that times of spiritual strength.** In *Acts 2:38*, the order is: (1) Turn away from sin; (2) be baptized; (3) so that your sins will be forgiven; (4) God's gift, the Holy Spirit. Here it is: (1) Repent; (2) turn to God; (3) so that he will wipe away your sins; (4) times of spiritual strength may come. **That he may send Jesus.** Many see the Second Coming in this and cite *Matt. 24:14* to show that the spread of the gospel will bring the return of Christ. But notice that *Matt 24:14* has already been fulfilled in *Col. 1:23*. This must be understood, then, as the Promise fulfilled in Christ (*verse 13*), and *1 Pet. 1:20* seems to prove this. Christ "comes" to those who accept him (*Rom. 8:10*).

21. **Until the time comes.** Christ must reign (*1 Cor. 15:25*) during the Gospel Age, until the time for the New Heavens and New Earth (*2 Pet. 3:12-13*; *Rev. 21:1-4*).

22-23. **And destroyed.** *Deut. 18:15-19*. The Jews could be saved only through Christ.

24. **Also announced these present days.** The promise of the Old Testament was fulfilled in Christ, and Peter identifies this fulfillment with the time they were right then living in! Compare *Acts 2:16-17*.

25-26. **The promises . . . are for you.** Compare *Gal. 3:8,16*; *Rom. 3*. The Good News of God's act in Christ was first presented to the Jews. Notice God's Servant [Jesus Christ] would bless them by making them turn away from their wicked ways. He blesses us all in the same way!

Peter and John before the Council

4 Peter and John were still speaking to the people when the priests, the officer in charge of the temple guards, and the Sadducees came to them. ²They were annoyed because the two apostles were teaching the people that Jesus had risen from death, which proved that the dead will rise to life. ³So they arrested them and put them in jail until the next day, since it was already late. ⁴But many who heard the message believed; and the number of men came to about five thousand.

⁵The next day the Jewish leaders, the elders, and the teachers of the Law gathered in Jerusalem. ⁶They met with the High Priest Annas, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and the others who belonged to the High Priest's family. ⁷They made the apostles stand before them and asked them, "How did you do this? What power do you have, or whose name did you use?"

⁸Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, answered them,

4 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the

1. **Peter and John were still speaking.** Probably both are speaking to separate groups of people, as the priests on duty, the officer of the temple police, and the Sadducees [perhaps the High Priest and his associates] come to them to stop what they are doing.

2. **They were annoyed.** While Jesus lived, the Pharisees were his worst enemies. But after his resurrection, the Sadducees became the stronger source of opposition to the messianic community, because they did not believe man survives death! "Christ on the cross" was offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles (1 Cor. 1:23). But first century preaching *strongly emphasized* the Risen Jesus and the resurrection of all the dead.

3-4. **But many who heard the message believed.** Jailing Peter and John did not change the minds of those who believed what they had said. **To about five thousand.** This must include those men who were "buried with Christ" on Pentecost (Acts 2:41). Women were not usually counted (compare Matt. 14:21). [J.G. Malphurs thinks Timothy's mother and grandmother were both "baptized into Christ" on Pentecost, along with his father (who was a Gentile converted to Judaism). He cites the fact that a religious Jewish mother and grandmother did not circumcise Timothy, as evidence pointing toward this.]

5-6. **The next day.** This is a meeting of the Jewish Council [the Sanhedrim]. The Jews still considered Annas the High Priest, even though the Romans had put Caiaphas in his place ten years before.

7. **What power do you have?** They knew the miracles and wonders were real! But they think it comes through some rite of magic.

8. **Peter, full of the Holy Spirit.** See Matt. 10:16-20 and notes.

"Leaders of the people and elders: 'if we are being questioned today about the good deed done to the lame man and how he was made well, ¹⁰then you should all know, and all the people of Israel should know, that this man stands here before you completely well by the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth—whom you crucified and God raised from death. ¹¹Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says,

"The stone that you the builders despised turned out to be the most important stone."

¹²Salvation is to be found through him alone; for there is no one else in all the world, whose name God has given to men, by whom we can be saved."

¹³The members of the Council were amazed to see how bold Peter and John were, and to learn that they were ordinary men of no education. They realized then that they had companions of Jesus. ¹⁴But there was nothing that they could say, because they saw the man who had been made well standing there with Peter and John. ¹⁵So they told them to leave the Council room, and started discussing among

people! If we are being called 9
to account today for an act of
kindness shown to a cripple
and are asked how he was
healed, then know this, you 10
and everyone else in Israel:
It is by the name of Jesus
Christ of Nazareth, whom
you crucified but whom God
raised from the dead, that
this man stands before you,
completely healed. He is 11

"the stone you builders re-
jected, which has become
the capstone."

Salvation is found in no one 12
else; for there is no other
name under heaven given to
men by which we must be
saved."

When they saw the 13
courage of Peter and John
and realized that they were
uneducated, ordinary men,
they were astonished and
they took note that these
men had been with Jesus.
And since they could see the 14
man who had been healed
standing there with them,
there was nothing they could
say. So they ordered them to 15
withdraw from the San-
hedrin and then conferred

9. **About the good deed done.** They are prisoners on trial for a good deed. Peter uses this to prove the power of the name of Jesus, and to present the Truth of God to them.

10. **Jesus Christ of Nazareth.** The very One whom the Council had condemned, is the source of power! **Whom you crucified.** Now Peter is the "judge," and they are on trial.

11. **The stone.** Jesus quotes this same scripture in *Matt. 21:42-46*. See notes there.

12. **Through him alone.** No other name in all Creation is a SAVING NAME, because God has acted through Jesus Christ. Whoever rejects the Son, has rejected the Father also (*1 John 2:22-23*). It is not possible, then, to follow God, while rejecting Jesus. [Since Jesus Christ is THE NAME, we do not need the name of angel, Virgin, or saint.]

13-14. **Ordinary men of no education.** As all Jews, they had been educated in the synagogue schools, but had not attended the "theological schools" of the teachers of the Law. **Companions of Jesus.** They had three years of intensive training from Jesus. Plus, they had *total recall* through the Holy Spirit (*John 14:26*). **Because they saw the man.** "Facts are stubborn things."

15. **And started discussing.** After they send them out, the Council uses all their wisdom to find a solution.

themselves. ¹⁶“What shall we do with these men?” they asked. “Everyone living in Jerusalem knows that this extraordinary miracle has been performed by them, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷But to keep this matter from spreading any further among the people, let us warn these men never again to speak to anyone in the name of Jesus.”

¹⁸So they called them back in and told them that under no condition were they to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John answered them, “You yourselves judge which is right in God’s sight, to obey you or to obey God. ²⁰For we cannot stop speaking of what we ourselves have seen and heard.” ²¹The Council warned them even more strongly, and then set them free. They could find no reason for punishing them, because the people were all praising God for what had happened. ²²The man on whom this miracle of healing had been performed was over forty years old.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

²³As soon as they were set free, Peter and John returned to their group and told them what the chief priests and the elders had said. ²⁴When they heard it, they all joined together in prayer to God: “Master and Creator of heaven, earth,

together. “What are we going to do with these men?” they asked. “Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. But to stop this from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.”

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

The Believers’ Prayer

On their release, Peter ²³ and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. When they heard this, they ²⁴ raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and

16-18. **And told them.** They threaten them, expecting to put a stop to their preaching.

19. **Or to obey God.** This is the “higher law,” which supersedes all other!

20. **For we cannot stop speaking.** They are under an *obligation*! They are men with a mission to perform.

21-22. **Because the people.** Note the power of public opinion! **The man.** The man who had been healed was over forty years old, therefore known as a life-long cripple.

23. **Returned to their group.** The Christians met together daily (*Acts 2:46*). Peter and John give their report of all that has happened.

24. **They all joined together.** Someone would lead the prayer. They had been ordered to stop their activities, so they go to God in prayer.

and sea, and all that is in them! ²⁵By means of the Holy Spirit you spoke through our ancestor David, your servant, when he said,

‘Why were the Gentiles furious;
why did the people plot in vain?’

²⁶The kings of the earth prepared themselves,
and the rulers met together
against the Lord and his Messiah.’

²⁷For indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together in this city with the Gentiles and the people of Israel against Jesus, your holy Servant, whom you made Messiah. ²⁸They gathered to do everything that you, by your power and will, had already decided would take place. ²⁹And now, Lord, take notice of the threats they made and allow us, your servants, to speak your message with all boldness. ³⁰Stretch out your hand to heal, and grant that wonders and miracles may be performed through the name of your holy Servant Jesus.”

³¹When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak God’s message with boldness.

everything in them. You ²⁵spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:

‘Why do the nations
rage,
and the people plot in
vain?’

The kings of the earth ²⁶take their stand,
and the rulers gather
together
against the Lord
and against his Anointed One.’

Indeed Herod and Pon- ²⁷tius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what ²⁸your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand ³⁰to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

After they prayed, the ³¹place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

25-26. **Why were the Gentiles furious?** This is quoted from *Psalm 2. Verse 27* shows how it came true.

27-28. **They gathered to do everything.** God had already decided what would be done, but this does not say that God decreed that Herod, Pilate, etc., would be the ones who would do this. They “volunteered” [unknowingly] to carry out God’s decree.

29-30. **And now, Lord.** They do not ask to be saved from pain, persecution, or death. They ask for: (1) boldness in speaking; (2) proof of the power of **THE NAME**. Their prayer is directed toward the mission Christ has given them.

31. **Was shaken.** Evidence that God heard them. **They were all filled.** *Lipscomb* thinks only the apostles were filled. *Johnson* thinks the whole group were filled in a conscious renewal of the miraculous power, just like Pentecost. Compare *Acts 10:44*, where the Spirit came down on all who were listening.

All Things Together

³²The group of believers was one in mind and heart. No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had. ³³With great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all. ³⁴There was no one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale ³⁵and turn it over to the apostles; and the money was distributed to each one according to his need.

³⁶And so it was that Joseph, a Levite born in Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "One who Encourages"), ³⁷sold a field he owned, brought the money, and turned it over to the apostles.

Ananias and Sapphira

5 But there was a man named Ananias, whose wife was named Sapphira. He sold some property that belonged to them, ²but kept part of the money for himself, as his wife knew, and

The Believers Share Their Possessions

All the believers were one ³² in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the ³³ apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was with them all. There ³⁴ were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the ³⁵ sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

Joseph, a Levite from ³⁶ Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means, Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned ³⁷ and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

Ananias and Sapphira

5 Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his ² wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, and brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

32-35. **Was one in mind and heart.** They formed one community in Christ, with one doctrine, served one Lord, and had one hope of eternal life! **Was his own.** See note on Acts 2:44-45. It was an emergency, but the group met the need. The language does not imply that everyone sold everything he had.

36-37. **Joseph, a Levite born in Cyprus.** He is "Barnabas" from this time on. **Sold a field he owned.** He did this out of love, of his own free will, and brought the *entire* sum of money, and turned it over to the apostles. This is important, because it "sets the stage" for the event in the next chapter.

1. But there was a man named Ananias. Side by side with the picture of love and fellowship in the 4th chapter, comes the selfishness and hypocrisy of this couple.

2. But kept part of the money. It is important to see where the sin was. No one forced them to sell the property; and once sold, no one forced them to give the money; and in giving the money, no one required them to give all of it. Their sin was in lying about it to get the glory for something they had not done. (1) They gave from the wrong motives; (2) They lied about it.

turned the rest over to the apostles. ³Peter said to him, "Ananias, why did you let Satan take control of your heart and make you lie to the Holy Spirit by keeping part of the money you received for the property? ⁴Before you sold the property it belonged to you, and after you sold it the money was yours. Why, then, did you decide in your heart that you would do such a thing? You have not lied to men—you have lied to God!" ⁵As soon as Ananias heard this he fell down dead; and all who heard about it were filled with fear. ⁶The young men came in, wrapped up his body, took him out, and buried him.

⁷About three hours later his wife came in, but she did not know what had happened. ⁸Peter said to her, "Tell me, was this the full amount you and your husband received for your property?"

"Yes," she answered, "the full amount."

⁹So Peter said to her, "Why did you and your husband decide to put the Lord's Spirit to the test? The men who buried your husband are at the door right now, and they will carry you out too!" ¹⁰At once she fell down at his feet and died. The young men came in and saw that she was dead, so they carried her out and buried

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"

"Yes," she said "that is the price."

Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

3-4. **And make you lie to the Holy Spirit.** Peter points out the money had been his to do with as he pleased. Ananias wanted to receive the same honor Barnabas had, for giving the entire sum of money. But Ananias lied about how much it was, so he could keep part of it and still get honor for giving it all.

5. **He fell down dead.** It was not Peter, but the Holy Spirit who struck this man dead. The punishment seems more drastic than necessary, yet Satan was striking at the messianic community through this lie, and it was a much more serious incident than it seems to be! Compare Uzzah's death for touching the Box of the Covenant (2 Sam. 6:6-8).

6. **And buried him.** No weeping, no funeral! The body cannot remain inside the temple walls. Examples of such a quick burial are found in Lev. 10:1-7; Joshua 7:16-26.

7. **His wife came in.** It was strange, but not impossible, that his wife did not know what had happened.

8-9. **Was this the full amount?** Here was her chance to tell the truth that would have saved her, but she tells the lie which she and her husband had agreed to tell.

10. **The young men came in.** It had taken three hours to carry Ananias out of the city, bury him, and come back. This incident teaches, that while you can lie to men, you cannot fool God!

her beside her husband. ¹¹The whole church and all the others who heard of this were filled with great fear.

Miracles and Wonders

¹²Many miracles and wonders were being performed among the people by the apostles. All the believers met together in a group in Solomon's Porch. ¹³Nobody outside the group dared join them, even though the people spoke highly of them. ¹⁴But more and more people were added to the group—a crowd of men and women who believed in the Lord. ¹⁵As a result of what the apostles were doing, the sick people were carried out in the streets and placed on beds and mats so that, when Peter walked by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶And crowds of people came in from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those who had evil spirits in them; and they were all healed.

The Apostles Persecuted

¹⁷Then the High Priest and all his companions, members of the local party of the Sadducees, became extremely jealous of the apostles; so they decided to take action. ¹⁸They arrested the apostles and placed them in the public jail.

Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events. 11

The Apostles Heal Many

The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed. 12-16

The Apostles Persecuted

Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles and put them in the 17-18

¹¹ **Were filled with great fear.** This incident showed the reality of sin! Neither sin nor salvation are "make-believe!" What these two did was blasphemy! [Not fear, but love, is the ULTIMATE MOTIVATION. See 1 John 4:18]

¹²⁻¹⁴ **Many miracles and wonders.** Note it is the apostles who are said to have this power. Not everyone was given the gift of miracles. **Met together in a group.** See Acts 2:46; Heb. 10:25. **Nobody outside the group.** This must speak of their enemies. See the next verse. **Were added to the group.** A continuous growth. **Men and women.** Women are specifically mentioned here. There were already women among the group (Acts 1:14; see note on Acts 4:3-4). They are again mentioned in chapter 6.

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ **The sick people were carried out.** We are not told that any were healed by Peter's shadow. The point is the fame and popularity these things brought to the apostles. [Compare Acts 19:11-12.]

¹⁷ **Then the High Priest.** This would be Annas. See note on Acts 4:6. He was a Sadducee, and therefore strongly opposed to any thought of the dead being raised. See note on Acts 4:2.

¹⁸ **And placed them in the public jail.** That is, they treated them like common criminals. [A small basement room, with a dirt floor and no sanitary facilities.]

¹⁹But that night an angel of the Lord opened the prison gates, led the apostles out, and said to them, ²⁰“Go and stand in the temple, and tell the people all about this new life.” ²¹The apostles obeyed, and at dawn they entered the temple and started teaching.

The High Priest and his companions called together all the Jewish elders for a full meeting of the Council; then they sent orders to the prison to have the apostles brought before them. ²²But when the officials arrived, they did not find the apostles in prison; so they returned to the Council and reported, ²³“When we arrived at the jail we found it locked up tight and all the guards on watch at the gates; but when we opened the gates we did not find anyone inside!” ²⁴When the officer in charge of the temple guards and the chief priests heard this, they wondered what had happened to the apostles. ²⁵Then a man came in who said to them, “Listen! The men you put in prison are standing in the temple teaching the people!” ²⁶So the officer went off with his men and brought the apostles back. They did not use force, however, because they were afraid that the people might stone them.

public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people the full message of this new life.”

At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.

When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin—the full assembly of the elders of Israel—and sent to the jail for the apostles. But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported, “We found the jail securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside.” On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were puzzled wondering what would come of this.

Then someone came and said, “Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people.” At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.

19. **An angel of the Lord.** God works through angels (*Heb. 1:14*).

20. **Go and stand in the temple.** They are instructed by the angel to go back to the temple and continue preaching the resurrection of the dead.

21. **For a full meeting of the Council.** Notice this was called for the trial of the apostles, and the Council sends to the prison to have the prisoners brought before them.

22-23. **We found it locked up tight.** They cannot explain why the apostles were not in the prison.

24-25. **Are standing in the temple teaching.** This miracle was a source of fresh strength and faith to all the disciples. Those who knew of the arrest [i.e., all Jerusalem] would be curious. Also, this should have proved to the Sadducees that they could not hold back this Good News! Compare *verse 39*.

26. **They did not use force.** The power of public opinion!

²⁷They brought the apostles in and made them stand before the Council, and the High Priest questioned them. ²⁸"We gave you strict orders not to teach in the name of this man," he said; "but see what you have done! You have spread your teaching all over Jerusalem, and you want to make us responsible for his death!"

²⁹Peter and the other apostles answered back, "We must obey God, not men. ³⁰The God of our fathers raised Jesus from death, after you had killed him by nailing him to a cross. ³¹God raised him to his right side as Leader and Savior, to give to the people of Israel the opportunity to repent and have their sins forgiven. ³²We are witnesses to these things—we and the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to those who obey him."

³³When the members of the Council heard this they were so furious that they decided to have the apostles put to death. ³⁴But one of them, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law who was highly respected by all the people, stood up in the Council. He ordered the apostles to be taken out, ³⁵and then said to the Council, "Men of Israel, be careful what

Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood."

Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men! The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

They were furious when they heard this and wanted to put them to death. But a Pharisee named Gamallel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. Then he addressed them:

"Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to

27-28. **The High Priest questioned them.** He charges they have: (1) defied the Council; (2) spread their teaching all over Jerusalem. **You want to make us responsible.** Read what they had said before (*Matt.* 27:25). They are not so eager to accept their guilt now! The people might rebel against them because they had killed Christ.

29-32. **We must obey God, not men.** What other reason is needed??? Peter says: (1) God raised Jesus from death; (2) to his right side as Leader and Savior; (3) to give Israel the opportunity to repent; (4) "We are witnesses." **Who is God's gift to those who obey him.** The obedience of faith (*Rom.* 1:5; *Acts* 2:38) was the *requisite* for receiving God's gift. "Obey" implies continuous action. One of the special blessings of being in Christ is the *stream of living water* which the Scripture itself identifies as the Holy Spirit (*John* 7:38-39; *1 Cor.* 6:19-20).

33. **They were so furious.** Their response to the Good News is to try to kill those who bring it!

34. **A Pharisee named Gamallel.** [Pharisees believed man survives death.] Gamaliel was the most revered teacher of the Law. The Talmud speaks of him, and he was a grandson of Hillel [the most revered teacher of all]. Paul was his pupil (*Acts* 22:3).

35-39. **Be careful what you are about to do.** Good advice! (1) Think! (2) Impostors will fail. (3) You cannot defeat God! [Theudas and Judas were well known to the Council, but we cannot accurately

you are about to do to these men. ³⁶Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming that he was somebody great; and about four hundred men joined him. But he was killed, all his followers were scattered, and his movement died out. ³⁷After this, Judas the Galilean appeared during the time of the census; he also drew a crowd after him, but he also was killed and all his followers were scattered. ³⁸And so in this case now, I tell you, do not take any action against these men. Leave them alone, because if this plan and work of theirs is a man-made thing, it will disappear; ³⁹but if it comes from God you cannot possibly defeat them. You could find yourselves fighting against God!"

The Council followed Gamaliel's advice. ⁴⁰They called the apostles in, had them whipped, and ordered them never again to speak in the name of Jesus; and then they set them free. ⁴¹The apostles left the Council, full of joy that God had considered them worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus. ⁴²And every day in the temple and in people's homes they continued to teach and preach the Good News about Jesus the Messiah.

do to these men. Some time ³⁶ ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. After him, Judas ³⁷ the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. Therefore, in the present ³⁸ case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from ³⁹ God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God."

His speech persuaded ⁴⁰ them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

The apostles left the San- ⁴¹ hedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Day after day, in ⁴² the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

identify them. See notes on this in the Expositors Greek Testament.] **But if it comes from God.** *Lipscomb* says: "So while Gamaliel was not a believer, he was so impressed with the possibility that they might be sent by God that he was unwilling for the Sanhedrin to try to destroy them." [Those who oppose translations and movements ought to think about what Gamaliel said.]

40. They called the apostles in. The fact that most of the Council are Pharisees may have helped them decide to do what Gamaliel says. **Had them whipped.** The whip had bits of bone or stone tied in the end of the strands, and would tear the flesh. This was a common form of punishment.

41. Full of joy. *James 1:2-4.*

42. And every day. This shows how hard they work to spread the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free!

The Seven Helpers

6 Some time later, as the number of disciples kept growing, there was a quarrel between the Greek-speaking Jews and the native Jews. The Greek-speaking Jews said that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of funds. ²So the twelve apostles called the whole group of disciples together and said, "It is not right for us to neglect the preaching of God's word in order to handle finances. ³So then, brothers, choose seven men among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and we will put them in charge of this matter. "We ourselves, then, will give our full time to prayers and the work of preaching."

⁵The whole group was pleased with the apostles' proposal; so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a Gentile from Antioch who had been converted to Judaism. ⁶The group presented them to the apostles, who prayed and placed their hands on them.

The Choosing of the Seven

6 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against those of the Aramaic-speaking community because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ²So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said: "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, ³choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention ⁴to prayer and the ministry of the word."

⁵This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

1. **Some time later.** Both *Lipscomb* and *McGarvey* think this is still during the first year of the Gospel Age, either 30, or early 31 A.D. [by the corrected calendar]. **There was a quarrel.** Notice that somebody was already doing the work of a "church helper" [deacon] (*1 Tim. 3:8*). But the Greek-speaking Jews were being discriminated against. [Many Jews outside of Palestine adopted the Greek language and some customs.] **Their widows were being neglected.** The *pride* of the Palestinian Jews made them neglect the needs of these widows.

2. **So the twelve apostles.** This proves that Matthias was counted (*Acts 1:26*), since Paul had not yet converted to Christ. **It is not right for us.** Their mission did not allow them time to do this.

3. **So then, brothers, choose.** Note the apostles did not do the choosing! **Seven men.** This many could handle the assistance to the Greek-speaking widows. **Who are known to be.** Men whom the congregation could respect, and who could be trusted. **And we will put them in charge.** Compare *Titus 1:5*. Both church leaders [elders] and church helpers [deacons] are *horizontal extensions* of the group [local church], appointed to do a job. [Clerks watching the store, while the Boss is away.]

4. **To prayer and the work of preaching.** Note the apostles give prayer and preaching *equal* priority.

5. **So they chose Stephen.** He would be the first martyr. **Phillip.** He would later do the work of an evangelist. **Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas.** Their names do not appear again. **Nicolaus.** Some try to connect him with the "Nicolaitans in Revelation, but there is no evidence to do this.

6. **And placed their hands on them.** *McGarvey* says: "But all the apostles did was to pray and lay on their hands; hence, this was the ceremony of their appointment."

⁷And so the word of God continued to spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem grew larger and larger, and a great number of priests accepted the faith.

So the word of God spread. ⁷
The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

The Arrest of Stephen

Stephen Seized

⁸Stephen, a man richly blessed by God and full of power, performed great miracles and wonders among the people. ⁹But some men opposed him; they were members of the synagogue of the Free Men (as it was called), which had Jews from Cyrenia and Alexandria. They and other Jews from Cilicia and Asia started arguing with Stephen. ¹⁰But the Spirit gave Stephen such wisdom that when he spoke they could not resist him. ¹¹So they bribed some men to say, "We heard him speaking against Moses and against God!" ¹²In this way they stirred up the people, the elders, and the teachers of the Law. They came to Stephen, seized him, and took him before the Council. ¹³Then they brought in some men to tell lies about him. "This man," they said, "is always talking against our sacred temple

Now Stephen, a man full ⁸
of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. Opposition arose, ⁹
however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, but they could not stand up ¹⁰
against his wisdom or the Spirit by which he spoke.

Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, ¹¹
"We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God."

So they stirred up the ¹²
people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. They produced false witnesses, who testified, ¹³
"This fellow never stops speaking against the holy place and a-

7. **And a great number of priests.** The unity of the group was preserved, and even priests were becoming "fulfilled Jews" in Christ! [Ezra 2:36-39 speaks of 4,289 priests coming back from Babylon. There would be more at this time.]

8. **Stephen.** His name is Greek. He is the first one *not an apostle* who is said to do miracles and wonders. Philip also had this power (Acts 8:6-7). [Only the apostles and those whom the apostles had "placed their hands on" had this power, as far as the Scripture tells us.] Compare Acts 8:15-19.

9. **Of the synagogue of the Free Men.** The Talmud says there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem. This one was made up of men who had been taken to Rome as slaves, and later set free, who held Roman citizenship. Those who made up this synagogue were "Greek-speaking Jews." Stephen's name is Greek, and he probably would begin working with those of his own group.

10. **They could not resist him.** They could not refute his arguments. His message was very convincing.

11. **So they bribed some men.** They intend to stop what Stephen is doing. **Speaking against.** They cannot refute his arguments, so they accuse him of blasphemy.

12. **They stirred up the people.** By their slander. Up till now, the Christians had been popular for the most part (see verse 7). These "Free Men" try to turn public opinion against Stephen and the Christians. Compare note on Acts 4:2.

13-14. **This man.** Instead of attacking all Christians, they direct their slander against Stephen only. By doing this, they hope to be able to prejudice the people and turn them away from Christ. Compare

and the Law of Moses. ¹⁴We heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will tear down the temple and change all the customs which have come down to us from Moses!" ¹⁵All those sitting in the Council fixed their eyes on Stephen and saw that his face looked like the face of an angel.

Stephen's Speech

7 The High Priest asked Stephen, "Is this really so?" ²Stephen answered, "Brothers and fathers! Listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham while he was living in Mesopotamia, before he had gone to live in Haran, ³and said to him, 'Leave your family and country and go to the land that I will show you.' ⁴And so he left the land of Chaldea and went to live in Haran. After Abraham's father died, God made him move to this country, where you now live. ⁵God did not then give Abraham any part of it as his own, not even a square foot of ground; but God promised that he would give it to him, and that it would belong to him and his descendants after him. At the time God made

against the law. For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."

All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Stephen's Speech to the Sanhedrin

7 Then the high priest asked him, "Are these charges true?"

To this he replied:

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. 'Leave your country and your people,' God said, 'and go to the land I will show you.'"

"So he left Chaldea and settled in Haran. After the death of his father, God sent him to this land where you are now living. He gave him no inheritance here, not even a foot of ground. But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though at that time

note on Rev. 12:17. Stephen likely did preach "the close of the Jewish Age and Christ as King." However, he did not blaspheme either God or Moses.

15. Fixed their eyes on Stephen. To see how he is reacting to these charges. **Like the face of an angel.** If his face had been shining with a supernatural light, the Council would have dismissed in awe! It must have been peace and joy which flashed from his eyes! [*Lipscomb* thinks it was the supernatural glory that lit up the face of Moses. (*Exod. 35:30-35*).]

1. Is this really so? That is, "What do you have to say in your own defence?"

2-4. Stephen answered. His answer is to give an outline of Jewish history, from Abraham to Christ. This is to show that the "spiritual temple" which is the church of Christ [the messianic community] is the fulfillment of the Jewish Age. A true child of Abraham will listen to the prophecies of Moses and the others, and will accept Christ as the Messiah. (1) Abraham was uncircumcised when God called him and gave him the promise. (2) Joseph [a symbol of Christ] was rejected by his brothers, but later saved them (3) Moses was rejected by his people, but God used him to save Israel. (4) Israel went chasing after false gods, and the Lord sent them into captivity. (5) God had the Tent and the Temple built, but told them he does not live in houses built by men. (6) Moses predicted a prophet like himself, God's Servant. (7) In rejecting Christ and murdering him, they showed themselves true sons of their ancestors. The whole speech is logical, bringing these people face to face with their own sins. **The God of glory.** Abraham's home was in Ur, in the land of Chaldea in Mesopotamia. Abraham stopped five years at Haran, until his father died (*Gen. 11:31-32*). God gave a second call to him there (*Gen. 12:1*).

5. God did not then give. Abraham had only the promise by faith.

this promise Abraham had no children. ⁶This is what God said to him, 'Your descendants will live in a foreign country, where they will be slaves and will be badly treated for four hundred years. ⁷But I will pass judgment on the people that they will serve,' God said, 'and afterward they will come out of that country and will worship me in this place.' ⁸Then God gave to Abraham the ceremony of circumcision as a sign of the covenant. So Abraham circumcised Isaac a week after he was born; Isaac circumcised Jacob, and Jacob circumcised the twelve patriarchs.

⁹"The patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, and sold him to be a slave in Egypt. But God was with him, ¹⁰and brought him safely through all his troubles. When Joseph appeared before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, God gave him a pleasing manner and wisdom. Pharaoh made Joseph governor over the country and the royal household. ¹¹Then there was a famine in all of Egypt and Canaan, which caused much suffering. Our ancestors could not find any food. ¹²So when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent his sons, our ancestors, on their first visit there. ¹³On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Pharaoh came to know about Joseph's family. ¹⁴So Joseph sent a message to his father Jacob, telling him and the whole family to come to Egypt; there were

Abraham had no child. God spoke to him in this way: 'Your descendants will be strangers in a foreign country, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. I will punish the nation that makes them slaves,' God said, 'and afterward they will come out of that country and worship me in this place.' Then he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

⁹"Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the good will of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.

¹¹"Then a famine struck all Egypt and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our fathers could not find food. When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers on their first visit. On their second visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph's family. After this, Joseph sent for his father Jacob and his whole family, seventy-five in all.

6. Will live in a foreign country. Egypt. See *Gen. 15:13-16*. Four hundred years. From the birth of Isaac to the Exodus. It was four hundred and thirty years from the calling of Abraham (*Gal. 3:16-17; Exod. 12:40*).

8. As a sign of the covenant. *Gen. 17*. All Jewish male babies received this sign. See notes on *Col. 2:11-12* for a contrast between this and spiritual circumcision.

9. The patriarchs were jealous. Joseph's brothers. As they rejected Joseph, their descendants rejected Christ. But God was with him. God raised him to an honored position in Egypt.

11. Then there was a famine. *Genesis chapters 39-50* tell about Joseph.

14. So Joseph sent a message. Joseph, the rejected brother, becomes the savior of his kinfolk! There were seventy-five people in all. Stephen quotes from the Septuagint [Greek translation of the Old Testament], as did Christ and the apostles who used this version almost exclusively. *Gen. 46:27* in that version says Joseph had nine sons, which would make the seventy-five.

seventy-five people in all. ¹⁵Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our ancestors died. ¹⁶Their bodies were moved to Shechem, where they were buried in the grave which Abraham had brought from the tribe of Hamor for a sum of money.

¹⁷When the time drew near for God to keep the promise he had made to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt had grown much larger. ¹⁸At last a different king, who had not known Joseph, began to rule in Egypt. ¹⁹He tricked our people and was cruel to our ancestors, forcing them to put their babies out of their homes, so that they would die. ²⁰It was at this time that Moses was born, a very beautiful child. He was brought up at home for three months, ²¹and when he was put out of his home the daughter of Pharaoh adopted him and brought him up as her own son. ²²He was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and became a great man in words and deeds.

²³When Moses was forty years old he decided to visit his fellow Israelites. ²⁴He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian; so he went to his help and took revenge on the Egyptian by killing him. ²⁵(He thought that his own people would understand that God was going to use him to set them free; but they did not under-

Then Jacob went down to 15
Egypt, where he and our
fathers died. Their bodies 16
were brought back to She-
chem and placed in the tomb
that Abraham had bought
from the sons of Hamor at
Shechem for a certain sum
of money.

¹⁷As the time drew near
for God to fulfill his promise
to Abraham, the number of
our people in Egypt greatly
increased. Then another 18
king, who knew nothing a-
bout Joseph, became ruler
of Egypt. He dealt treacher- 19
ously with our people and
oppressed our ancestors by
forcing them to throw out
their newborn babies so that
they would die.

²⁰At that time Moses was
born, and he was no ordi-
nary child. For three months
he was cared for in his
father's house. When he was 21
placed outside, Pharaoh's
daughter took him and
raised him as her own son.
Moses was educated in all 22
the wisdom of the Egyptians
and was powerful in speech
and action.

²³When Moses was forty
years old, he decided to visit
his fellow Israelites. He saw 24
one of them being mis-
treated by an Egyptian, so
he went to his defense and
avenged him by killing the 25
Egyptian. Moses thought
that his own people would
realize that God was using
him to rescue them, but they

16. **Their bodies were moved to Shechem.** The bodies of Joseph and his brothers (*Joshua 24:32*). Jewish tradition says the brothers were buried there also. Jerome, in the fourth century, said their graves could still be seen. **Which Abraham had bought.** Abraham built an altar to God at Shechem (*Gen. 12:6-7*). Yet Jacob is the one who bought the grave-site (*Gen. 33:18-20*). *McGarvey* thought this was a copyist's error, but the very oldest manuscripts have *Abraham*. Stephen evidently had some information which we do not have.

17. **When the time drew near.** For the people of Israel to come out of Egypt. (*verse 7*).

18-21. **It was at this time that Moses was born.** *Exodus chapters 1-2* tells about this.

22. **He was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians.** He was raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter (*Heb. 11:24*).

23-29. **When Moses was forty years old.** *Exod. 2:11-15*. The point Stephen brings out, is that Israel rejected Moses, just as they did Joseph and Jesus. Yet they knew how God had chosen both Joseph and Moses to be their leaders and saviors. This implies God had chosen Jesus also.

stand.) ²⁶The next day he saw two Israelites fighting, and he tried to make peace between them. 'Listen, men,' he said, 'you are brothers; why do you mistreat each other?' ²⁷But the one who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside. 'Who made you ruler and judge over us?' he asked. ²⁸'Do you want to kill me, just as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹When Moses heard this he fled from Egypt and started living in the land of Midian. There he had two sons.

³⁰'After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai. ³¹Moses was amazed by what he saw, and went near the bush to look at it closely. But he heard the Lord's voice: ³²'I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' Moses trembled with fear and dared not look. ³³The Lord said to him, 'Take your sandals off, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴I have looked and seen the cruel suffering of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groans, and I have come down to save them. Come now, I will send you to Egypt.'

³⁵'Moses is the one who was rejected by the people of Israel. 'Who made you ruler and judge over us?' they asked. He is the one whom God sent as ruler and savior, with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush. ³⁶He led the people out of Egypt, performing miracles and wonders in Egypt and the Red Sea,

did not. The next day Moses ²⁶came upon two Israelites who were fighting. He tried to reconcile them by saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?'

"But the man who was ²⁷mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' When Moses heard this, he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons.

"After forty years had ³⁰passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai. When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to look more closely, he heard the Lord's voice: 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look.

"Then the Lord said to ³¹him, 'Take off your sandals; the place where you are standing is holy ground. I have indeed seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to set them free. Now come, I will send you back to Egypt.'

"This is the same Moses ³⁵whom they had rejected with the words, 'Who made you ruler and judge?' He was sent to be their ruler and deliverer by God himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. He led them out of ³⁶Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty

30-34. After forty years had passed. God's choosing and sending Moses is told in *Exod. 3:1-10*.

35-36. Moses is the one who was rejected. He comes down hard on this fact! He does this to reach the climax of verse 37.

and in the desert for forty years. ³⁷Moses is the one who said to the people of Israel, 'God will send you a prophet, just as he sent me, who will be of your own people.' ³⁸He is the one who was with the people of Israel assembled in the desert; he was there with our ancestors and with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai; he received God's living messages to pass on to us.

³⁹"But our ancestors refused to obey him; they pushed him aside and wished that they could go back to Egypt. ⁴⁰So they said to Aaron, 'Make us some gods who will go in front of us. We do not know what has happened to the Moses who brought us out of Egypt.' ⁴¹It was then that they made an idol in the shape of a calf, offered sacrifice to it, and had a feast to celebrate what they themselves had made. ⁴²But God turned away from them, and gave them over to worship the stars of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'People of Israel! It was not to me
that you slaughtered and sacrificed
animals
for forty years in the desert.

⁴³It was the tend of God Moloch that
you carried,
and the image of the star of your god
Rephan;

years in the desert. This is ³⁷ that Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.' He was in the ³⁸ congregation in the desert, with our fathers and with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai; and he received living words to pass on to us.

"But our fathers refused ³⁹ to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. They told Aaron, 'Make ⁴⁰ some gods who will lead the way for us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt—we don't know what has happened to him!' That ⁴¹ was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and held a celebration in honor of what their hands had made. But God turned ⁴² away and gave them over to the worship of the heavenly bodies. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets:

'Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings
forty years in the desert,
O Israel?

No, you have lifted up the ⁴³ shrine of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan,

37. God will send you a prophet. This prophecy destroys the charge against Philip, which accused him of blaspheming Moses. Since Moses spoke about a prophet who would supersede himself, the one who truly gives honor to Moses honors the One whom Moses spoke about.

38. He is the one. That is, Moses. Stephen still shows them their ancestors did not honor Moses. The angel who spoke to him. Compare *verse 53; Gal. 3:19. God's living message.* The Law. Compare *Rom. 7:12-14.*

39-43. But our ancestors refused to obey him. These verses sum up the disobedience of Israel. Stephen shows that the rejection of Jesus has roots deep in their own past. Compare *Exod. 16:3; 17:4; 32:1-14. But God turned away from them.* Stephen condenses many centuries into this record of rejection which led to their captivity in Babylon. The stars of heaven. Compare *Deut. 17:3. People of Israel!* The quotation in *verses 42-43* is from *Amos 5:25-27.* The animal sacrifices were offered to God, yet the people really intended them for their "star gods." **Moloch.** *Sakkuth.* Babies were burned as human sacrifices to this god (*Lev. 18:21*). **Rephan.** *Kaiwan* [= Saturn?]. Perhaps the *Ashtoreth* of the O.T.,

they were idols that you had made to worship.

And so I will send you away beyond Babylon.'

⁴⁴"Our ancestors had the tent of God's presence with them in the desert. It had been made as God had told Moses to make it, according to the pattern that Moses had been shown.

⁴⁵Later on, our ancestors who received the tent from their fathers carried it with them when they went with Joshua and took over the land from the nations that God drove out before them. And it stayed there until the time of David. ⁴⁶He won God's favor, and asked God to allow him to provide a house for the God of Jacob. ⁴⁷But it was Solomon who built him a house.

⁴⁸"But the Most High God does not live in houses built by men; as the prophet says,

⁴⁹"Heaven is my throne, says the Lord, and earth is my footstool.

What kind of house would you build for me?

Where is the place for me to rest?

⁵⁰Did not I myself make all these things?'

the idols you made to worship.

Therefore, I will send you into exile' beyond Babylon.

"Our ancestors had the ⁴⁴tabernacle of the testimony with them in the desert. It had been made as God directed Moses, according to the pattern he had seen. Having received the ⁴⁵tabernacle, our fathers under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations God drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David, who enjoyed ⁴⁶God's favor and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. But it was Solomon who ⁴⁷built the house for him.

"However, the Most High ⁴⁸does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says:

'Heaven is my throne, ⁴⁹and the earth is my footstool.

What kind of house will you make for me? says the Lord.

Or where will my resting place be?

Has not my hand made all ⁵⁰these things?'

who would be worshiped in immoral ways. [The quotation follows the Septuagint.] **And so I will send you away.** Stephen shows that Israel has always been *rebellious*, and God has punished them for it. [Probably two million Jews came out of Egypt (*compare Numbers 1:45-46*), yet during the forty years in the desert, all perished except Joshua and Caleb.]

45-50. Our ancestors had the tent of God's presence. [*Tabernacle* is an old word for *tent*.] This tent was a "portable temple," and served to focus the worship of God and act as a witness to the Covenant. Compare *Heb. 9:1-10*. Stephen contrasts God's tent with the "tent of Moloch" (*verse 43*) which must have been a small "model" which they carried with them. **When they went in with Joshua.** [Joshua and Jesus are the same name in Hebrew.] They took God's tent with them into Canaan. **To provide a house for the God of Jacob.** David wanted to build a temple to replace the tent, but God would not allow him to do it See *2 Sam. 7:1-17; 1 Chron. 22:7-8; 2 Chron. 6:1-11*. **But the Most High God.** The tent was superseded by the temple, as God commanded. But God does not confine himself to any human construction (*2 Chron. 6:18*); therefore the temple itself would be superseded. [This would make them insane with anger!] But Jesus had predicted this (*John 4:21-24; Matt. 23:38-39*); and the Christians preached it (*compare Acts 17:24-25*). **Verses 49-50** quote *Isaiah 66:1-2* from the Septuagint.

⁵¹“How stubborn you are! How heathen your hearts, how deaf you are to God’s message! You are just like your ancestors: you too have always resisted the Holy Spirit! ⁵²Was there any prophet that your ancestors did not persecute? They killed God’s messengers, who long ago announced the coming of his righteous Servant. And now you have betrayed and murdered him. ⁵³You are the ones who received God’s law, that was handed down by angels—yet you have not obeyed it!”

The Stoning of Stephen

⁵⁴As the members of the Council listened to Stephen they became furious and ground their teeth at him in anger. ⁵⁵But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw God’s glory, and Jesus standing at the right side of God. ⁵⁶“Look!” he said, “I see heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right side of God!”

⁵⁷With a loud cry they covered their ears with their hands. Then they all rushed together at

“You stubborn people, 51 with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was 52 there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—you who have 53 received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it.”

The Stoning of Stephen

When they heard this, 54 they were furious and ground their teeth at him. But Stephen, filled with the 55 Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. “Look,” he said, “I see 56 heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

At this they covered their 57 ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all

51. **How stubborn you are!** Stephen now makes the application of all he has said. [Remember: the Holy Spirit is directing him.] They are *stubborn* like the ox that has to be *driven* to pull his load. Their hearts are *heathen* [alien and cut off from God]. They are *deaf* to God’s message. They are just like their ancestors, whom Stephen has just described as rebels. They *resist* the Holy Spirit. Compare *Rom. 2:25-29*.

52-53. **Was there any prophet?** Compare *Matt. 23:29-36*. **That was handed down by angels.** Compare *Heb. 2:1-5*. The Jews had an unhealthy interest in angels. [Compare note on *Col. 2:18-19*.]

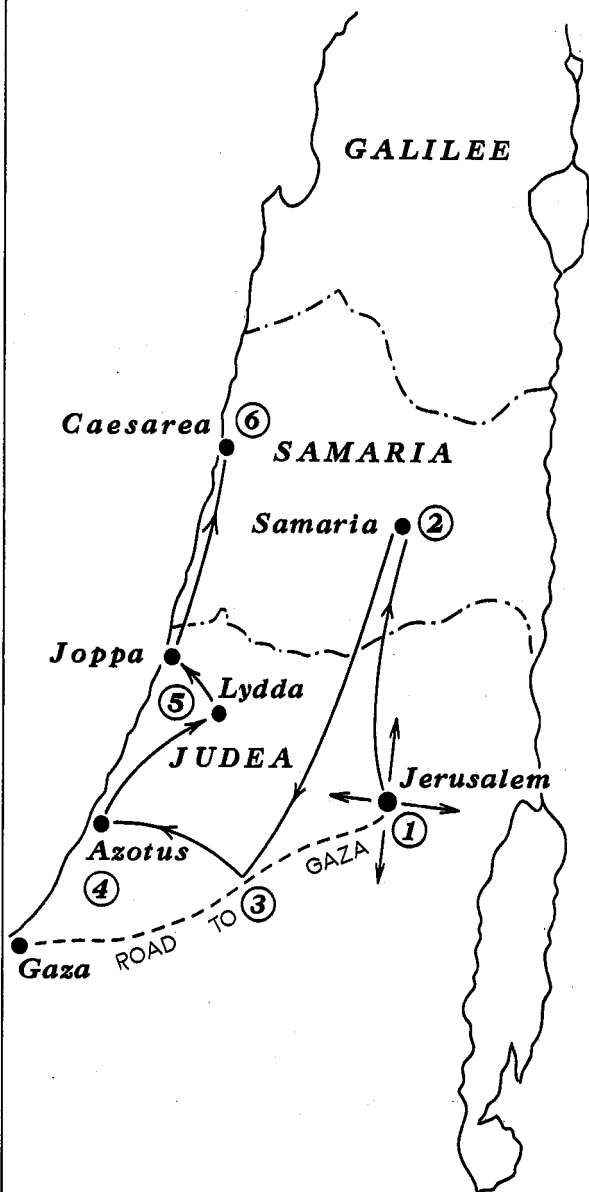
54. **They became furious.** Satan uses their own sense of guilt to drive them insane with anger! Compare notes on *Rev. 9*.

55. **Looked up to heaven.** “Happy are the dead who from now on die in the service of the Lord!” (*Rev. 14:13*). For the Christian, death is *graduation* from the school of life.

56. **The Son of Man standing.** Compare notes on *Matt. 26:64-65*.

57. **With a loud cry.** Some seventy-two solemn councilmen, who are official guardians of the Law, become a “howling mob.” *McGarvey* says: “But the maddest pranks ever played upon this mad earth are witnessed when wicked men set themselves in uncompromising opposition to God and his holy truth.”

THE DISPERSION 8:1-4
THE WORK OF PHILIP 8:5-13; 26-40



**THE DISPERSION THE WORK OF PHILIP
THE WORK OF PETER AND JOHN**

8:1-40

THE DISPERSION, 8:1-4

- a. The persecution against the church, *1a*
- b. The dispersion, *1b*
- c. The burial of Stephen, *2*
- d. The persecution by Saul, *3*
- e. The preaching of all who were scattered, *4*

THE FIRST WORK OF PHILIP, 8:5-13

- a. Leaving Jerusalem at the dispersion, *5a*
- b. The signs and preaching at Samaria resulting in the conversion of the Samaritans and Simon the sorcerer, *5b-13*

THE LATER WORK OF PHILIP, 26-40

1. On the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, *26-39*
 - a. The directions of the angel, *26*
 - b. The meeting of the eunuch and Philip, *27-30*
 - c. Philip's sermon, *31-35*
 - d. The baptism of the eunuch, *36-39*
2. At Azotus, *40a*
Directed here by the Holy Spirit, *40a*
3. At Lydda. (one of the villages on the plain of Philistia.) *40 b*
4. At Joppa, *40c* (where Philip probably preached.)
5. In Caesarea, *40d*
The final place in Philip's tour, *40d Cf. Acts 21:8.*

him at once, ⁵⁸threw him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses left their cloaks in charge of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹They kept on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰He knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord! Do not remember this sin against them!" He said this and died.

8 And Saul approved of his murder.

Saul Persecutes the Church

That very day the church in Jerusalem began to suffer cruel persecution. All the believers, except the apostles, were scattered throughout the provinces of Judea and Samaria. ²Some devout men buried Stephen, mourning for him with loud cries.

³But Saul tried to destroy the church; going from house to house he dragged out the believers, both men and women, and threw them into jail.

rushed at him, dragged him 58 out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

While they were stoning 59 him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees 60 and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

8 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death.

The Church Persecuted and Scattered

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men 2 buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. 3 Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

58. **Threw him out of the city.** Even though they are committing murder, they are very careful to do it outside the "holy city" (*Lev. 24:14*). **And stoned him.** The Romans crucified; the Jews stoned. **The witnesses.** They had to throw the first stones (*Deut. 17:7*). **A young man named Saul.** This is the first mention of this militant Jewish missionary, who will later become The Apostle to the Gentiles. See note on *Acts 9:1*.

59-60. **Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!** This shows his confident faith! **He knelt down.** The point is, that like Jesus, he prayed for his enemies. **And died.** Stephen's death was murder because: (1) no vote was taken in the Council; (2) The Roman governor's consent was not obtained (see note on *John 18:31*).

1. **And Saul approved of his murder.** He did not throw a stone, but he agreed in spirit with what they did. See the description of Saul in notes on *Acts 9:1*. **That very day.** Murdering Stephen was not enough! These men, including Saul, wanted "blood" of the entire messianic community. **All the believers.** The group had become very large, some think as large as one hundred thousand members. Persecution caused an *explosion* as it forced the disciples to *run for their lives!* Verse 4 tells the results. **Except the apostles.** An old tradition says Christ ordered the apostles to stay in Jerusalem for twelve years, so that no one there could say he had not heard the Good News. The apostles were shielded in some way.

2. **Some devout men buried Stephen.** This implies they were not Christians, but devout Jews, favorable toward the Gospel, yet not willing to obey it. **Mourning for him.** They showed their protest against Stephen's murder by a public funeral, with the usual screaming and crying.

3. **But Saul tried to destroy the church.** He did this because he BELIEVED they were God's enemies. Saul always did what he thought God wanted him to do. Compare *Acts 23:1*. [The Jews of the first century believed they could bring the promised Messiah, by converting the world to Judaism. Saul certainly must have been a "militant Jewish missionary."]

The Gospel Preached in Samaria

⁴The believers who were scattered went everywhere, preaching the message. ⁵Philip went to the city of Samaria and preached the Messiah to the people there. ⁶The crowds paid close attention to what Philip said. They all listened to him and saw the miracles that he performed. ⁷Evil spirits came out with a loud cry from many people; many paralyzed and lame people were also healed. ⁸So there was great joy in Samaria.

⁹In that city lived a man named Simon, who for some time had astounded the Samaritans with his magic. He claimed that he was someone great, ¹⁰and everyone in the city, from all classes of society, paid close attention to him. "He is that power of God known as 'The Great Power,'" ¹¹he said. He had astounded them with his magic for such a long time that they paid close attention to him. ¹²But when they believed Philip's message about the Good News of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Philip in Samaria

Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralyzed and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city.

Simon the Sorcerer

Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself

4. **Preaching the message.** The group was scattered, but the church of Christ was not destroyed! They had been schooled by the apostles, and everywhere one of these believers found himself, a new community of believers grew up.

5. **Philip went to the city of Samaria.** This is not Philip the apostle, but rather Philip the "church helper" (Acts 6:5). The city of Samaria was some ten miles northwest of Sychar. Herod the Great rebuilt it and renamed it Sebaste.

6-8. **The crowds paid close attention.** The miracles got their attention. Compare Acts 19:10-12. Philip, one of the seven (Acts 6:5), had the gift of miracles. This is the second recorded example of one, who was not an apostle, having this gift. The miracles were similar to those which Jesus did. Compare notes on Matt. 4:24-25.

9. **A man named Simon.** A magician, who had built fame for himself through his use of the magic arts. He claimed to be more than human, with supernatural powers.

10. **He is that power of God.** They believed God worked through him to do these things.

12. **But when they believed Phillip's message.** Note that: (1) Philip preached to them; (2) the Good News of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; (3) faith came from hearing the message (Rom 10:17); (4) when they believed, they were baptized. This is the pattern found throughout Acts, including the special case of Cornelius. **Both men and women.** There is no mention of children.

¹³Simon himself also believed; and after being baptized he stayed close to Philip, and was astounded when he saw the great wonders and miracles that were being performed.

¹⁴The apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had received the word of God; so they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵When they arrived, they prayed for the believers that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶For the Holy Spirit had not yet come down on any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸Simon saw that the Spirit had been given to them when the apostles placed their hands on them. So he offered money to Peter and John, ¹⁹and said, "Give this power to me too, so that anyone I place my hands on will receive the Holy Spirit."

believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

13. **Simon himself also believed.** Many have argued that Simon believed in the miracles, not in Christ. But we are not told this, and the Scripture makes no separation between he and the others. It is hard to believe a man with the fame Simon had, would yield himself to the Good News, unless he was sincere at the time. He was like the seed that fell among thorns, which grew up and choked out his spiritual life.

14. **The apostles in Jerusalem heard.** Philip was not an apostle. He had the gift of miracles, but could not pass it on to others. (1) On Pentecost, the Spirit came down on the first Jewish Christians. (2) The Samaritan Christians received the gifts of the Spirit from the apostle. (3) When the first Gentiles were converted, an apostle was present as the Spirit came down. There is no record of the gifts of the Spirit being given other than through or in the presence of an apostle. See *Rom. 1:11*. So they sent Peter and John. The entire group of apostles chooses Peter and John for this mission. This is the last time John is mentioned in the book of Acts.

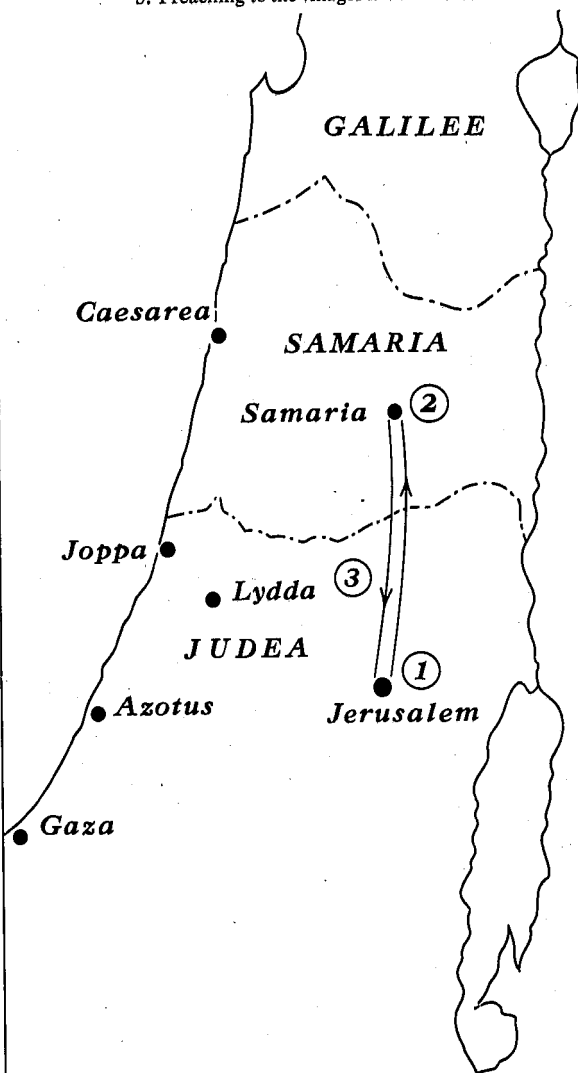
15-17. **They prayed for the believers.** That the Spirit might come down on them. The "gifts of the Spirit" are not the same as the "Spirit as a gift." These had already been born of water and the Spirit (*John 3:5*), but had not yet been given the supernatural gifts of the Spirit. See notes on *Acts 19:1-7*. Calvin wrote: "Luke speaks not of the common grace of the Holy Spirit, but of those singular gifts with which God would have certainly endowed at the beginning of the gospel." Placed their hands on them. Only the apostles had the authority and the ability to pass on the gifts of the Spirit.

18-19. **So he offered money to Peter and John.** This implies he was not one whom the apostles gave the gifts of the Spirit. His sin is not that he wanted this power, but that he tried to buy it! [*1 Tim. 6:5* may apply here.]

THE WORK OF PETER AND JOHN

8:14-25

1. At Jerusalem, 14
 - a. News of Philip's work reaches Jerusalem, 14a
 - b. Peter and John sent, 14b
2. At Samaria, 15-25a
 - a. The imparting of spiritual gifts, 15-17
 - b. The sin of Simon and the rebuke of Peter, 18-24
 - c. Preaching and testifying in Samaria, 25a
3. Preaching to the villages in Samaria, 25b



²⁰But Peter answered him, "May you and your money go to hell, for thinking that you can buy God's gift with money! ²¹You have no part or share in our work, because your heart is not right in God's sight. ²²Repent, then, from this evil plan of yours, and pray to the Lord that he will forgive you for thinking such a thing as this. ²³For I see that you are full of bitter envy, and are a prisoner of sin."

²⁴Simon said to Peter and John, "Please pray to the Lord for me, so that none of these things you said will happen to me."

²⁵After they had given their testimony and spoken the Lord's message, Peter and John went back to Jerusalem. On their way they preached the Good News in many villages of Samaria.

Philip and the Ethiopian Official

²⁶An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, "Get yourself ready and go south to the road that goes from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This road is

Peter answered: "May 20
your money perish with you,
because you thought to buy
the gift of God with money!
You have no part or share in 21
this ministry, because your
heart is not right before
God. Repent of this wicked- 22
ness and pray to the Lord.
Perhaps he will forgive you
for having such a thought in
your heart. For I see that 23
you are full of bitterness and
captive to sin."

Then Simon answered, 24
"Pray to the Lord for me so
that nothing you have said
may happen to me."

When they had testified 25
and proclaimed the word of
the Lord, Peter and John re-
turned to Jerusalem, preach-
ing the gospel in many Sa-
maritan villages.

Phillip and the Ethiopian

Now an angel of the Lord 26
said to Phillip, "Go south to
the road—the desert road—
that goes down from Jerusa-

20-24. *May you and your money go to hell.* This is a *literal* translation. *Johnson* thinks this is not an *anathema* [God's curse], but the word is *APOLEIAN*, which is translated "destined to hell" in *2 Thess. 2:3*. However, Simon is not completely beyond hope, as Peter shows. **For thinking that you can buy.** Simon's *conversion* is not called into question but the *sin* he has done. **You have no part or share in our work.** In these gifts of the Spirit. **Repent, then.** He does not repeat the words of *Acts 2:38*, because this man is not an alien from the Kingdom. His past sins have already been forgiven. It is this present sin that threatens to drag him down to hell. If there is any *doubt* about forgiveness, it is not about God's willingness to forgive, but about Simon's willingness to repent. Compare *Heb. 6:4-6* **And pray to the Lord.** The erring child of God, caught with sin on his hands, has the *right* to pray to the Lord for forgiveness. The alien from the Kingdom must: (1) believe; (2) repent; (3) be baptized (*Acts 2:37-38* and *notes*). Peter shows us that the sinning Christian must (1) repent; (2) pray (*see also 1 John 1:8-10*). Scripture tells us nothing more of this Simon the magician.

25. **After they had given.** Peter and John did not rush back to Jerusalem, but used every opportunity to spread the Good News of Jesus.

26. **An angel of the Lord.** Gaza was on the south-west seacoast of Judea. The road went through the hill-country of Judea. Note the angel speaks to the *preacher* and sends him to preach Jesus.

no longer used.) ²⁷⁻²⁸So Philip got ready and went. Now an Ethiopian eunuch was on his way home. This man was an important official in charge of the treasury of the Queen, or Candace, of Ethiopia. He had been to Jerusalem to worship God, and was going back in his carriage. As he rode along he was reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹The Holy Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and stay close to that carriage." ³⁰Philip ran over and heard him reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah; so he asked him, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

³¹"How can I understand," the official replied, "unless someone explains it to me?" And he invited Philip to climb up and sit in the carriage with him. ³²The passage of scripture which he was reading was this,

"He was like a sheep that is taken to be slaughtered;
he was like a lamb that makes no sound when its wool is cut off;
he did not say a word.

³³He was humiliated, and justice was denied him.

No one will be able to tell about his descendants,

lem to Gaza." So he started 27 out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and 28 on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. The Spirit told Philip, "Go 29 to that chariot and stay near it."

Then Philip ran up to the 30 chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

"How can I," he said, 31 unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

The eunuch was reading 32 this passage of Scripture:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

In his humiliation he was 33 deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants? For his

27-28. **Now an Ethiopian eunuch.** Ethiopia was the part of Africa south of Egypt. It was common in the East to "desex" strong, intelligent young men, and train them for positions of leadership. This "mutilated" man was probably a Gentile converted to Judaism, although he could never be a "full Jew" because he was a eunuch (*Deut. 23:1*). **In charge of the treasury.** This shows his importance. [*"Candace"* is not a personal name, but a title.] Her court was on an island in the Nile river, about a thousand miles from the Mediterranean Sea. **To worship God.** Traveling this long distance, his Bible study, etc., shows him to be a devout man. [He would be allowed only in the Court of the Gentiles, because of his mutilation (*Deut. 23:1*).

29-30. **The Holy Spirit said to Philip.** Notice the Spirit sends Philip to this man.

31. **How can I understand?** He needed help to understand the prophecies. Compare *1 Cor. 2:13-14*.

32-33. **The passage of scripture.** *Isa. 53:7-8* from the Septuagint. This quotation from Isaiah shows the voluntary sacrifice which Christ would make; the wickedness and guilt of the people who killed him; and also the "spiritual children" [followers] he would have.

because his life on earth has come to an end."

³⁴The official said to Philip, "Tell me, of whom is the prophet saying this? Of himself or of someone else?" ³⁵Philip began to speak; starting from this very passage of scripture, he told him the Good News about Jesus. ³⁶As they traveled down the road they came to a place where there was some water, and the official said, "Here is some water. What is to keep me from being baptized?"

[³⁷Philip said to him, "You may be baptized if you believe with all your heart."

"I do," he answered; "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]

³⁸The official ordered the carriage to stop; and both of them, Philip and the official, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

³⁹When they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away. The official did not see him again, but continued on his way, full

life was taken from the earth."

The eunuch asked Philip, ³⁴ "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" Then ³⁵ Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

As they traveled along the ³⁶ road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he ordered the chariot ³⁸ to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they ³⁹ came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way

34-35. **Of whom is the prophet saying this?** Philip used this opportunity to show how the prophets predicted God's act in Christ to set men free. He showed the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. He told how they had been ordered to preach this Good News and baptize believers by the authority of Christ into the "Three Names of God" (see notes on Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38). We know this, because of the question the official asks in verse 36.

36. **They came to a place.** The exact spot where this baptism took place is unknown. Jerome and Eusebius place it at Bethsura [Bethzur, *Joshua 15:58*], about twenty miles from Jerusalem, in a deep pool at the foot of a hill. Others think *verse 40* implies it was near Ashdod. **Here is some water.** Note it is the official who asks this! This implies Philip had taught him this. The Greek implies *happiness* that he could obey his Lord in the liquid grave (*Col. 2:12*). See note on *verse 39*.

37. **If you believe.** Philip asks for a formal declaration of faith. **I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.** This is the "Ultimate declaration!" See *Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21*.

38. **And both of them . . . went down into the water.** *The Expositor's Greek Testament* says: "ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΝΥΔΟΡ: even if the words are rendered 'unto the water' (Plumptre), the context ΑΝΕΒΕΣΑΝ ΕΚ indicates that the baptism was by immersion, and there can be no doubt that this was the custom in the early Church."

39-40. **Up out of the water.** "Christian baptism" involves both *water* and *Spirit*. See note on *John 3:5*. **Full of Joy.** This man had been unable to find full acceptance in Judaism because of his mutilation (*Deut. 23:1*). Try to picture his great happiness in discovering that none of that was important any more! He, a eunuch, had direct access to Jesus Christ the Son of God!!! **Philip found himself in Ashdod.** Also called Azotus. This was an old Philistine city on the seacoast. He probably planted churches along

of joy. ⁴⁰Philip found himself in Ashdod; and he went through all the towns preaching the Good News, until he arrived at Caesarea.

The Conversion of Saul

(Also Acts 22.6-16; 26.12-18)

9 In the meantime Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the High Priest ²and asked for letters of introduction to the Jewish synagogues in Damascus, so that if he should find any followers of the Way of the Lord there, he would be able to arrest them, both men and women, and take them back to Jerusalem.

³On his way to Damascus, as he came near the city, suddenly a light from the sky flashed

rejoicing. Philip, however, ⁴⁰ appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Saul's Conversion

9 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around

the coastal area (compare Acts 9:32,36). Until he arrived at Caesarea. He may have taken months or years to do this. Peter probably did his work of missions at Caesarea before Philip arrived. We find Philip living there in Acts 21:8.

1. **Saul kept up his violent threats.** See Acts 8:3. The life of this man is about to undergo a radical transformation as he comes face to face with the Risen Lord! Saul tried to live as he understood the Law of God. It was because of ignorance that he tried to destroy the church (1 Tim. 1:13). [One year or more has passed since the death of Stephen.] Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3:5); his Jewish father was a Roman citizen, so Saul was born a Roman citizen (Acts 22:28). He was born in Tarsus, a Greek city, capital of Cilicia. He grew up with the Greek language and customs, as well as being raised a strict Pharisee (Phil. 3:5-6). While still young, he went to Jerusalem to study the Law at the theological schools, and was taught by one of the greatest teachers of the Law, Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). He was one of the militant Pharisees (Acts 26:5), and probably had been trained as a missionary for Judaism. It is thought that he had been away from Jerusalem during the time of Christ's public ministry and the events of the Cross. As we first meet him, he is a young man [between 30 and 35 years old], outstanding and with great influence, active in his attempt to destroy what he believes to be a heresy, and a trusted leader of those who are enemies of Christianity.

2. **And asked for letters.** If Saul's conversion was in 33 A.D. [by the corrected calendar], the High Priest must have been Joseph Calaphas, a Sadducee, who held office until 36 A.D. The High Priest was a "pope" over the Jews, and authority from him would allow Saul to demand help from any synagogue. **Damascus.** About 140 miles northeast of Jerusalem, east of Mt. Hermon, in Syria. Watered by mountain streams, this beautiful city was a fertile spot in the desert. It is one of the oldest cities in the world, dating from before Abraham. Saul's activity had the backing of the Council, of which he himself may have been a member (see note on Acts 26:10). **The Way of the Lord.** Christianity; the Christian System.

3. **On his way.** Six or seven days were needed to go that far. **Suddenly a light from the sky.** Much brighter than the sun (Acts 26:13). The same as that seen at the Transfiguration, and by John on Patmos. Paul tells more details in chapters 22 & 26.

around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?"

⁵"Who are you, Lord?" he asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you persecute," the voice said, ⁶"But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do."

⁷The men who were traveling with Saul had stopped, not saying a word; they heard the voice but could not see anyone. ⁸Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes, but could not see a thing. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. ⁹For three days he was not able to see, and during that time he did not eat or drink anything.

¹⁰There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. He had a vision, in which the Lord said to him, "Ananias!"

"Here I am, Lord," he answered.

him. He fell to the ground ⁴ and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

"Who are you, Lord?" ⁵ Saul asked.

"I am Jesus whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

The men traveling with ⁷ Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. Saul got up ⁸ from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

In Damascus there was a ¹⁰ disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

4. **And heard a voice.** The voice spoke to him in Hebrew (*Acts 26:14*), the language he spoke at his mother's knee, which was also the theological language. This strikes Saul at the very depths of his personality. **Why do you persecute me?** The blow that strikes against the messianic community also strikes Jesus himself! This shows how closely united Christ is with his church.

5. **Who are you, Lord?** He recognized this as a supernormal communication, but would not know that it was Christ who spoke. Saul was a religious man, sincere in what he was doing (*Acts 23:1*). **I am Jesus.** He does not say, "I am the Eternal Logos, the Living God." Saul would have answered, "I am not persecuting you, Lord." The voice says, "*I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute.*" And immediately Saul understands! The one whom he had hated intensely, whose religious community he had worked to destroy, is the Lord himself!!! He could reject this knowledge, as did Judas Iscariot. And the power of the vision had not offered anything to change his mind, until the voice identified itself. But his mind GRASPS this knowledge and he lies there a *believer* who desperately wants to escape his sin!

6. **Where you will be told what you must do.** He must come into the Kingdom in the same way the others have. Christ has placed the terms of salvation into human hands, and Saul must learn what to do to be saved from a human source [Ananias]. Compare *2 Cor. 4:1-7*.

7. **They heard the voice.** Saul both heard the voice and saw Jesus (*verse 17; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8*). These men were on the fringes of the vision and did not receive the full impact. Although they heard the voice, they did not understand what it said (*Acts 22:9*). It is implied they got up from the ground in a shorter time than Saul did.

8. **But could not see a thing.** This blindness was proof he had not imagined the whole thing. Saul the *destroyer* was led helplessly into the city.

9. **For three days.** Try to picture the panic and anguish of this devoutly religious man who suddenly discovered he had been *fighting against* the very God he loved and served!!! Compare *Acts 2:37* and note.

10. **There was a disciple.** Ananias is only mentioned in his connection with Saul.

¹¹The Lord said to him, "Get ready and go to Straight Street, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying, ¹²and in a vision he saw a man named Ananias come in and place his hands on him so that he might see again."

¹³Ananias answered, "Lord, many people have told me about this man, about all the terrible things he has done to your people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴And he has come to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

¹⁵The Lord said to him, "Go, because I have chosen him to serve me, to make my name known to Gentiles and kings, and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶And I myself will show him all that he must suffer for my sake."

¹⁷So Ananias went, entered the house and placed his hands on Saul. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord has sent me—Jesus himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸At once something like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes and he was able to see again. He stood up and

The Lord told him, "Go ¹¹to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

"Lord," Ananias answered, ¹³"I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

But the Lord said to Ananias, ¹⁵"Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Then Ananias went to the ¹⁷house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord — Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here — has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, ¹⁸something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up

11-12. **The Lord said to him.** Just as Philip was sent to the Ethiopian eunuch, Ananias is sent to Saul. **Straight Street.** This street ran across the city, from the eastern gate to the western gate, and was about 100 feet wide. **At the house of Judas.** We know only his name. **A man from Tarsus named Saul.** This would identify the right man. **He is praying.** Try to picture how Ananias must have felt, being sent to Saul of Tarsus, the fierce enemy of Christians!!!

13-14. **Ananias answered.** He voices his fears to the Lord. Put yourself in his place.

15-16. **Go, because I have chosen him.** The case of Saul is unique! He alone of the apostles, saw the Lord in this way and received this call (*1 Cor. 15:8; Acts 26: 16-18*). Note that Saul was called to be an apostle *before* his sins were forgiven, and it was his *option* whether he obeyed the Lord (*Acts 22:16*).

17. **And placed his hands on Saul.** As an act of friendship, not to give any gift [since Ananias was not an apostle]. Paul declared that he received his authority as an apostle from God, not men (*Gal. 1:1, 11-12*). The "*be filled with the Holy Spirit*" took place *after* Ananias had baptized Saul into Christ. Compare *Acts 22:13-16*. All the apostles received the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" direct from God (*Acts 1:4*), and none but the apostles could "pass on" the special gifts to others.

18. **Something like fish scales.** As soon as Ananias says "Brother Saul, see again!" this happens. **He stood up and was baptized.** J.F. Bethune-Baker, in *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine* says this of how the early church understood the role of baptism: "*It was regarded as in itself conveying the blessings and the grace which were bestowed. It was the medium by which the power of the life and death of Christ was made effective to the individual experience.*" See note on *Acts 22:16*.

was baptized; ¹⁹and after he had eaten, his strength came back.

Saul Preaches in Damascus

Saul stayed for a few days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰He went straight to the synagogues and began to preach about Jesus. "He is the Son of God." he said.

²¹All who heard him were amazed, and asked, "Isn't this the man who in Jerusalem was killing those who call on this name? And didn't he come here for the very purpose of arresting them and taking them back to the chief priests?"

²²But Saul's preaching became even more powerful, and his proofs that Jesus was the Messiah were so convincing that the Jews who lived in Damascus could not answer him.

²³After many days had gone by, the Jews gathered and made plans to kill Saul; ²⁴but he was told of what they planned to do. Day and night they watched the city gates in order to kill him. ²⁵But one night Saul's followers took him and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

and was baptized, and after ¹⁹taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul in Damascus and Jerusalem

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. All those who heard him ²¹were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" Yet ²²Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

After many days had gone ²³by, the Jews conspired to kill him, but Saul learned of ²⁴their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. But his followers took ²⁵him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

19. Saul stayed for a few days. Paul, as we better know him, received his knowledge and his message direct from God and did not need to be taught (*Gal. 1:12*). But try to picture his intense desire for companionship! In turning to Jesus Christ, he has cut himself off from everything in the past!

20. He went straight to the synagogues. He immediately begins working to bring people to Jesus. For a short time, the *bizarre* turn-around in him would cause many unbelieving Jews to hear him out.

21. All who heard him were amazed. They knew who he was and what he had done in the past, but had not yet learned of his converting to Christ.

22. But Saul's preaching. His ability grew rapidly!

23. After many days had gone by. Probably three years time, during which he was away in Arabia (*Gal. 1:16-18*). It was when he had come back to Damascus that this persecution broke out. And made plans to kill Saul. Paul tells about this in *2 Cor. 11:32-33*. King Aretas, an Arabian, controlled Damascus at this time, and he was willing to kill Paul to please the Jews.

24. Day and night they watched. "The governor under King Aretas placed guards at the city gates to arrest me" (*2 Cor. 11:32*).

25. Lowering him in a basket. Houses built against the wall, or on the wall, gave the opportunity to escape from the city.

Saul in Jerusalem

²⁶Saul went to Jerusalem and tried to join the disciples. They would not believe, however, that he was a disciple, and they were all afraid of him. ²⁷Then Barnabas came to his help and took him to the apostles. He explained to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road, and that the Lord had spoken to him. He also told them how boldly Saul had preached in the name of Jesus in Damascus. ²⁸And so Saul stayed with them and went all over Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹He also talked and disputed with the Greek-speaking Jews, but they tried to kill him. ³⁰When the brothers found out about this, they took Saul down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹And so it was that the church throughout all of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had a time of peace. It was built up and grew in numbers through the help of the Holy Spirit, as it lived in reverence for the Lord.

When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him. When the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

26. **Saul went to Jerusalem.** Three years before, he had set out from Jerusalem, as a proud, talented young Pharisee, with a bright future as an agent of the Council. He set out with authority from the High Priest himself, to stamp out Christianity in Damascus. Now he comes back as a disciple of the hated Jesus of Nazareth, with no future at all as far as the Council and Judaism is concerned. Persecuted, hated, he is an outcast from his own nation. Why the change??? He had decided that what Jesus had to offer was worth more than the whole world put together!!! **And they were all afraid of him.** Could you blame them???

27. **Then Barnabas came to his help.** We met Barnabas in *Acts 4:36*. Like Paul, he was a Greek-speaking Jew. He may have known Paul personally.

28. **And went all over Jerusalem.** He certainly was not *timid!*

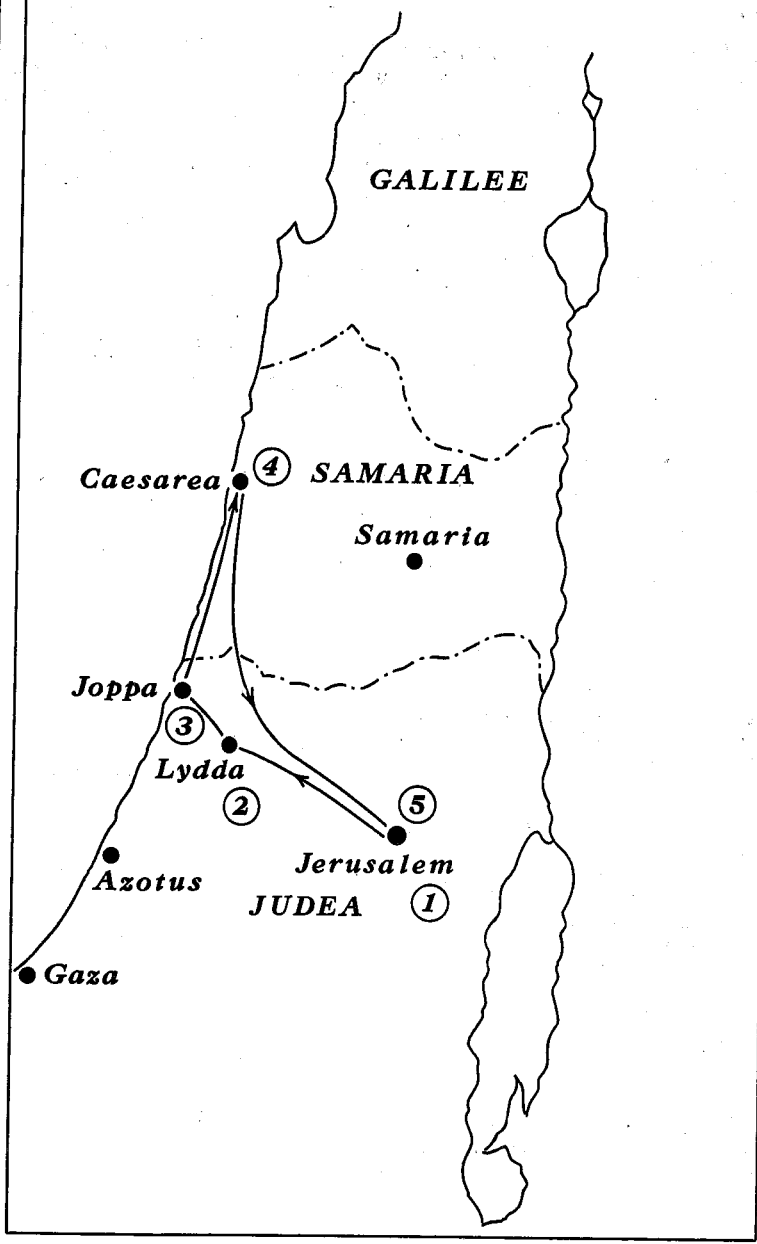
29. **And disputed with the Greek-speaking Jews.** He was "one of them." But they considered him a "traitor" because he had turned to Christ. Note also that the Lord warned him to get away from Jerusalem (*Acts 22:17-21*).

30. **And sent him away to Tarsus.** The same group of Jews who had killed Stephen, now wanted to kill Paul. Some think *Gal. 1:21* implies Paul went by land through Syria. *Johnson* thinks Paul went by boat to Seleucia, on the seacoast close to Antioch, and then by land to Tarsus. Four or five years pass before we hear of Paul again (*Acts 11:26*), during which time he was busy preaching Christ (*Gal. 1:21-24; Acts 15:23, 41*).

31. **Had a time of peace.** After Paul escaped from the city, persecution ceased for a while. The Roman Emperor *Caligula* ordered his statue placed in the temple at Jerusalem. The Jews were too busy with this defilement of their temple, to persecute the Christians.

THE WORK OF PETER

9:32-11:18



GALILEE

Caesarea

④

SAMARIA

Samaria

Joppa

③

Lydda

②

⑤

Jerusalem

JUDEA

①

Azotus

Gaza

THE WORK OF PETER

9:31—11:18

1. AT JERUSALEM. 9:31
The increase of the church through the preaching of Peter and others. 31 Cf. 9:32a
2. IN LYDDA. 9:32-35
 - a. Peter comes to the saints at Lydda on his preaching tour. 32
 - b. The healing of Aeneas. 33, 34
 - c. The results of this miracle and the preaching. 35
3. AT JOPPA. 9:36-43
 - a. The incident in Joppa. 36, 37
 - b. The disciples sent for Peter from Joppa to Lydda. 38
 - c. Peter in Joppa; the raising of Dorcas. 39-41
 - d. Good results. 42
 - e. Peter's residence. 43
4. IN CAESAREA. 10:1-48
 - a. Cornelius and his vision. 1-8
 - b. Peter's vision. 9-16
 - c. The messengers arrive. God directs Peter. Messengers received. 17-23a
 - d. The trip to and arrival at Caesarea. 24b-33
 - e. Peter's sermon. 34-43
 - f. The baptism in the holy Spirit. 44-46a
 - g. Baptism in water. 46b-48
5. AT JERUSALEM. 11:1-18
 - a. News of the conversion of Cornelius arrives in Jerusalem. 1
 - b. Objection of those of the circumcision. 2, 3
 - c. The answer of Peter. 4-18

Peter in Lydda and Joppa

³²Peter traveled everywhere, and one time he went to visit God's people who lived in Lydda.

³³There he met a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had not been able to get out of bed for eight years. ³⁴"Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ makes you well. Get up and make your bed." At once Aeneas got up. ³⁵All the people living in Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

³⁶In Joppa there was a woman named Tabitha, who was a believer. (Her name in Greek is Dorcas, meaning a deer.) She spent all her time doing good and helping the poor. ³⁷At that time she got sick and died. Her body was washed and laid in a room upstairs. ³⁸Joppa was not very far from Lydda, and when the disciples in Joppa heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him with the message, "Please hurry and come to us." ³⁹So Peter got ready and went with them. When he arrived he was taken to the room upstairs. All the widows crowded around him, crying and showing him the shirts and coats that Dorcas had made while she was alive. ⁴⁰Peter put them all out of the room, and knelt down and prayed; then he turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up!" She opened her eyes, and

Aeneas and Dorcas

As Peter traveled about ³² the country, he went to visit the saints in Lydda. There ³³ he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. "Aeneas," Peter said ³⁴ to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and arrange your things." Immediately Aeneas got up. All those ³⁵ who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

In Joppa there was a disci- ³⁶ ple named Tabitha (which means Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that ³⁷ time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an up- ³⁸ stairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in ³⁸ Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

Peter went with them, and ³⁹ when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other ⁴⁰ clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

Peter sent them all out of ⁴⁰ the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed.

32-34. **Peter traveled everywhere.** Visiting the communities of Christians in Judea. **In Lydda.** Near Joppa. Here Peter heals a man who had been paralyzed for eight years. Note he credits the healing to Christ.

35. **Living in Lydda and Sharon.** Sharon is mentioned in *Song 2:1*. "All the people" means there was a general "turning to the Lord."

36. **There was a woman named Tabitha.** Joppa has been a seaport since the time of David. Citrus fruit is grown in the flat coastal plain. She was a Christian, well known for her charity.

37. **Her body was washed.** Eastern houses often had a large upstairs room. Bodies were washed to prepare them for burial. [Note the symbolism in *Rom. 6:3-4*]

38-39. **They sent two men to him.** His fame suggests he may restore her to life. **All the widows crowded around him.** It was a bitter experience to be a widow in the first century, and it was very often necessary to depend upon charity. Tabitha had been one who helped them.

40. **Peter put them all out of the room.** Compare *1 Kings 17:19-23*; *2 Kings 4:32-36*; *Matt. 9:25*. This is so nothing will disturb him, as he kneels down in prayer. This is the first "Raising from death" done by an apostle.

when she saw Peter she sat up. ⁴¹Peter reached over and helped her get up. Then he called the believers and the widows, and presented her alive to them. ⁴²The news about this spread all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. ⁴³Peter stayed on in Joppa for many days with a leatherworker named Simon.

Peter and Cornelius

10 There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a captain in the Roman army regiment called "The Italian Regiment." ²He was a religious man; he and his whole family worshiped God. He did much to help the Jewish poor people, and was constantly praying to God. ³It was about three o'clock one afternoon when he had a vision, in which he clearly saw an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius!"

"He stared at the angel in fear and said, "What is it, sir?"

The angel answered, "God has accepted your prayers and works of charity, and has remem-

Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa and many people believed in the Lord. Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

Cornelius Calls for Peter

10 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"

Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked.

The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a remembrance before God.

42-43. **The news about this.** This sort of thing "advertised" Christianity! Peter stayed on in Joppa. For perhaps a year. Joppa was a large city, and there were many people to hear the Good News. Peter is at the house of Simon the leatherworker when the messengers come to him (*Acts 10:32*).

1. **There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius.** Caesarea was the chief seaport of Palestine, also the Roman capital and military headquarters. Cornelius was one of several Gentile captains spoken of favorably in the New Testament. [Julius (*Acts 27:1-3*) the one at the cross (*Matt. 27:54*); the one who built the synagogue at Capernaum (*Luke 7:2*).] **The Italian Regiment.** Many of the conquered people served in the Roman armies. This regiment of six hundred men were all Italians, which strongly implies Cornelius was an Italian himself.

2. **He was a religious man.** This means he had turned to God and worshiped him. He was not a "Gentile converted to Judaism," because he had not been circumcised and officially become a Jew. But he and his family were part of a synagogue and worshiped the One True God. Most of the Gentiles who first "came to Christ" were from this type of people.

3. **When he had a vision.** Three o'clock was one of the Jewish hours of prayer (*Acts 3:1*). He clearly saw the angel.

4. **What is it, sir?** [*lord = sir.*] He asks the meaning of this vision which has filled him with awe. **God has accepted your prayers.** Cornelius was worshiping God to the full extent of his knowledge. When God finds one who is eager to know *him*, he makes that knowledge available!

bered you. ⁵And now send some men to Joppa to call for a certain man whose full name is Simon Peter. ⁶He is a guest in the home of a leatherworker named Simon, who lives by the sea." ⁷Then the angel who was speaking to him went away, and Cornelius called two of his house servants and a soldier, a religious man who was one of his personal attendants. ⁸He told them what had happened and sent them off to Joppa.

⁹The next day, as they were on their way and coming near Joppa, Peter went up on the roof of the house about noon in order to pray. ¹⁰He became hungry, and wanted to eat; while the food was being prepared he had a vision. ¹¹He saw heaven opened and something coming down that looked like a large sheet being lowered by its four corners to the earth. ¹²In it were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and wild birds. ¹³A voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat!"

¹⁴But Peter said, "Certainly not, Lord! I have never eaten anything considered defiled or unclean."

Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea." 5
6

When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and one of his military aides who was a devout man. He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa. 7
8

Peter's Vision

About noon the following day as they were approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." 9
10
11
12
13

"Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten 14

5. **To call for a certain man.** Note it is not the angel who tells him the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free. Cornelius is told to send for Peter [in order to learn what he must believe and do].

6. **In the home of a leatherworker named Simon.** Sanitary laws required leatherworkers to live outside the cities, and to be near plenty of water. Note that Cornelius will learn God's will through a human messenger.

7. **Two of his house servants and a soldier.** These also worshiped God.

9. **The next day.** They are coming near Joppa. So God sends Peter a vision to get him ready to go with them. Peter is a Jew, they are Gentiles. **Peter went up on the roof.** The roof was flat, with a wall around it about four feet high. People often slept on the roof at night, when the weather permitted. [Moses commanded this type of construction (*Deut. 22:8*).]

10. **He had a vision.** Compare *2 Cor. 12:2*; *Rev. 1:10*.

11-15. **He saw heaven opened.** The meaning of this vision is clear. Peter is hungry. He sees a sheet lowered down, containing all kinds of animals, reptiles, and wild birds. Many of these are ritually "unclean" and the Law forbids any to eat them. The voice says: "Get up, Peter; kill and eat!" Peter answers: "I have never eaten anything considered defiled or unclean." In this we can see much of the same stubbornness that Peter showed in the Gospels. The voice speaks again and says that God has declared these things clean. This can only mean that the commands of the Law about "clean" and "unclean" foods have been canceled! Peter, as a Jew, would not associate with Gentiles (*see note on John 4:9*). The purpose of the vision is to show Peter that God intends him to go with the messengers. *See Eph. 2:13-18* and notes.

¹⁵The voice spoke to him again, "Do not consider anything unclean that God has declared clean." ¹⁶This happened three times; and then the thing was taken back up into heaven.

¹⁷Peter was wondering about the meaning of this vision that he had seen. In the meantime the men sent by Cornelius had learned where Simon's house was, and were now standing in front of the gate. ¹⁸They called out and asked, "Is there a guest here by the name of Simon Peter?"

¹⁹Peter was still trying to understand what the vision meant, when the Spirit said, "Listen! Three men are here looking for you. ²⁰So get yourself ready and go down, and do not hesitate to go with them, because I have sent them." ²¹So Peter went down and said to the men, "I am the man you are looking for. Why have you come?"

²²"Captain Cornelius sent us," they answered. "He is a good man who worships God and is highly respected by all the Jewish people. He was told by one of God's angels to invite you to his house, so that he could hear what you have to say." ²³Peter invited the men in and had them spend the night there.

The next day he got ready and went with them; and some of the brothers from Joppa went along with him. ²⁴The following day he arrived in Caesarea, where Cornelius was waiting for him, together with relatives and close friends that

anything impure or unclean."

The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. They ¹⁸called out asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there.

While Peter was still ¹⁹thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. So get up and ²⁰go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

Peter went down and said ²¹to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?"

The men replied, "We ²²have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." Then Peter invited the men ²³into the house to be his guests.

Peter at Cornelius' House

The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went along. The following ²⁴day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting

16. This happened three times. The voice spoke three times.

17-23. Peter was wondering. He is trying to understand the Lord's message to him. And do not hesitate to go with them. Peter's "Jewish attitude" would have told him not to go (compare Gal. 2:11-14). And some of the brothers. See Acts 11:12.

24. The following day. Parts of two days went into the trip, which was about thirty miles [probably walking]. Cornelius was waiting for him. The religious attitude of this man is shown by the crowd he has called together.

he had invited. ²⁵As Peter was about to go in, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet and bowed down before him. ²⁶But Peter made him rise. "Stand up," he said, "because I myself am only a man." ²⁷Peter kept on talking to Cornelius as he went into the house, where he found many people gathered. ²⁸He said to them, "You yourselves know very well that a Jew is not allowed by his religion to visit or associate with a Gentile. But God has shown me that I must not consider any man unclean or defiled. ²⁹And so when you sent for me I came without any objection. I ask you, then, why did you send for me?"

³⁰Cornelius said, "It was about this time three days ago that I was praying in my house at three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly a man dressed in shining clothes stood in front of me ³¹and said: 'Cornelius! God has heard your prayer, and has remembered your works of charity. ³²Send someone to Joppa to call for a man whose full name is Simon Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the leatherworker, who lives by the sea.' ³³And so I sent for you at once, and you have been good enough to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God, waiting to hear anything that the Lord has ordered you to say."

Peter's Speech

³⁴Peter began to speak: "I now realize that it is true that God treats all men on the same basis.

them and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"

Cornelius answered: ³⁰ "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me and ³¹ said, 'Cornelius, God had heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. he is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' So I sent for you ³² immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

Then Peter began to ³⁴ speak:

"I now realize how true it is that God does not show

25-26. **Cornelius met him.** Note that when Cornelius "worships" Peter, he is made to *rise*. No man is to be worshiped, and, not even an angel (*Rev. 22:8-9*). Only God is to be worshiped! [Christ is God in human form.]

27-29. **That a Jew is not allowed.** Jewish tradition was much more restrictive than the Law (*Gal. 2:12*). **But God has shown me.** This is the meaning of Peter's vision. Barriers of race, sex, and social status disappear in Christ (*Gal. 3:28-29*).

30-33. **Now we are all here.** Cornelius tells Peter the vision he had, and eagerly waits to hear the message God will give him through Peter. This is the first Gentile audience to hear the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free!

34-35. **Peter began to speak.** The same preacher who announced God's terms for salvation to the Jews on Pentecost, now announces them to the Gentiles for the first time. **That God treats all men on the same basis.** God loves both Jew and Gentile. Compare *John 3:16-17* and notes.

³⁵Whoever fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him, no matter what race he belongs to. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the Good News of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all men. ³⁷You know of the great event that took place throughout all the land of Israel, beginning in Galilee, after the baptism that John preached. ³⁸You know about Jesus of Nazareth, how God poured out on him the Holy Spirit and power. He went everywhere, doing good and healing all who were under the power of the Devil, because God was with him. ³⁹We are witnesses of all that he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ⁴⁰But God raised him from death on the third day, and caused him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people, but only to us who are the witnesses that God had already chosen. We ate and drank with him after he rose from death. ⁴²And he commanded us to preach the gospel to the people, and to testify that he is the one whom God has appointed judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets spoke about him, saying that everyone who believes in him will have his sins forgiven through the power of his name."

favoritism but accepts men 35
from every nation who fear
him and do what is right.
This is the message God sent 36
to the people of Israel, tell-
ing the good news of peace
through Jesus Christ, who is
Lord of all. You know what 37
has happened throughout
Judea, beginning in Galilee
after the baptism that John
preached—how God anoint- 38
ed Jesus of Nazareth with
the Holy Spirit and power,
and how he went around do-
ing good and healing all who
were under the power of the
devil, because God was with
him.

"We are witnesses of 39
everything he did in the
country of the Jews and in
Jerusalem. They killed him
by hanging him on a tree,
but God raised him from the 40
dead on the third day and
caused him to be seen. He 41
was not seen by all the
people, but by witnesses
whom God had already
chosen—by us who ate and
drank with him after he rose
from the dead. He com- 42
manded us to preach to the
people and to testify that he
is the one whom God ap-
pointed as judge of the living
and the dead. All the proph- 43
ets testify about him that

36-38. **You know the message.** Cornelius and his friends would know the personal history of Jesus of Nazareth, and even the "Good News of peace" which Christ had proclaimed to the Jews. Luke gives us only a short summary of what Peter said. **After the baptism that John preached.** Jesus began his public ministry after being baptized by John. **How God poured out on him.** Christ received the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit at his baptism (*John 1:33-34; 3:34*). [Remember: the Logos in taking human form took human limitations as well (*Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:9*).]

39-41. **We are witnesses.** They saw *first hand* his life and power, and saw him after he had raised from death. **Not to all the people.** The reason why he did not show himself to all the unbelievers after his resurrection, may be the principle he taught in *Matt. 7:6*. He was seen by more than just the apostles (*I Cor. 15:6*), and might have been seen by some who were favorable to him, although not his followers (see notes on *Matt. 27:52-53; Acts 1:3*).

42. **And he commanded us to preach the gospel.** [Gospel means Good News.] Compare *Luke 24:44-49*.

43. **All the prophets spoke about him.** The Old Testament was full of "Christ." **Through the power of his name.** Name = authority (compare note on *Acts 2:38*). (1) Sins are forgiven in/by his name; (2) to those who believe in him; (3) whoever believes, Jew or Gentile, can reach out through faith to grasp the sacrifice of Christ to receive all its benefits including forgiveness of sins. [Plus *sonship*; eternal life; union with God; etc.]

The Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who were listening to the message. ⁴⁵The Jewish believers who had come from Joppa with Peter were amazed that God had poured out his gift of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶For they heard them speaking in strange tongues and praising God's greatness. Peter spoke up, ⁴⁷"These people have received the Holy Spirit, just as we also did. Can anyone, then, stop them from begin baptized with water?" ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for a few days.

Peter's Report to the Church at Jerusalem

11 The apostles and the brothers throughout all of Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ²When Peter went up to Jerusalem, those who were in favor of

everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Peter Explains His Actions

11 The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criti-

44. **On all those who were listening.** All those mentioned in verses 2 & 24. Peter later identifies this as: "Just as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). This answers the question about whether the 120 or only the apostles received the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" at Pentecost. *Lipscomb* says: "Here the Spirit falls on the house [household] of Cornelius when Peter begins to speak, not to make them Christians, but to prove that God accepted them, that Peter and his six Jewish brethren who came with him might be encouraged to baptize them [into Christ]. It was a proof that God was willing to receive them. The miraculous gift of [given by] the Holy Spirit was never a part of the converting process, but was to attest that the work was of God, and to guide those who received this Spirit in teaching all truth of God to the people." [additions mine, RDI]

45. **The Jewish believers.** They were amazed that God would do this to Gentiles, whom they thought of as being "cut off from God." This is the only time mentioned in the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit coming down on those who had not been baptized. Compare Acts 19:1-7 and notes. This is a unique event, for the purpose of proving to the Jews that God did accept the Gentiles.

47. **From being baptized with water?** Baptism with "water and the Spirit" (John 3:5 and note) was still necessary to initiate Cornelius and the others into union with Christ. Compare Titus 3:4-5; Acts 22:16; Col. 2:11-12.

48. **So he ordered them to be baptized.** Cornelius was such a good man that he would be received in many religious groups unbaptized! Yet to be part of the church of Christ, he must comply with Peter's command to be buried in the liquid grave.

1-2. **When Peter went up to Jerusalem.** The Jewish Christians who made up the "group" at Jerusalem [who still "kept" the Tradition (Acts 21:20)] and the Samaritan Christians were all circumcised. Cornelius and the other Christians at Caesarea were the first uncircumcised Christians. Some thought Gentiles had to convert to Judaism and be circumcised in addition to obeying Christ. Compare Acts 15.

circumcising Gentiles criticized him, ³“You were a guest in the home of uncircumcised Gentiles, and you even ate with them!” ⁴“So Peter gave them a full account of what had happened, from the very beginning:

⁵“I was praying in the city of Joppa, and I had a vision. I saw something coming down that looked like a large sheet being lowered by its four corners from heaven, and it stopped next to me. ⁶I looked closely inside and saw animals, beasts, reptiles, and wild birds. ⁷Then I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat!’ ⁸But I said, ‘Certainly not, Lord! No defiled or unclean food has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹The voice spoke again from heaven, ‘Do not consider anything unclean that God as declared clean.’ ¹⁰This happened three times, and finally the whole thing was drawn back up into heaven. ¹¹At that very moment three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea arrived at the house where I was staying. ¹²The Spirit told me to go with them without hesitation. These six brothers from Joppa also went with me to Caesarea, and we all went into the house of Cornelius. ¹³He told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house who said to him, ‘Send someone to Joppa to call for a man whose full name is Simon Peter. ¹⁴He will speak words to you by which you

criticized him and said, “You ³ went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

Peter began and explained everything to them ⁴ precisely as it had happened:

“I was in the city of Joppa ⁵ praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air. Then I ⁶ heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’ ⁷

“I replied, ‘Surely not, ⁸ Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’

“The voice spoke from ⁹ heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’ This happened three times, ¹⁰ and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.

“Right then three men ¹¹ who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s ¹² house. He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is ¹³ called Peter. He will bring 14 you a message through

3. In the home of uncircumcised Gentiles. This violated their Tradition! Notice that in the case of Peter himself, it took: (1) the vision; (2) God’s command; (3) Cornelius’ request; (4) the “coming down” of the Holy Spirit - to convince him that God did intend the Gentiles to come into the Kingdom. No wonder then, that Peter was criticized for what he had done.

4-17. So Peter gave them a full account. To show that he had done what God has authorized him to do. Compare notes on chapter 10. 12. These six brothers from Joppa. Peter had taken them with him to Jerusalem to be “witnesses” of all that had happened. This shows Peter expected to be criticized. 14. He will speak words to you. Cornelius could not have faith until he heard the message about Christ and believed it (Rom. 10:17). Will be saved. (1) Cornelius, a religious man, was not yet saved. (2) God’s grace brought the Good News of Jesus Christ to him through a human agent, Peter. (3) This is the first mention of a family being baptized. Were there any young children included? Note: relatives and close friends (Acts 10:24); waiting to hear (Acts 10:33); the Holy Spirit came down on all those who

and all your family will be saved.' ¹⁵And when I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came down on them just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶Then I remembered what the Lord had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷It is clear that God gave those Gentiles the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; who was I, then, to try to stop God!"

¹⁸When they heard this, they stopped their criticism and praised God, saying, "Then God has given to the Gentiles also the opportunity to repent and live!"

The Church at Antioch

¹⁹The believers were scattered by the persecution which took place when Stephen was killed. Some of them went as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message to Jews only. ²⁰But some of the believers, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and proclaimed the message to Gentiles also, telling them the Good News about the Lord Jesus. ²¹The Lord's power was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

which you and all your household will be saved.'

"Just as I was starting to ¹⁵ speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I ¹⁶ remembered what the Lord had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them ¹⁷ the same gift as he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God!"

When they heard this, ¹⁸ they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has even granted the Gentiles repentance unto life."

The Church in Antioch

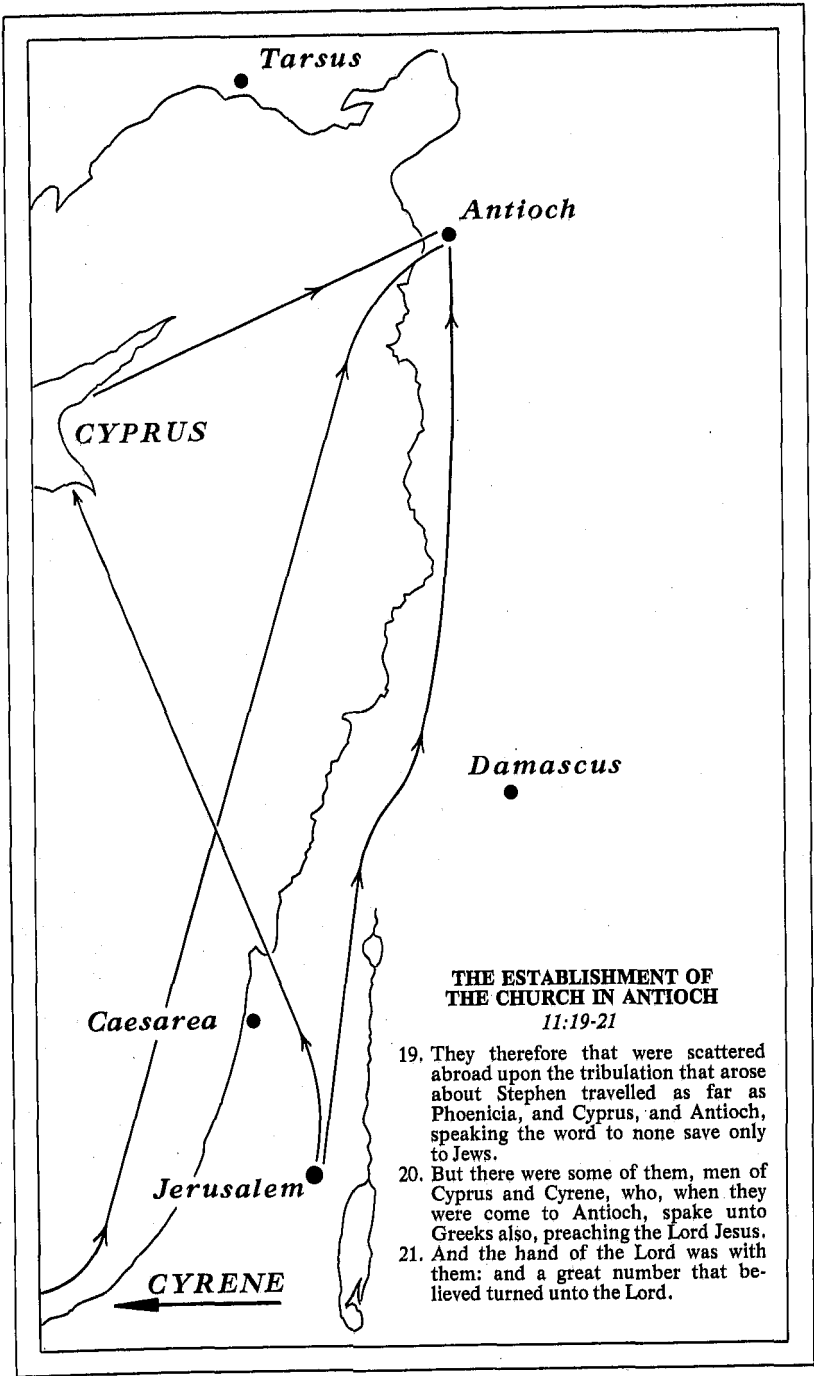
Now those who had been ¹⁹ scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. Some of them, however ²⁰ men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with ²¹ them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

were listening (*Acts 10:44*); and these same ones were baptized into Christ (*Acts 10:47-48*). ¹⁵ **Just as on us at the beginning.** Peter refers back to the birth-day of the church. ¹⁶ **But you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.** *Acts 1:5* and note. Peter calls this: "baptism with the Holy Spirit." Every Christian has the "Holy Spirit as a gift," along with the *fruits* of this gift (*Gal. 5:22-23*). The gifts of the Spirit (baptism with the Holy Spirit) were unusual and not every Christian had them. *See notes on Acts 8:15-17*. ¹⁷ **Who was I, then?** If God accepted Gentiles, as he showed Peter that he did, how could Peter try to stop what God was doing???

¹⁸ **When they heard this.** "Facts are stubborn things." Notice they are willing to stop their criticism and praise God!

¹⁹ **The believers were scattered.** *Acts 8:4-5*. **Phoenicia.** A long, fertile area between the mountains of Lebanon and the sea. Tyre and Sidon were cities of this area. **Cyprus.** A large island in the Mediterranean Sea. **Antioch.** Capital of the entire province of Syria, including Palestine. Only Rome and Alexandria were more important cities. **To Jews only.** They were scattered before they knew that God would save Gentiles as well.

²⁰⁻²¹ **Cyrene.** A Greek city in North Africa, which had a large Jewish population. **Proclaimed the message to Gentiles also.** ["Greek" often means "Gentile."] These *preachers* were Jews who spoke the Greek language. Led by the Spirit, they preached the Good News to these Gentiles (*see notes on Acts 10:2*); and a great number of them turned to the Lord (*compare note on Acts 3:19-20*).



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH

11:19-21

- 19. They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews.
- 20. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.
- 21. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.

²²The news about this reached the church in Jerusalem, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

²³When he arrived and saw how God had blessed the people, he was glad and urged them all to be faithful and true to the Lord with all their hearts.

²⁴Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Many people were brought to the Lord.

²⁵Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul. ²⁶When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year the two met with the people of the church and taught a large group. It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.

²⁷About the time some prophets went down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸One of them, named Agabus, stood up and by the power of the Spirit predicted that a great famine was about to come over all the earth. (It came when

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(This happened during the

22-24. So they sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a "Greek-speaking Jew" (Acts 4:36), who was the friend of another "Greek-speaking Jew" named Paul (Acts 9:27). He was sent to evaluate what was happening there. And saw how God had blessed the people. This is the first "group" [messianic community, church] outside the borders of Palestine. It soon became the "center of missions" to fill the Gentile world with the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free!!!

25-26. To look for Saul. Compare note on Acts 9:30. Paul is thought to have come to Antioch in 43 A.D. [by the corrected calendar]. An "apostle" was needed at Antioch to "pass on" spiritual gifts and bring "instant maturity" to the community of believers there. Compare notes on 1 Cor. 12:27-31. First called Christians. The Jews called them "Nazarenes," and "Galileans." They called themselves "disciples," "brothers" [which includes sisters], "God's people" [ἅγιος: saint, chosen, holy (sanctified)]. What spiritual power must these disciples have had, to be called "Christians!" Christian means "one who belongs to Christ." See also Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16.

27-28. About that time some prophets. See note on Acts 2:17. Named Agabus. We meet him again in Acts 21:10. A great famine. Eusebius writes: "In his reign there was a famine that prevailed over the whole world; an event, indeed, which has been handed down by historians very far from our doctrine; and by which the prediction of the prophet Agabus, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, respecting the impending famine over the whole world, received its fulfillment." This would be about 46 A.D., and is probably not the famine mentioned by Josephus [or the famine may have started in Palestine about 44 A.D. and lasted for three or four years].

Claudius was Emperor.) ²⁹The disciples decided that each of them would send as much as he could to help their brothers who lived in Judea. ³⁰They did this, then, and sent the money to the church elders by Barnabas and Saul.

More Persecution

12 About this time King Herod began to persecute some members of the church. ²He had James, the brother of John, put to death by the sword. ³When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he went ahead and had Peter arrested. (This happened during the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.) ⁴After his arrest Peter was put in jail, where he was handed over to be guarded by four groups of four soldiers each. Herod planned to put him on trial in public after Passover. ⁵So Peter was kept in jail, but the people of the church were praying earnestly to God for him.

reign of Claudius.) The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, ³⁰ sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

Peter's Miraculous Escape from Prison

12 It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. ² When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. ³ This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. ⁴ Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

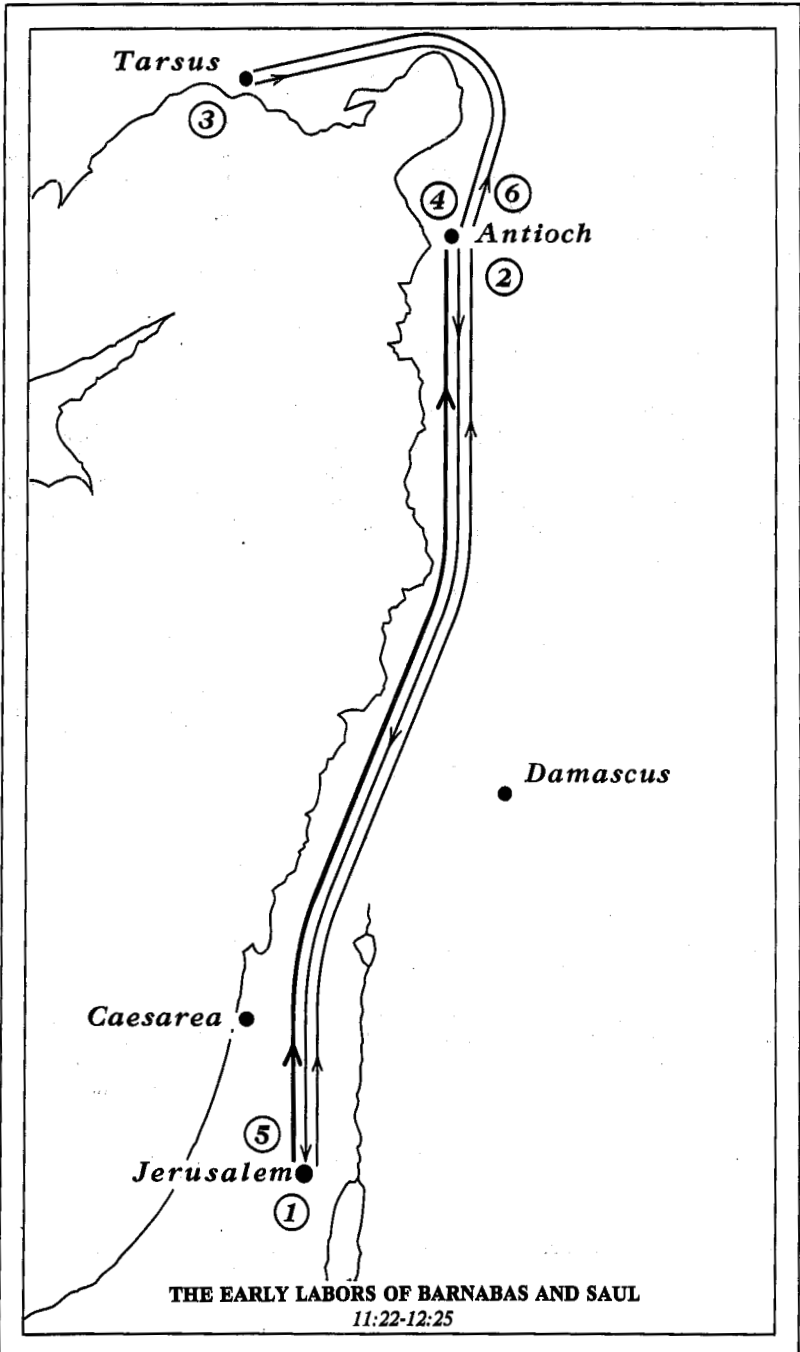
29-30. To help their brothers who lived in Judea. This marks the beginning of a new "spirit" which was to radically change the Gentile world! The *Gentiles* of Antioch "reach out in love" to their *Jewish* brothers in Judea!

1. **King Herod, Herod Agrippa.** See note on *Matt. 2:1*. Herod ruled all of Palestine. Even though he lived a wicked life, he was very strict in following Jewish ritual. He was hostile to Christianity, because he saw it competing with Judaism.

2. **James, the brother of John.** One of the three apostles who had formed the "inner circle" with Jesus. James was *beheaded*. [James the Lord's brother appears in Acts after this (*see also Gal. 1:19*). He is the one who wrote the book of James.]

3-4. **When he saw that this pleased the Jews.** This was the time for Passover, and a large number of Jews would be in Jerusalem for the Feast. He was looking for honor and popularity from them, and probably did not think too much about pleasing God.

5. **But the people of the church.** The *church* is **PEOPLE**, and they joined together in prayer, asking God to help Peter in this problem. Prayer is much more powerful than we sometimes think. Compare *James 5:16-18; Rev. 8:3-4; Rom. 8:26*.



THE EARLY LABORS OF BARNABAS AND SAUL
11:22-12:25

THE EARLY LABORS OF BARNABAS AND SAUL

11:22—12:25

1. IN JERUSALEM. 11:22
Report of the conversion of the Greeks reaches Jerusalem. They send Barnabas. 22
2. AT ANTIOCH. 11:23, 24
The rejoicing of Barnabas and his efforts in Antioch, 23, 24
3. AT TARSUS. 11:25, 26a
Barnabas to Tarsus to find Saul to help. 25, 26a
4. IN ANTIOCH. 11:26b-30
 - a. The labors of Barnabas and Saul for a year. The new name. 26b
 - b. Prophets from Jerusalem. The prophesy of Agabus. 27, 28
 - c. The free will offering taken and sent. 29, 30
5. AT JERUSALEM. 12:1-24
 - a. Persecution of Herod. James beheaded. Peter imprisoned. 1-5
 - b. The miraculous release. 6-11
 - c. At the house of Mary. 12-17
 - d. The death of the soldiers. 18, 19a
 - e. Herod's speech and death at Caesarea. 19b-23
 - f. The growth of the word. 24
6. BACK TO ANTIOCH. 12:25
Barnabas and Saul return taking with them John Mark. 25

Peter Set Free from Prison

⁶The night before Herod was going to bring him out to the people, Peter was sleeping between two guards. He was tied with two chains, and there were guards on duty at the prison gate. ⁷Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood there, and a light shone in the cell. The angel shook Peter by the shoulder, woke him up, and said, "Hurry! Get up!" At once the chains fell off Peter's hands. ⁸Then the angel said, "Tighten your belt and tie on your sandals." Peter did so, and the angel said, "Put your cloak around you and come with me." ⁹Peter followed him out of the prison. He did not know, however, if what the angel was doing was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰They passed by the first guard station, and then the second, and came at last to the iron gate that opens into the city. The gate opened for them by itself, and they went out. They walked down a street, and suddenly the angel left Peter.

¹¹Then Peter realized what had happened to him, and said, "Now I know that it is really true! The Lord sent his angel, and rescued me from Herod's power and from all the things the Jewish people expected to do."

¹²Aware of his situation, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Many people

The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating."

When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered

6. **The night before.** Putting a man to death on Passover week, would have been a *defiling* of those holy days. Peter was sleeping between two guards. He was chained to each of them, while the other two stood guard. This was the Roman way to maintain security.

7-8. **Suddenly an angel of the Lord.** This is God's answer to the prayer of his people. Notice Peter has time to get dressed.

9-11. **He thought he was seeing a vision.** That is, he thought he was dreaming. **The gate opened for them by itself.** The outer gate of the prison. **Now I know.** After the angel leaves him outside on the street, he decides it is real.

12. **He went to the home of Mary.** She is the mother of John Mark [who is the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10).] Many people had gathered there and were praying for the release of Peter.

had gathered there and were praying. ¹³Peter knocked at the outside door, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer it. ¹⁴She recognized Peter's voice and was so happy that she ran back in without opening the door, and announced that Peter was standing outside. ¹⁵"You are crazy!" they told her. But she insisted that it was true. So they answered, "It is his angel."

¹⁶Meanwhile, Peter kept on knocking. They opened the door at last and when they saw him they were amazed. ¹⁷He motioned with his hand for them to be quiet, and explained to them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell this to James and the rest of the brothers," he said; then he left and went somewhere else.

¹⁸When morning came, there was a tremendous confusion among the guards; what had happened to Peter? ¹⁹Herod gave orders to search for him, but they could not find him. So he had the guards questioned and ordered them to be put to death.

After this Herod went down from Judea and spent some time in Caesarea.

and were praying. Peter ¹³ knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!"

"You're out of your ¹⁵ mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel."

But Peter kept on knock- ¹⁶ ing, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. Peter motioned for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the brothers about this," he said, and then he left for another place.

In the morning, there was ¹⁸ a great commotion among the soldiers. "What could have happened to Peter?" they asked. After Herod had ¹⁹ a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed.

13-17. **A servant girl named Rhoda.** This was at night, and they were Christians. The one at the door could be either friend or enemy, as far as they knew. **She recognized Peter's voice.** She is so happy she runs back without opening the door! **It is his angel.** The Jews believed everyone had a personal angel to guard him, and they thought this angel had assumed Peter's voice. [Luke does not tell us whether there is such a thing as a "guardian angel."] **They opened the door at last.** Peter has kept on knocking until they do. They are amazed to see him. **Tell this to James.** Not the apostle, but the Lord's brother, who has become an important leader in the church at Jerusalem. [James is mentioned in *Acts 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12.*]

18-19. **When morning came.** The soldiers guarding Peter were probably asleep [at least the two chained to him], and did not find him missing until they woke up. **Herod gave orders to search for him.** Herod is angry, he has the guards questioned, and orders them to be put to death. **And spent some time in Caesarea.** Herod lived there part of the time, but usually lived in Jerusalem. *Josephus* says he went at this time to conduct the Games in honor of Emperor Claudius.

The Death of Herod

²⁰Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; so they went in a group to see Herod. First they won Blastus over to their side; he was in charge of the palace. Then they went to Herod and asked him for peace, because their country got its food supplies from the king's country.

²¹On a chosen day Herod put on his royal robes, sat on his throne, and made a speech to the people. ²²"It isn't a man speaking, but a god!" they shouted. ²³At once the angel of the Lord struck Herod down, because he did not give honor to God. He was eaten by worms and died.

²⁴The word of God continued to spread and grow.

²⁵Barnabas and Saul finished their mission and returned from Jerusalem, taking John Mark with them.

Herod's Death

Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while. He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Having secured the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king's country for their food supply.

On the appointed day ²¹ Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted, ²² "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." Immediately, ²³ because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

But the word of God ²⁴ continued to increase and spread.

When Barnabas and Saul ²⁵ had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.

20. **Herod was very angry.** We do not know why. **First they won Blastus.** The people from Tyre and Sidon probably bribed this man, who was in charge of the palace, and so able to influence Herod.

21. **On a chosen day.** This implies it was some special occasion. Josephus the Jewish historian tells about all this.

22. **But a god.** This is the second day of the Games. Herod is dressed in robes of silver cloth, and he stands so the sun will flash and sparkle from his robes. It may be that he announced peace with Tyre and Sidon, and the group from there led the crowd in shouting that he was a god.

23. **Struck Herod down.** *Josephus* says he lived five days in great agony. This agrees with what Luke tells us.

24. **Continued to spread.** The excitement of all that was happening helped to make people listen. Note how the word of God continued to spread so rapidly among people who were no more spiritual than people are today.

25. **Finished their mission.** *Acts 11:30* tells what this mission was. **Taking John Mark with them.** He will go with Paul and Barnabas on their next tour of missions.

Barnabas and Saul Chosen and Sent

13 In the church at Antioch there were some prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon (called the Black), Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (who had been brought up with Governor Herod), and Saul. ²While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said to them, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul, to do the work to which I have called them."

³They fasted and prayed, placed their hands on them, and sent them off.

In Cyprus

⁴Barnabas and Saul, then having been sent by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to the island of Cyprus. ⁵When they arrived at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. They had John Mark with them to help in the work.

Barnabas and Saul Sent Off

13 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

On Cyprus

The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

1. **In the church at Antioch.** See notes on Antioch in *Acts 11:19-26*. This was the "parent congregation" of the Gentile Christians. Antioch was the third most important city in the world at that time. *Chrysostom* writes that in his day (fourth century) Antioch had a population of 200,000, over half of whom were Christians, and that they supported 3,000 helpless poor people out of the church treasury. **Prophets and teachers.** Prophets had supernatural knowledge from the Holy Spirit. Teachers did not. See *Eph. 4:11* and note. **Barnabas.** See *Acts 4:36*. **Simon.** Some identify him with Simon from Cyrene (*Matt. 27:32*), but nothing is known of him. **Lucius.** Not the writer of Acts, but possibly one of the men in *Acts 11:20* who planted the church here, perhaps the Lucius of *Rom. 16:21*. **Manaen.** The Latin Vulgate calls him "foster-brother" to Herod [Antipas]. **And Saul.** Paul, the apostle.

2. **While they were serving the Lord and fasting.** Fasting and prayer often go together, and these men must have been asking God to show them how they could do more to spread the Good News of Christ. **The Holy Spirit said to them.** He spoke through one of the prophets. Compare *Acts 20:23; 21: 10-11*. **Set apart for me.** Both Barnabas and Paul had been chosen by God to preach to the Gentiles. This, then, is a request to officially identify them.

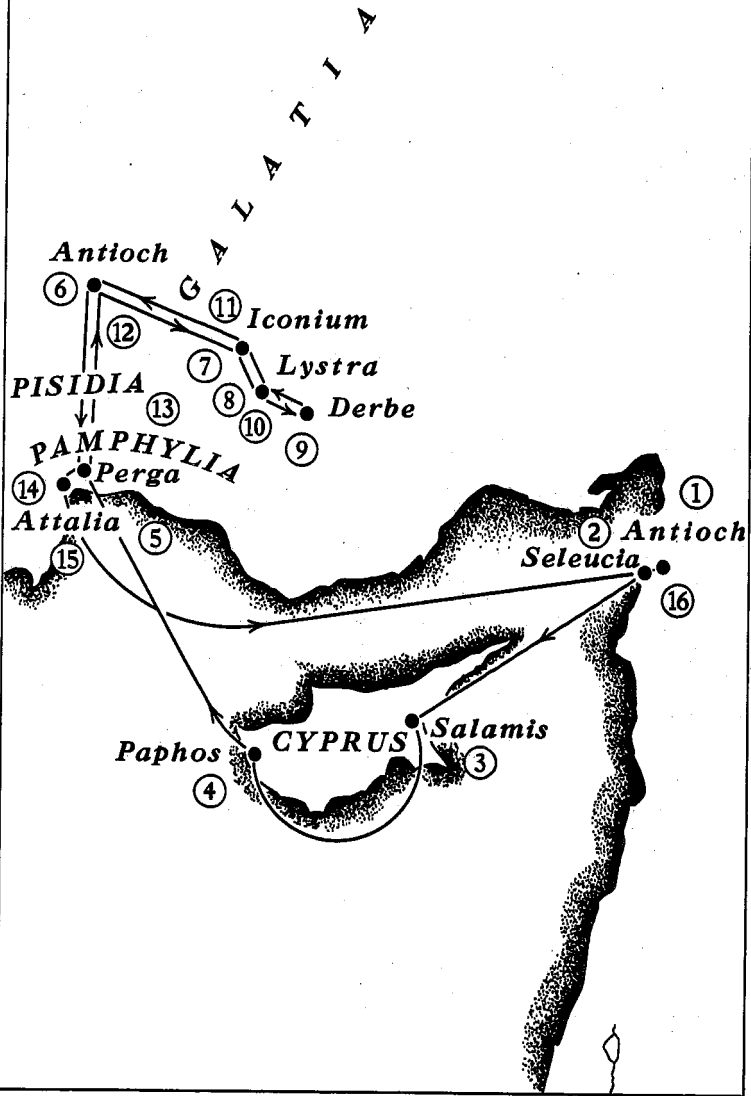
3. **And sent them off.** Paul was already an apostle. This simple ceremony identifies he and Barnabas as men who have been chosen for a special mission. These are the first two men to be sent on a tour of missions by a congregation of Gentile Christians. We see them return after their tour, to report their results, in *Acts 14:27*.

4. **Went down to Seleucia.** This was the seaport of Antioch, about sixteen miles away. Cyprus was the old home of Barnabas (*Acts 4:36*). It had a large Jewish population.

5. **Salamis.** On the eastern side of Cyprus. This would be about fifty miles distant from Seleucia, and would take about a day to travel. **In the Jewish synagogues.** The fact there was more than one, shows the size of the Jewish population. The Gospel had already been planted on Cyprus (*Acts 11:19-20*). **They had John Mark.** *Johnson* thinks John Mark probably did most of the work of baptizing people into Christ (compare *1 Cor. 1:14-17*). John Mark was related to Barnabas (*Col. 4:10*).

THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

13:1-14:28



THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

13:1—14:28

1. AT ANTIOCH. 13:1-3
 - a. The leaders of the church. 1
 - b. The directions of the Holy Spirit. 2
 - c. Barnabas and Saul set aside for their work. 3
2. AT SELEUCIA. 13:4
The seaport for Antioch from where they sailed to Cyprus. 4
3. IN SALAMIS. 13:5
 - a. Preached in synagogues. 5a
 - b. Had John Mark as attendant. 5b
4. AT PAPHOS. 13:6-12
 - a. Through the whole island. 6a
 - b. Elymas and his opposition. 6b-8
 - c. The rebuke and miracle of Paul. 10, 11
 - d. The results of this incident on the proconsul. 12
5. IN PERGA. 13:13
Where John Mark left for Jerusalem. 13
6. IN ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA. 13:14-52
 - a. In the synagogue, the first sermon of Paul. 14-41
 - b. The desire to hear more the next sabbath. 42
 - c. The interest of the Jews and devout proselytes. 43
 - d. Great gathering the next sabbath. Contradiction of the Jews. 44, 45
 - e. Turn to the Gentiles with good results. 46-48
 - f. The spread of the word. 49
 - g. The persecution and leaving the city. 50, 51
7. AT ICONIUM. 14:1-6a
 - a. In the synagogue the conversion of many Jews and Greeks. 1
 - b. The opposition of the Jews. 2
 - c. Stay some time in spite of opposition. God blesses. 3
 - d. The city divided in opinion. 4
 - e. Plot laid for stoning, so they leave. 5, 6a
8. IN LYSTRA. 14:6b-20
 - a. General statement of the work. 6b-7
 - b. The healing of the lame man. 8-10
 - c. The multitudes worship them as gods. 11-13
 - d. The objection of Paul and Barnabas. 14-18
 - e. Opposition from Jews from Antioch and Iconium. Paul stoned. 19
 - f. He is raised and returns to the city. 20
 - g. Timothy, his mother and grandmother converted here. Cf. 16:1; 1 Tim. 1:5
9. AT DERBE. 14:21a
Preached here. Many converted. 21a
10. IN LYSTRA. 14:22, 23
Confirmed the souls of the disciples and appointed elders. 22, 23
11. AT ICONIUM. 14:22, 23
Same as above. 22, 23
12. IN ANTIOCH. 14:22, 23
Same as above. 22, 23
13. THROUGH THE PROVINCES OF PISIDIA AND PAMPHYLIA. 14:24
14. AT PERGA. 14:25a
The word spoken. 25a
15. AT ATTALIA. 14:25b
They boarded the ship. 25b
16. IN ANTIOCH. 14:26-28
 - a. The gathering of the church to hear all that God had done. 26, 27
 - b. They tarry here some time. 28

⁶They went all the way across the island to Paphos, where they met a certain magician named Bar-Jesus, a Jew who claimed to be a prophet. ⁷He was a friend of the Governor of the island, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. The Governor called Barnabas and Saul before him because he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸But they were opposed by the magician Elymas (this is his name in Greek); he tried to turn the Governor away from the faith. ⁹Then Saul—also known as Paul—was filled with the Holy Spirit; he looked straight at the magician ¹⁰and said, “You son of the Devil! You are the enemy of everything that is good; you are full of all kinds of evil tricks, and you always keep trying to turn the Lord’s truths into lies! ¹¹The Lord’s hand will come down on you now; you will be blind, and will not see the light of day for a time.”

At once Elymas felt a black mist cover his eyes, and he walked around trying to find someone to lead him by the hand. ¹²The Governor believed when he saw what had happened; he was greatly amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, “You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun.”

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

6. **Across the island to Paphos.** The island is about 130 miles long by 50 miles wide. Salamis is at the east end, and Paphos at the west end. Paphos was the capital, and famous for the worship of Venus. **A certain magician named Bar-Jesus.** Jewish law prohibited witchcraft and magic of this sort (*Deut. 18:9-22*), but at this time, Jewish magicians had great influence over the people including government officials.

7. **He was a friend of the Governor.** The government officials of this era asked advice from magicians and fortune-tellers as a normal practice. Since *Jewish* magicians had the greatest influence at this time, Sergius Paulus is interested in *two Jews* who claim to have a new revelation from God.

8. **But they were opposed.** This man could see Christianity in competition with him. He had used his magic to impress people and make himself rich. **Elymas.** It was usual for a Jew to also have a Gentile name. This man calls himself “Elymas,” which means “Wise Man.”

9. **Then Saul - also known as Paul.** From this point on, we know him by his Greek name. He becomes the leader, and Barnabas fades into the background. **Was filled with the Holy Spirit.** This is to show us that what he does now is directed by the Holy Spirit himself.

10-12. **You son of the Devil!** This is the only recorded miracle by an apostle, done for the purpose of injury. Yet this had to be done to show the power of Christ superior to the power of this man. Sergius Paulus and the others were deceived by the tricks of Elymas. Denouncing him and striking him with blindness settled the question of who spoke the truth. Compare Elijah and the priests of Baal. **The Governor believed.** This implies he became a Christian.

In Antioch of Pisidia

¹³Paul and his companions sailed from Paphos and came to Perga, in Pamphylia; but John Mark left them there and went back to Jerusalem. ¹⁴They went on from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia; and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. ¹⁵After the reading from the Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets, the officials of the synagogue sent them a message: "Brothers, we want you to speak to the people if you have a message of encouragement for them." ¹⁶Paul stood up, motioned with his hand, and began to speak:

"Fellow Israelites and all Gentiles here who worship God: hear me! ¹⁷The God of this people of Israel chose our ancestors, and made the people a great nation during the time they lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt. God brought them out of Egypt by his great power, ¹⁸and for forty years he endured them in the desert. ¹⁹He destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan and made his people the owners of the

In Pisidian Antioch

From Paphos, Paul and ¹³his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem. From Perga they ¹⁴went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the ¹⁵Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak."

Standing up, Paul ¹⁶motioned with his hand and said:

"Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me! The God of the ¹⁷people of Israel chose our fathers and made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt. With mighty power he led them out of that country and endured their ¹⁸conduct forty years in the desert. He overthrew seven ¹⁹nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as

13. **Paul and his companions.** Perga is northwest from Cyprus. **But John Mark left them.** We do not know why. It could have been the dangers he could see ahead in their work; or it could have been his Jewish sense of pride was hurt by preaching to the Gentiles. *Acts 15:38-39* shows us it was a serious matter. But it was "worked out" (*Col. 4:10 and note*).

14. **And came to Antioch of Pisidia.** There were a number of cities named Antioch. This one was almost directly north of Perga, and was the capital of the province of Pisidia. **They went into the synagogue.** Whenever there was a synagogue in a city, they went there first with the Good News of Christ.

15. **After the reading.** Reading the Bible out loud to the people was very important, since copies were scarce. [They had to be copied by hand.] It was usual for the leaders of the synagogue to invite visiting Jewish brothers to speak to the group. Some think the synagogues followed a "uniform lesson series," and that since Paul quotes from *Deut. 1:31* and *Isa. 1:2* [both from the Septuagint], it proves that this was the forty-fourth Sabbath of the Jewish year [sometime in July or August].

16. **Paul stood up.** In Judea, the speakers remained seated. Among the Greek-speaking Jews, they stood up to speak to the group. These next verses show us how Paul preached in the Synagogues. He begins by showing the glory of Israel; then to King David, hero of all Israelites; then to David's descendant, Jesus Christ. He did this to build up a common bond with them, so they would listen when he told them about Jesus. Compare *1 Cor. 9:19-23*. **Fellow Israelites.** Those who were born Jews. **All Gentiles here.** Judaism was "missionary-minded" at this time and attracted Gentiles who learned to "fear" [reverence] God and study his word.

17-19. **Destroyed seven nations.** See *Deut. 7:1-6*.

land ²⁰for about four hundred and fifty years.

"After this he gave them judges, until the time of the prophet Samuel. ²¹And when they asked for a king, God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, from the tribe of Benjamin, to be their king for forty years. ²²After removing him, God made David their king. This is what God said about him, 'I have found that David, the son of Jesse, is the kind of man I like, a man who will do all I want him to do.' ²³It was Jesus, a descendant of David, that God made the Savior of the people of Israel, as he had promised. ²⁴Before Jesus began his work, John preached to all the people of Israel that they should turn from their sins and be baptized. ²⁵And as John was about to finish his mission, he said to the people, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the one you are waiting for. But look! He is coming after me, and I am not good enough to take his sandals off his feet.'

²⁶"My brothers, descendants of Abraham, and all Gentiles here who worship God: it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent! ²⁷For the people who live in Jerusalem, and their leaders, did not know that he is the Savior, nor did they understand the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath day. Yet they made the prophets' words come true by condemning

their inheritance. All this ²⁰took about 450 years.

"After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then ²¹the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. ²²After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' From this ²³man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. ²⁴Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel. As John was completing his work, he said: 'Who do you think I am? I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.'

"Brothers, children of A- ²⁶braham, and you God fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. The people of ²⁷Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every

20. **After this he gave them judges.** Johnson thinks the 450 years is counted from the time they came out of Egypt to the time when God made David king. "After this" refers to the events in verses 17-19.

21. **God gave them Saul.** He was the first king of Israel.

22. **God made David their king.** This young shepherd became Israel's second king. Is the kind of man I like. This is implied in 1 Sam. 13:14. David was not perfect, but he was not a rebel like king Saul.

23. **As he had promised.** See God's promise in 2 Sam. 7:12; Isa. 11:1; Zech. 3:8; 6:12.

24-25. **John preached to all the people.** The Jews believed John the Baptist to have been an important prophet. See Matt. 3:1-12; John 5:32-35. John pointed to the Messiah.

26. **It is to us.** This Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free has been sent to both Jew and Gentile.

27-37. **For the people.** Paul now explains the facts of the gospel. (1) Christ was rejected by the Jewish leaders; (2) the prophecies made to come true; (3) they force Pilate to kill him, even though they could find no reason; (4) the Scriptures came true in his death; (5) God raised him from death; (6) God's

Jesus. ²⁸And even though they could find no reason to pass the death sentence on him, they asked Pilate to have him put to death. ²⁹And after they had done everything that the Scriptures say about him, they took him down from the cross and placed him in a grave. ³⁰But God raised him from the dead, ³¹and for many days he appeared to those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now witnesses for him to the people of Israel. ³²⁻³³And we are here to bring the Good News to you: what God promised our ancestors he would do, he has now done for us, who are their descendants, by raising Jesus to life. As it is written in the second Psalm,

'You are my Son;
today I have become your Father.'

³⁴And this is what God said about raising him from the dead, never again to return to decay.

'I will give you the sacred and sure blessings that I promised to David.'

³⁵As indeed he says in another passage,

'You will not allow your devoted servant to suffer decay.'

³⁶For David served God's purposes in his own time; and then he died, was buried beside his ancestors, and suffered decay. ³⁷But the one whom God raised from the dead did not suffer decay. ³⁸⁻³⁹All of you, my brothers, are to know for sure that it is through Jesus that the message about forgiveness of sins is preached to you; you are to know that everyone who believes in him is set free from all the sins from which the Law of

Sabbath. Though they found ²⁸
no proper ground for a death
sentence, they asked Pilate
to have him executed. When ²⁹
they had carried out all that
was written about him, they
took him down from the tree
and laid him in a tomb. But ³⁰
God raised him from the
dead, and for many days he ³¹
was seen by those who had
traveled with him from Gali-
lee to Jerusalem. They are
now his witnesses to our
people.

"We tell you the good ³²
news: What God promised
our fathers he has fulfilled ³³
for us, their children, by
raising Jesus from the dead.
As it is written in the second
Psalm:

'You are my Son;
today I have become
your Father.'

The fact that God raised him ³⁴
from the dead, never to de-
cay, is stated in these words:

'I will give you the holy
and sure blessings prom-
ised to David.'

So it is stated elsewhere: ³⁵

'You will not let your
Holy One undergo decay.'

"For when David had ³⁶
served God's purpose in his
own generation, he fell a-
sleep; he was buried with his
ancestors and his body de-
cayed. But the one whom ³⁷
God raised from the dead
did not undergo decay.
Therefore, my brothers, I ³⁸
want you to know that
through Jesus the forgiveness
of sins is proclaimed to you.
Through him everyone who
believes is justified from
everything from which you
could not be justified by the ³⁹

promise to the ancestors had now been fulfilled to the descendants. **You are my Son.** This is explained by *Rom. 1:4*. God "became his father" by raising Jesus to life. **Never again to return to decay.** Others had been raised from death, but Jesus was the first to conquer death. He will never die again! Compare *1 Cor. 15:20*. **You will not allow your devoted servant.** See notes on *Acts 2:27-32*.

38-41. That it is through Jesus. See *Acts 4:12* and note. **Is set free.** Compare *Gal. 5:1-6*. **The Law of Moses could not set you free.** Compare *Heb. 10:2-4*. **Take care, then.** It is fatal to reject Christ! *Verse 41*

Moses could not set you free. ⁴⁰Take care, then, so that what the prophets said may not happen to you,

⁴¹‘Look, you scoffers! Wonder and die! For the work that I am doing in your own day is something that you will not believe, even when someone explains it to you!’ ”

⁴²As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to come back the next Sabbath and tell them more about these things. ⁴³After the people had left the meeting, Paul and Barnabas were followed by many Jews and many Gentiles converted to Judaism. The apostles spoke to them and encouraged them to keep on living in the grace of God.

⁴⁴The next Sabbath day nearly everyone in the town came to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy; they spoke against what Paul was saying and insulted him. ⁴⁶But Paul and Barnabas spoke out even more boldly. “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. But since you reject it, and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we will leave you and go to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷For this is the commandment that the Lord has given us,

‘I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, to be the way of salvation for the whole world.’ ”

law of Moses. Take care that ⁴⁰ what the prophets have said does not happen to you:

‘Look, you scoffers, ⁴¹ wonder and perish, because I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe, even if someone told you.’ ”

As Paul and Barnabas ⁴² were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. When the congregation was ⁴³ dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

On the next Sabbath ⁴⁴ almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. When the Jews saw the ⁴⁵ crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.

Then Paul and Barnabas ⁴⁶ answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For this is what the ⁴⁷ Lord has commanded us:

‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

is paraphrased from *Habakkuk 1:5*. Just a few years after this, the “scoffers” did “wonder and die” in the siege of Jerusalem (see note on *Matt. 24:21*).

42-43. The people invited them. They wanted to learn more about God’s act in Christ. **Living in the grace of God.** By trusting and obeying him. They could not do this if they rejected Christ. The apostles urged everyone to “reach out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ” (compare note on *Acts 2:38*).

44. Nearly everyone in the town came. This shows us the intense interest generated by preaching the Good News.

45. When the Jews saw the crowds. A certain type of Jew (compare *Acts 6:9* and note) opposed the Good News, even with violence (see *Acts 17:5-9; 1 Thess. 2:14-16*).

46. It was necessary. The Good News was sent first to the Jews (*Acts 1:8; 3:26; Rom. 1:16*). But God had already planned to save the Gentiles. See what James says in *Acts 15:12-18* and notes.

47. For this is the commandment. See *Acts 26:16-18*. Paul quotes *Isa. 49:6* to prove what he says. Jesus is the world’s Savior! God treats all men on the same basis (*Acts 10:34*)!

⁴⁸When the Gentiles heard this they were glad and praised the Lord's message; and those who had been chosen for eternal life became believers.

⁴⁹The word of the Lord spread everywhere in that region. ⁵⁰But the Jews stirred up the leading men of the city and the Gentile women of high social standing who worshiped God. They started a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and threw them out of their region. ⁵¹The apostles shook the dust off their feet against them and went on to Iconium. ⁵²The disciples in Antioch were full of joy and the Holy Spirit.

When the Gentiles heard 48 this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

The word of the Lord 49 spread through the whole region. But the Jews incited 50 the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. So they shook 51 the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. And the 52 disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

In Iconium

In Iconium

14 The same thing happened in Iconium: Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of Jews and Gentiles became believers. ²But the Jews who would not believe stirred up the Gentiles and turned their feelings against the brothers. ³The apostles stayed there for a long time. They spoke boldly about the Lord, who proved that their message about his grace was true by giving them the power to perform

14 At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed. But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. Paul and Barnabas spent 3 considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miracu-

48. **When the Gentiles heard this.** They were glad, both because of the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free, and because the Jewish Scriptures declared this promise. **And those who had been chosen.** Verse 46 shows the Jews acted through their own choice. God chooses those who choose him. Compare *2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Cor. 16:15*. *Wesley* says: "Not that God rejected the rest; it was his will that they also should be saved, but they thrust salvation from them." **Became believers.** Made a public declaration of their faith.

49-51. **But the Jews stirred up.** They did what they could to cause trouble. **And threw them out of their region.** This interrupted the work of Paul and Barnabas, but not the spread of the Good News. They came back later (*Acts 14:21*). **Shook the dust off.** *Luke 9:5* and note. **Iconium.** About fifty miles east.

52. **The disciples in Antioch.** Even though Paul and Barnabas had been ejected from their area, they were full of joy and the Holy Spirit because they were new in Christ! Compare *1 Thess. 1:6; Rom. 14:17*.

1. **The same thing happened in Iconium.** Just as it had on the island of Cyprus and at Antioch. They went first to the Jewish synagogue and preached the Good News of God's act in Christ. Some Jews would believe, plus a number of the Gentiles who could be found in every synagogue. [Gentiles attended the synagogue to learn more about the God of Israel.]

2-3. **But the Jews who would not believe.** Christ brings division (*Matt. 10:34-36*). Those who refuse to believe, hate and fight against the Good News (*Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2*). [But like Paul, some change.] Note the apostles stayed there a long time and turned many people to Christ.

miracles and wonders. ⁴The crowd in the city was divided: some were for the Jews, others for the apostles.

⁵Then the Gentiles and the Jews, together with their leaders, decided to mistreat the apostles and stone them. ⁶When the apostles learned about it they fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities in Lycaonia, and to the surrounding territory. ⁷There they preached the Good News.

In Lystra and Derbe

⁸There was a man living in Lystra whose feet were crippled; he had been lame from birth and had never been able to walk. ⁹Sitting there, he listened to Paul's words. Paul saw that he believed and could be healed, so he looked straight at him ¹⁰and said in a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" The man jumped up and started walking around. ¹¹When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they started to shout in their own Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us!" ¹²They gave Barnabas the name Zeus, and Paul the name Hermes, because he was the one who

lous signs and wonders. The 4
people of the city were divid-
ed; some sided with the
Jews, others with the apost-
les. There was a plot afoot 5
among the Gentiles and
Jews, together with their
leaders, to mistreat them
and stone them. But they 6
found out about it and fled
to the Lycaonian cities of
Lystra and Derbe and to the
surrounding country, where 7
they continued to preach the
good news.

In Lystra and Derbe

In Lystra there sat a man 8
crippled in his feet, who was
lame from birth and had
never walked. He listened 9
to Paul as he was speaking.
Paul looked directly at him,
saw that he had faith to be
healed and called out, 10
"Stand up on your feet!" At
that, the man jumped up
and began to walk.

When the crowd saw what 11
Paul had done, they shouted
in the Lycaonian language,
"The gods have come down
to us in human form!" Bar-
nabas they called Zeus, and 12
Paul they called hermes be-
cause he was the chief

4-7. **The crowd in the city was divided.** Many believed, but many refused to believe. **Decided to mistreat the apostles.** The Greek text implies *sudden action*, such as raising a mob. **They fled to Lystra and Derbe.** Cities close to Iconium. Early church history often speaks of Lystra as a center of Christian influence.

8-10. **There was a man.** Verse 3 shows us how many miracles were done to prove the Good News to be true. This one shows us something of the attitude and humility of the apostles. **He listened to Paul's words.** His friends might have brought him here. **Paul saw that he believed.** Faith comes from hearing the message (*Rom. 10-17*). This miracle, like those Christ did, is a parable of being "set free" from sin. (1) The message of the Good News is heard; (2) faith comes from hearing; (3) the command calls for faith to "reach out" [act]; (4) faith obeys; (5) the man is *set free* from his deformity by the obedience of faith. "His faith had saved him!"

11-13. **When the crowds saw.** The people of Lystra were heathen who believed in many *gods*. Their tradition said the *gods* often came down in the form of men, and intervened in human affairs. **Zeus.** The chief of the *gods*. Barnabas must have been more impressive than Paul (*compare 2 Cor. 10:10*). **Hermes.** The spokesman for the *gods*. [Jupiter and Mercurius are the Latin names.] **The priest of the god Zeus.** He comes to offer worship to those whom the people think to be *gods*. The sacrificial bulls were decorated with flowers, and the priest wore a wreath of flowers on his head. **To the apostles.** "Apostle" means "one sent" [by the Holy Spirit]. We use it as a title for the Twelve, but Barnabas and others were also "apostles." It is used to mean those who "represent the churches" (*2 Cor. 8:23*).

did the speaking. ¹³The priest of the god Zeus, whose temple stood just outside the town, brought bulls and flowers to the gate. He and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifice to the apostles.

¹⁴When Barnabas and Paul heard what they were about to do, they tore their clothes and ran into the middle of the crowd, shouting, ¹⁵"Why are you doing this, men? We are just men, human beings like you! We are here to announce the Good News, to turn you away from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven, earth, sea, and all that is in them. ¹⁶In the past he allowed all peoples to go their own way. ¹⁷But he has always given proof of himself by the good things he does: he gives you rain from heaven and crops at the right times; he gives you food and fills your hearts with happiness." ¹⁸Even with these words the apostles could hardly keep the crowds from offering a sacrifice to them.

¹⁹Some Jews came from Antioch of Pisidia and from Iconium; they won the crowds to their side, stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking that he was dead. ²⁰But when the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he and Barnabas went to Derbe.

speaker. The priest of Zeus, ¹³ whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

But when the apostles ¹⁴ Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed into the crowd, shouting: "Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. ¹⁶ In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." Even ¹⁸ with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

Then some Jews came ¹⁹ from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. But ²⁰ after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

14-18. **They tore their clothes.** This was a symbol of grief, anger, and horror. Compare *Matt. 26:65* **We are just men.** This shows their complete commitment to *truth!* They would not permit themselves to be worshipped. **To the living God.** These other things are worthless! See *Rom. 1:25*. **In the past.** Compare *Acts 17:30*. History proves that man cannot find God by their own wisdom, even though "Nature" speaks God's glory with many voices. (*Rom. 1:18-21*).

19-20. **Some Jews came from Antioch.** Some think Paul's "thorn in the flesh" refers to these Jews. [compare *Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13; 2 Tim. 4:14-17.*] The Lystrans, frustrated because they were not permitted to worship Paul and Barnabas, were easily turned against them. This is the first *injury* Paul suffered for Christ (*2 Cor. 11:25*). **He got up.** We are not told whether this was a miracle. When persecuted in one city, they would move on to another, as Christ had commanded.

The Return to Antioch in Syria

²¹Paul and Barnabas preached the Good News in Derbe, and won many disciples. Then they went back to Lystra, then to Iconium, and then to Antioch of Pisidia. ²²They strengthened the believers and encouraged them to remain true to the faith. "We must pass through many troubles to enter the Kingdom of God," they taught. ²³In each church they appointed elders for them; and with prayers and fasting they commended them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

²⁴After going through the territory of Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. ²⁵They preached the message in Perga and then went down to Attalia, ²⁶and from there they sailed back to Antioch, the place where they had been commended to the care of God's grace for the work they had now completed.

²⁷When they arrived in Antioch they gathered the people of the church together and told them of all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the way for the Gentiles to believe. ²⁸They stayed a long time there with the believers.

The Return to Antioch in Syria

They preached the good 21
news in that city and won a
large number of disciples.
Then they returned to
Lystra, Iconium and Anti- 22
och, strengthening the dis-
ciples and encouraging them
to remain true to the faith.
"We must go through many
hardships to enter the king-
dom of God," they said.
Paul and Barnabas appoint- 23
ed elders for them in each
church and, with prayer and
fasting, committed them to
the Lord in whom they had
put their trust. After going 24
through Pisidia, they came
into Pamphylia, and when 25
they had preached the word
in Perga, they went down to
Attalia.

From Attalia they sailed 26
back to Antioch, where they
had been committed to the
grace of God for the work
they had now completed. On 27
arriving here, they gathered
the church together and
reported all that God had
done through them and how
he had opened the door of
faith to the Gentiles. And 28
they stayed there a long time
with the disciples.

21-23. **Then they went back to Lystra.** The Jewish leaders may have been "chasing after" Paul in other cities, so while they were away, he can return to strengthen the believers. We would expect him to "organize" the groups of believers by appointing church-leaders [elders] and church-helpers [deacons]. Compare *Titus* 1:5. One of the believers was Timothy (*Acts* 16:1). **Through many troubles.** God has set this world up as an "obstacle-course," where we must *pass through* the "mud and barbed-wire" to "sort ourselves out" and *grow spiritually!* Compare *1 Thess.* 3:3; *Rom.* 5:3-4; *2 Cor.* 4:17; *Heb.* 12:5-11; *James* 1:2-4. **In each church.** (1) Elders were appointed within a few years of the church being planted in an area. (2) Each church [group of believers] had their own elders. (3) There were always more than one in each church. (4) They were *identified* by a simple ceremony of prayer and fasting (see note on *Acts* 13:3). (5) We infer from *Acts* 6:3-6 that each group chose their own church-leaders. See note on *Titus* 1:5.

24-28. **They preached the message in Perga.** They had not preached here when they landed from Paphos (*Acts* 13:13-14). **Attalia.** A seaport close to Perga. **Back to Antioch.** The Antioch in Syria. See notes on *Acts* 13:1. *W. M. Ramsay* thinks the first tour of missions began in 47 A.D., and ended in the Autumn of 49 A.D. (by the corrected calendar). **And told them.** They made a report to their "sponsoring church." **They stayed a long time.** Until their second tour of missions.

The Meeting at Jerusalem

15 Some men came from Judea to Antioch and started teaching the brothers, "You cannot be saved unless you are circumcised as the Law of Moses requires." ²Paul and Barnabas had a fierce argument and dispute with them about this; so it was decided that Paul and Barnabas and some of the others in Antioch should go to Jerusalem and see the apostles and elders about this matter.

³They were sent on their way by the church, and as they went through Phoenicia and Samaria they reported how the Gentiles had turned to God; this news brought great joy to all the brothers. ⁴When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the apostles, and the elders, to whom they told all that God had done with them. ⁵But some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "They have to be circumcised and told to obey the Law of Moses."

The Council at Jerusalem

15 Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." ²This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ³The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad. ⁴When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.

⁵Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and

1. **Some men came from Judea.** This chapter shows us something of the sharp conflict which shook the church of that day. Was Christianity just an extension of Judaism, or, was it something completely new??? The Jerusalem and Judean Christians remained strict Jews (*Acts 21:20-21*). The Samaritan Christians were already circumcized. Peter and his fellow believers were amazed that Cornelius and his friends could be baptized into Christ without first being circumcized. The planting of the Gentile church at Antioch in Syria, and the great crowds of Gentiles who became Christians without being circumcized, caused a certain group of Jews to react with anger! **Unless you are circumcized.** These Jews made this the supreme test of fellowship! Read the literal translation of Paul's inspired comment in *Gal. 5:12*. The issue of authority had to be settled, and the Jerusalem Meeting was called to show that the apostles and elders did not authorize forcing the Gentiles to be circumcized. This important question would decide whether Christianity would also be Jewish (following Jewish tradition), or, be free as God's sons. Paul calls these "men from Judea" *spies* who pretended to be brothers (*Gal. 2:4*).

2. **Had a fierce argument.** This shows the importance of the issue. These men were from Jerusalem, and could claim they were acting by the authority of the apostles. **Should go to Jerusalem.** The Twelve were there.

3-4. **They were sent on their way by the church.** This was an official mission. *Johnson* thinks a special escort of church-members went along with them to Jerusalem. They visited the churches in Phoenicia and Samarai as they went through, and told them what God was doing among the Gentiles. [The Holy Spirit produces faith through the hearing of the message (*Rom. 10:17*). The Gentiles heard, believed, and turned to God.]

5. **But some of the believers.** Like Paul, they had *converted* to Christ, but unlike him, they had not given up their prejudice (*see Acts 21:20-21*). Some may have been Paul's old friends. They quickly raised the question when Paul and Barnabas gave the report of *verse 4*.

⁶The apostles and the elders met together to consider this question. ⁷After a long debate Peter stood up and said, "My brothers, you know that a long time ago God chose me from among you to preach the message of Good News to the Gentiles, so that they could hear and believe. ⁸And God, who knows the hearts of men, showed his approval of the Gentiles by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he had to us. ⁹He made no difference between us and them; he purified their hearts because they believed. ¹⁰So then, why do you want to put God to the test now by laying a load on the backs of the believers which neither our ancestors nor we ourselves were able to carry? ¹¹No! We believe and are saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they are."

¹²The whole group was silent as they heard Barnabas and Paul report all the wonders and miracles that God had done through them among the Gentiles. ¹³When they finished speaking, James spoke up, "Listen to me, brothers!

said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."

The apostles and elders met to consider this question. After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them:

"Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. When they finished, James spoke up:

"Brothers, listen to me.

6. **The apostles and the elders met together.** *W. M. Ramsay* gives 49 A.D. as the date of this. [*Johnson* gives 51 A.D.] The Twelve had been reduced by one (*Acts 12:2*). James, the Lord's brother, was a chief man in the Jerusalem church. Historians often call him the pastor or bishop. Note that both of these titles mean "elder," and there were more than one. *Gal. 2:12* implies that James was the leader of the "circumcision party."

7-11. **After a long debate.** Some Jews believed God was their personal property, and that the Gentiles had to accept their Law and Tradition and come to God through them. Paul and others knew that God had terminated the Law (*Col. 2:14*), and of course, Tradition had no authority at all. **Peter stood up.** He tells about the Gentiles being accepted by God (*see Acts 10 & 11*). **He made no difference between us and them.** God's SAME terms of salvation are for BOTH Jew and Gentile. **He purified their hearts.** The Jews believed Gentiles were religiously unclean, and that they had to convert to Judaism and become a "Jew" before God's promises could be available to them. **So then.** The Law was a load which no one could carry. To force this on the believers was the same thing as opposing God. Compare *Acts 5:39*. **Just as they are.** BOTH Jew and Gentile must believe and be saved by grace (*Rom. 3:27-31*).

12. **The whole group was silent.** They are amazed! The miracles show that God approves the work among the Gentiles.

13. **James spoke up.** Note it is James, the brother of Jesus, who takes charge of the situation. See *Gal. 2:9* and the introduction to *James*.

¹⁴Simon has just explained how God first showed his care for the Gentiles by taking from among them a people to be all his own. ¹⁵The words of the prophets agree completely with this. As the scripture says,

¹⁶After this I will return, says the Lord,
and I will raise David's fallen house.

I will restore its ruins,
and build it up again.

¹⁷And so all other people will seek the Lord,
all the Gentiles whom I have called to
be my own.

¹⁸So says the Lord, who made this known
long ago.'

¹⁹"It is my opinion," James went on, "that we should not trouble the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰Instead, we should write a letter telling them not to eat any food that is unclean because it has been offered to idols; to keep themselves from immorality; not to eat any animal that has been strangled, or any blood. ²¹For the Law of Moses has been read for a very long time in the synagogues every Sabbath, and his words are preached in every town."

Simon has described to us 14 how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

'After this I will return 16
and rebuild the fallen
house of David.

Its ruins I will rebuild,
and I will restore it,
that the rest of mankind 17
may seek the Lord, and
all the Gentiles who
bear my name,
says the Lord, who does
these things'
that have been known 18
for ages.

"It is my judgment, there- 19
fore, that we should not
make it difficult for the
Gentiles who are turning to
God. Instead we should 20
write to them, telling them
to abstain from food pollut-
ed by idols, from sexual im-
morality, from the meat of
strangled animals and from
blood. For Moses has been 21
preached in every city from
the earliest times and is read
in the synagogues on every
Sabbath."

14. Simon has just explained. Read what Simon Peter said in *verses 7-11*. This is what James refers to.

15-18. The words of the prophets. James paraphrases *Amos 9:11-12*. **Raise David's fallen house.** Restore the glory of David in the Messiah. Note that James applies this to what had already happened.

And so all other people. This prophecy of the Gentiles being called to God, does not mention circumcision. **So says the Lord.** Making salvation available to the Gentiles has been part of God's Plan all along! David's fallen house is restored in the Gentiles coming to Christ.

19. It is my opinion. James can plainly see that this is God's will, so he must agree with it. **See note on verse 6.**

20. We should write a letter. Four things are mentioned, all of which were common practices in the Gentile world. **Food that is unclean.** Johnson thinks this includes everything that went into the worship of idols (see note on *Rev. 2:20*). But this must be understood in view of what Paul said in *1 Cor. 10:23-33*. **Immorality.** Sex activity with someone not a marriage partner of the one involved. This included adultery, homosexuality (both male and female); "peeping-tom-ism." etc. **That has been strangled.** This kept the blood in the animal. Romans would drown birds in wine, then cook and eat them. **Or any blood.** Blood was drunk in idol worship, and it was common to drink blood and wine together. This use of blood would horrify any Jew, so wisdom required this prohibition against eating blood. **For the Law of Moses.** Some would be afraid the Law would be forgotten (*Acts 21:20-25*). Also, there should be nothing to cause schism between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

The Letter to the Gentile Believers

²²Then the apostles and the elders, together with the whole church, decided to choose some men from the group and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas, called Barsabbas, and Silas, two men who were highly respected by the brothers. ²³They sent the following letter by them:

“We, the apostles and the elders, your brothers, send greetings to all brothers of Gentile birth who live in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. ²⁴We have heard that some men of our group went out and troubled and upset you by what they said; they had not, however, received any instructions from us to do this. ²⁵And so we have met together and have all agreed to choose some messengers and send them to you. They will go with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶who have risked their lives in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷We send you, then, Judas and Silas, who will tell you in person the same things we are writing. ²⁸The Holy Spirit and we have agreed not to put any other burden on you besides these necessary rules: ²⁹eat no food that has been offered to idols; eat no blood; eat no animal that has been strangled; and keep yourselves from immorality. You will do well if you keep yourselves from doing these things. Good-bye.”

³⁰The messengers were sent off and went to Antioch, where they gathered the whole group

The Council's Letter to Gentile Believers

Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas, called Barsabbas, and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers. With them they sent the following letter: ²³

The apostles and elders, your brothers,
To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:
Greetings.

We have heard that some ²⁴ went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. So we all agreed to choose ²⁵ some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul—men who have risked ²⁶ their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we are sending ²⁷ Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. It seemed ²⁸ good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain ²⁹ from food offered to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell.

The men were sent off and ³⁰ went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and deliver-

22-29. **Together with the whole church.** The entire group of Christians were in agreement about this. **They chose Judas.** He was a prophet (*verse 32*). **Silas.** He became Paul's associate (*verse 40*). **They sent the following letter by them.** The letter explains the question and the answer. **The Holy Spirit and we.** This is not just a human decision. The Holy Spirit directed what they did. The four prohibitions are explained in the notes on *verses 20-21*.

30-35. **They were filled with joy.** Because the Law did not apply to them, and because of the good will of their Jewish brothers in Christ. **Judas and Silas.** *Prophets:* see note on *Eph. 4:11*. They had super-normal knowledge. **They were sent off in peace.** This shows the close fellowship between the Jewish and

of believers and gave them the letter. ³¹When the people read the letter, they were filled with joy by the message of encouragement. ³²Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, spoke a long time with the brothers, giving them courage and strength. ³³After spending some time there, they were sent off in peace by the brothers, and went back to those who had sent them. [³⁴But Silas decided to stay there.]

³⁵Paul and Barnabas spent some time in Antioch. Together with many others, they taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Paul and Barnabas Separate

³⁶Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit our brothers in every city where we preached the word of the Lord, and find out how they are getting along." ³⁷Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, ³⁸but Paul did not think it was right to take him, because he had not stayed with them to the end of their mission, but had turned back and left them in Pamphylia. ³⁹They had a sharp argument between them, and separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark and sailed off for Cyprus, ⁴⁰while Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the care of the Lord's grace. ⁴¹He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

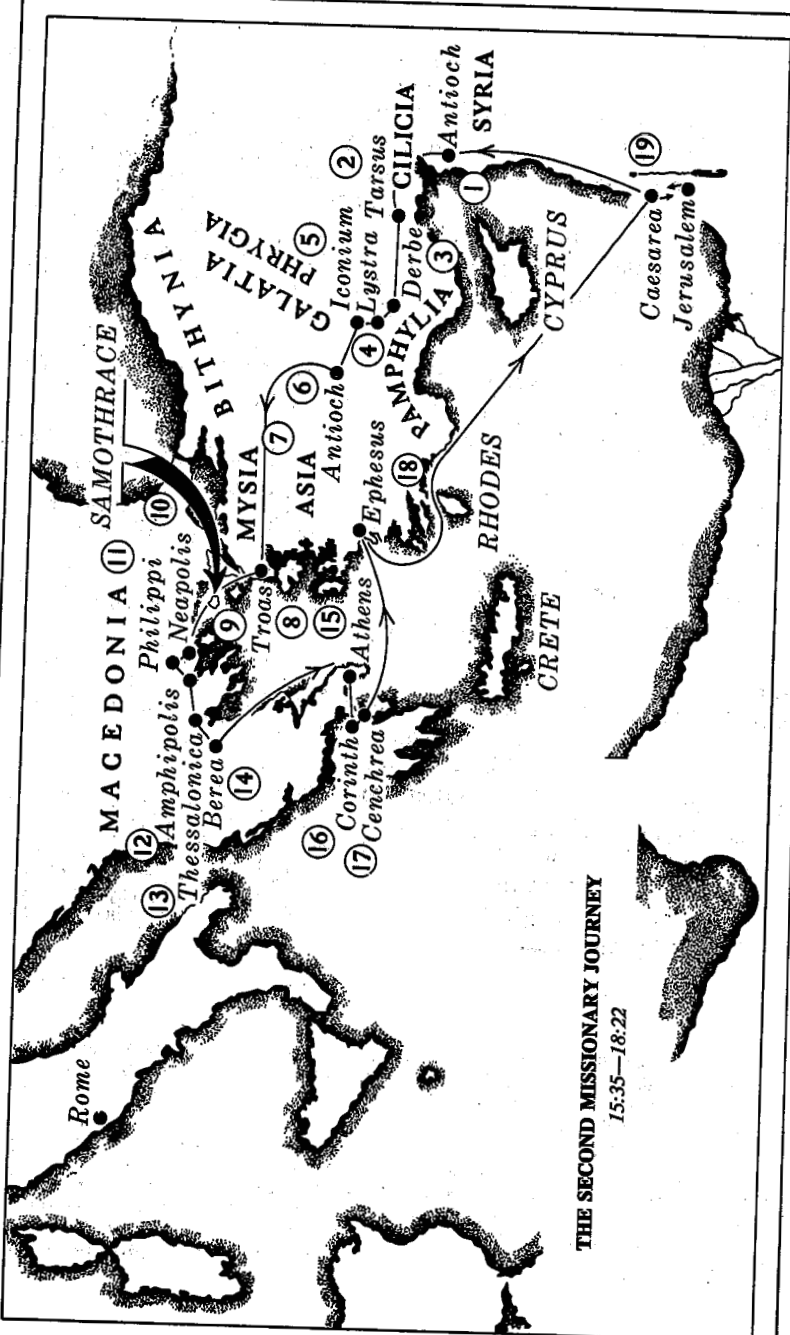
ed the letter. The people ³¹ read it and were glad for its encouraging message. Judas ³² and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers. After spending ³³ some time there, they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. Paul and Barnabas ³⁵ remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Disagreement Between Paul and Barnabas

Some time later Paul said ³⁶ to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." Barnabas wanted ³⁷ to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul ³⁸ did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had ³⁹ such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul ⁴⁰ chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. He ⁴¹ went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Gentile Christians. **But Silas.** This verse is omitted in most manuscripts, but there is some authority for it. It agrees with the facts. **Paul and Barnabas.** They stayed almost a year. Since the New Testament had not been written down, the Christians had to depend upon those teachers who had supernatural knowledge, for the word of the Lord.

36-41. **Let us go back.** This begins the second tour of missions. *W. M. Ramsay* gives the date as 50 A.D. (by the corrected calendar). **Barnabas wanted to take John Mark.** See notes on *Acts 13:5,13*. **They had a sharp argument.** Neither one would "give in," yet note this was not a fight, but a friendly disagreement. **And separated from each other.** This solved the problem. Now there were two teams making this second tour. **Commended by the brothers.** This implies that a meeting of the church was held to "identify" them (see notes on *Acts 13:2-3*). Both teams had their blessings. **Syria and Cilicia.** See *Gal. 1:21*.



THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY
15:35—18:22

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

15:35—18:22

1. IN ANTIOCH. 15:36-40
 - a. The desire to revisit the churches established on the first tour. 36
 - b. The desire of Barnabas to take John Mark. 37
 - c. Disagreement and parting of Barnabas and Saul. 38-40
2. THROUGH THE PROVINCES OF SYRIA AND CILICIA. 15:41
Confirmed the churches in this region. Cf. Gal. 1:21-24
3. AT DERBE. 16:1a
Confirmed the church. 1a
4. IN LYSTRA. 16:1b-5
 - a. Timothy, his faith and ancestry. 1b
 - b. The good report of Timothy's work from the nearby churches. 2
 - c. The circumcision of Timothy by Paul in preparation for their work. 3
5. THROUGH THE CITIES OF ICONIUM AND ANTIOCH TO WHOM THEY DELIVERED THE DECREES OF THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL. THE CHURCHES WERE GREATLY STRENGTHENED. 16:4, 5
6. THROUGH THE REGION OF PHRYGIA AND GALATIA. 16:6a; Cf. Gal. 4:13-15; 1 Cor. 16:1,2
7. WHILE IN THE ABOVE STATED REGIONS THEY WERE FORBIDDEN BY THE SPIRIT TO SPEAK THE WORD IN ASIA. THEY PASSED THROUGH THE PROVINCE OF MYSIA AND ASSAYED TO GO INTO THE PROVINCE OF BITHYNIA BUT THEY WERE AGAIN FORBIDDEN. 16:6b-8a
8. AT TROAS. 16:8b-10
 - a. The vision. 8b, 9
 - b. God's call to Macedonia. 10
9. AT SAMOTHRACE. 16:11a
A small island where they anchored overnight. 11a
10. AT NEAPOLIS. 16:11b
A large seaport city. No time spent here. 11b
11. IN PHILIPPI. 16:12-40
 - a. A description of Philippi. 12
 - b. The prayer meeting and the conversion. 13-15
 - c. The incident of the maid with the evil spirit. 16-18
 - d. The result of the casting out of the evil spirit. 19-24
 - e. Praise and prayer in jail. 25
 - f. The earthquake; prisoners released. 26
 - g. The desperation of the jailer. 27
 - h. The intervention of Paul. 28
 - i. The inquiry of the jailer for salvation. 29, 30
 - j. The reply and explanation. 31, 32
 - k. The results. 33, 34
 - l. The suggested release of Paul and Silas. 35-37
 - m. The report of Paul's reply to the magistrates, their action. 38, 39
 - n. The final visit with the brethren at the house of Lydia. 40
12. PASSING THROUGH THE CITIES OF AMPHIPOLIS AND APPOLLONIA. 17:1a
13. AT THESSALONICA. 17:1b-10a
 - a. Entering the synagogue and reasoning for three sabbaths. 1b-3
 - b. Many respond. 4
 - c. The Jews, full of jealousy, stir up a persecution. 5
 - d. The trial of Jason and certain brethren. 6-9
 - e. The brethren send them away by night. 10a
14. AT BEREAE. 17:10b-14a
 - a. Entering the synagogue. 10b
 - b. The noble attitude of the Berean Jews. 11
 - c. The good results. 12
 - d. The Jews from Thessalonica stir up opposition. Paul leaves with brethren; Silas and Timothy remain. 13, 14a

15. IN ATHENS. *17:14b-34*
 - a. The brethren from Berea go with Paul as far as Athens and take back a command for the coming of Silas and Timothy. *14b, 15*
 - b. Paul is provoked in spirit and reasons in the synagogue. *16, 17*
 - c. The contact with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. *18-21*
 - d. Paul's message on the unknown God. *22-31*
 - e. The results. *32-34*
16. IN CORINTH. *18:1-17*
 - a. Coming to Corinth. *1*
 - b. His meeting and abiding with Priscilla and Aquilla. *2, 3*
 - c. Reasoning in the synagogue. *4*
 - d. The arrival of Silas and Timothy. *5*
 - e. The opposition; turns to the Gentiles. *6*
 - f. The services in the house of Titus Justus. *7*
 - g. The encouraging vision by night. *8-10*
 - h. One year and six months spent here. *11*
 - i. Paul's trial before Gallio. *12-16*
 - j. The beating of Sosthenes. *17*
17. AT CENCHREA. *18:18*

Where Paul cut his hair in fulfillment of a vow; accompanied by Priscilla and Aquilla. *18*
18. IN EPHESUS. *18:19-21*
 - a. Enters the synagogue and reasons with Jews. *19*
 - b. Their desire that he would abide a longed time. *20*
 - c. His leaving and promise to return. *21*
19. AT CAESAREA. *18:22a*

Saluted the church. *22a*
20. IN ANTIOCH. *18:22b*

Back home. *22b*

Timothy Goes with Paul and Silas

16 Paul traveled on to Derbe and Lystra. A believer named Timothy lived there; his mother, also a believer, was Jewish, but his father was Greek. ²All the brothers in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of Timothy. ³Paul wanted to take Timothy along with him, so he circumcised him. He did so because all the Jews who lived in those places knew that Timothy's father was Greek. ⁴As they went through the towns they delivered to the believers the rules decided upon by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, and told them to obey these rules. ⁵So the churches were made stronger in the faith and grew in numbers every day.

In Troas: Paul's Vision

⁶They traveled through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit did not let them preach the message in the province of Asia. ⁷When they reached the border of Mysia, they tried to go into the province of Bithynia, but the

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

16 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. ²The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. ⁵So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Paul's Vision of the Macedonian

Paul and his companions ⁶traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow

1-3. **Paul traveled on to Derbe and Lystra.** Compare *Acts 14:6-21*. A believer named Timothy. Born of a Jewish mother and a Greek father, and had been taught the Scriptures from childhood (*2 Tim. 3:15*) by his devout mother and grandmother (*2 Tim. 1:5*). *J. G. Malphurs* thinks Timothy's father was a "Gentile converted to Judaism," and that he was in the crowd on Pentecost and was baptized into Christ. Timothy's mother and grandmother were Christians as well, and this explains why such devout people had not circumcised Timothy. *1 Cor. 4:17* shows us that Paul brought Timothy to Christ. Timothy could not have been more than fifteen at that time. Here he is probably sixteen or seventeen. **So he circumcised him.** Timothy was part Jewish, so Paul did this to prevent trouble with the Jews. Because Timothy was a descendant of Abraham, he could be circumcised as a *civil rite*. Since circumcision is without meaning (*1 Cor. 7:18-19*), this could be done on the principle of *1 Cor. 9:20*. But in the case of Titus, who was a Gentile, the case was different. To have allowed him to be circumcised would have damaged the messianic community (*Gal. 2:1-5*). At this time Timothy was also "identified" [ordained] (*1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6*). Compare notes on *Acts 13:2-3*.

4-5. **As they went through the towns.** They delivered the message from the Jerusalem church (*Acts 15:23-29*) to the churches [groups of believers] in the towns along the way.

6-10. **Through the region of Phrygia and Galatia.** *McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia* says the Province of Phrygia did not yet exist, but the name referred to the area south of Galatia. **In the province of Asia.** Ephesus was the capital. The Holy Spirit, also called the Spirit of Jesus, had other plans for them at this time. These other areas were not excluded from the gospel, but Paul's mission was to be in

Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. ⁸So they traveled right on through Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹Paul had a vision that night in which he saw a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" ¹⁰As soon as Paul had this vision, we got ready to leave for Macedonia, because we decided that God had called us to preach the Good News to people there.

them to. So they passed by ⁸ Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night ⁹ Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

In Philippi: the Conversion of Lydia

¹¹We left by ship from Troas and sailed straight across to Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis. ¹²From there we went inland to Philippi, a city of the first district of Macedonia; it is also a Roman colony. We spent several days in that city. ¹³On the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where we thought there would be a Jewish place for prayer. We sat down and talked to the women who gathered there. ¹⁴One of those who heard us was Lydia, from Thyatira, who was a dealer in purple goods. She was a woman who worshiped God, and the Lord opened her mind to pay attention to

Lydia's Conversion in Philippi

From Troas we put out to ¹¹ sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. From ¹² there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

On the Sabbath we went ¹³ outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. One of those listening was a woman named ¹⁴ Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's

Macedonia. **Paul had a vision.** This is the way the Holy Spirit's message was communicated to him. Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were all in Macedonia. **We got ready to leave.** We are not told they preached in Troas at this time. But a few years later we find a church here (*Acts 20:6-12*). From here on, Luke speaks as an eyewitness, which implies that he joined Paul and the others at Troas and went with them.

11-12 And sailed straight across. Samothrace is an island at the half-way point. Neapolis is the seaport, just a few miles from Philippi. **A Roman colony.** Emperor Augustus had planted this colony. It was a miniature Rome, with its own government. Note the apostles planted the Good News **FIRST** in the population centers, from which it would be taken home to the rural areas.

13-15. To the riverside. The Gangas, a small river. **A Jewish place for prayer.** Evidently, there was no synagogue. A few devout Jews, mostly women, met on the river banks to worship God. **And talked to the women.** Some of these may have been "Gentiles converted to Judaism." **Lydia** is a Greek name. **Thyatira** is in the province of Asia, some hundreds of miles distant. **Purple goods** were valuable luxury items. Since Thyatira was a Macedonian colony, Lydia may have had relatives here in Philippi. **And the Lord opened her mind.** "The Holy Spirit produces faith through the message." *To open* is the Lord's part; *to pay attention* was her part (*Rom. 10:17*). Compare *Eph. 1:18; Acts 17:3*. **Were baptized.** This was always done immediately. Early Christians viewed baptism as *participating* in the death of Christ

what Paul was saying. ¹⁵She and the people of her house were baptized. Then she invited us, "Come and stay in my house, if you have decided that I am a true believer in the Lord." And she persuaded us to go.

In Prison at Philippi

¹⁶One day as we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had an evil spirit in her that made her predict the future. She earned much money for her owners by telling fortunes. ¹⁷She followed Paul and us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God! They announce to you how you can be saved!" ¹⁸She did this for many days, until Paul became so upset that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I order you to come out of her!" The spirit went out of her that very moment. ¹⁹When her owners realized that their chance of making money was gone, they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them to the authorities in the public square. ²⁰They brought them before the Roman officials and said, "These men are Jews, and they are causing trouble in our city. ²¹They are teaching customs that are against our law; we are Romans and cannot accept or practice them." ²²The crowd joined the attack against them; the officials tore the clothes off Paul and Silas, and ordered them

message. When she and the ¹⁵ members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

Paul and Silas in Prison

Once when we were going ¹⁶ to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a lot of money for her owners by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and ¹⁷ the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. ¹⁸

When the owners of the ¹⁹ slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. They brought ²⁰ them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice." ²¹

The crowd joined in the ²² attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped

(see note on Col. 2:12). The people of her house would be her servants and friends. She was a business woman who sold purple goods, therefore wealthy. Then she invited us. This is an offer of support. Paul did not usually take financial help from his converts (Acts 20:33; 2 Cor. 12:17), but this time he was persuaded (compare Luke 8:1-3).

16-18. We were met by a slave girl. She was possessed by a demon, who gave her supernatural abilities. These men are servants. The demon knew who they were (James 2:19). Compare Mark 3:12; Luke 4:34-35. In the name of Jesus Christ. Compare Mark 16:17; Acts 19:13-16.

19-22. They grabbed Paul and Silas. Nothing angers men more than seeing their greed defeated. These men are Jews. That fact alone would incriminate them. Compare Acts 18:2 and note. Tore the clothes off. It was the custom to strip convicted prisoners and whip the bare body.

to be whipped. ²³After a severe beating they were thrown into jail, and the jailer was ordered to lock them up tight. ²⁴Upon receiving this order, the jailer threw them into the inner cell and fastened their feet between heavy blocks of wood.

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶Suddenly there was a violent earthquake, which shook the prison to its foundations. At once all the doors opened, and the chains fell off all the prisoners. ²⁷The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open he thought that all the prisoners had escaped; so he pulled out his sword and was about to kill himself. ²⁸But Paul shouted at the top of his voice, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

²⁹The jailer called for a light, rushed in, and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. ³⁰Then he led them out and asked, "What must I do, sirs to be saved?"

³¹"Believe in the Lord Jesus," they said, "and you will be saved—you and your family." ³²Then they preached the word of the Lord to him and

and beaten. After they had ²³ been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon ²⁴ receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and ²⁵ Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there ²⁶ was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. The jailer ²⁷ woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, ²⁸ "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

The jailer called for lights, ²⁹ rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He ³⁰ then brought them out and asked, "Men, what must I do to be saved?"

They replied, "Believe in ³¹ the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." Then they ³² spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others

23-24. **After a severe beating.** The Law of Moses regulated whipping (*Deut. 25:3; 2 Cor. 11:24*). Romans had no such restriction. **The inner cell.** A damp cell, with no source of light, used for "solitary confinement."

25-28. **About midnight.** Note they were praying and singing in spite of their physical condition and the place where they were! **Suddenly there was a violent earthquake.** This was God's answer. Compare *Acts 4:31; 5:19*. **And was about to kill himself.** Guards who allowed prisoners to escape forfeited their own lives (*Acts 12:19*). A Roman would commit suicide under these circumstances. **But Paul shouted.** Paul could see out of the darkness through the now opened doors. He and Silas were still there, and the other prisoners were probably too shocked to move.

29-34. **And fell trembling.** He is convinced they are under divine protection! **What must I do?** Paul's answer to this question shows the jailer knew they preached a new religion. **Believe in the Lord Jesus.** This was the point of beginning for this man. To those who already believed, Peter said "repent and be baptized" (*Acts 2:38*). To one who already believed and had repented, Ananias said "be baptized" (*Acts 22:16*). Faith reaches out to God (compare *Heb. 11:4*). **You and your family.** This does not mean the family would be saved as a unit. The same way open to him, was also open to them. **Then they preached the word.** They could not believe what they did not know. Paul presents the Good News of

to all the others in his house. ³³At that very hour of the night the jailer took them and washed off their wounds; and he and all his family were baptized at once. ³⁴He took Paul and Silas up into his house and gave them some food to eat. He and his family were filled with joy, because he now believed in God.

³⁵The next morning the Roman authorities sent police officers with the order, "Let those men go."

³⁶So the jailer told it to Paul, "The officials have sent an order for you and Silas to be released. You may leave, then and go in peace."

³⁷But Paul said to the police officers, "We were not found guilty of any crime, yet they whipped us in public—and we are Roman citizens! Then they threw us in prison. And now they want to send us away secretly? Not at all! The Roman officials themselves must come here and let us out."

³⁸The police officers reported these words to the Roman officials; and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were afraid. ³⁹So they went and apologized to them; then they led them out of the prison and asked

in his house. At that hour ³³ of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought ³⁴ them into his house and set a meal before them, and the whole family was filled with joy, because they had come to believe in God.

When it was daylight, the ³⁵ magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." The jailer told Paul, "The ³⁶ magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace."

But Paul said to the ³⁷ officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

The officers reported this ³⁸ to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. They ³⁹ came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave

God's act in Christ to set men free. This implies all who heard could understand and believe, **And washed off their wounds.** They were covered with blood, dust, and bruises. *Howson* thinks they were washed in a large tank or reservoir in the prison courtyard, which was kept full by rainwater from the roof. **Were baptized at once.** Paul and Silas were washed from fleshly wounds; the jailer and his family were washed from the deeper wounds and stains of sin (*compare Titus 3:4-5; 1 Pet. 3:21*). [No trace of the baptism of infant children of Christians is found in the New Testament.] **Up into his house.** The house may have been built on the wall above the prison. This shows his thankfulness. **Were filled with joy.** The joy of the Holy Spirit which followed his baptism. Although the text of *verse 34* speaks directly of the jailer, *verse 33* shows they had all believed and been baptized.

35-40. **The Roman authorities.** It may have been fear of the earthquake, or "second-thoughts" about their cruel treatment of "holy men" which influenced them to order the release. **But Paul said.** Roman law said no Roman citizen could be whipped or tortured. Paul makes an issue of this, probably to benefit the church at Philippi. Paul was born a Roman citizen. (*Acts 22:25-29*). He did not hesitate to call on the Roman government to help him, when it would promote the cause of Christ to do so. **And when they heard.** Paul could have demanded their punishment and dismissal. **And went to Lydia's house.** The small group of believers was meeting there. Later they would become a large group, and Paul

them to leave the city. ⁴⁰Paul and Silas left the prison and went to Lydia's house. There they met the brothers, spoke words of encouragement to them, and left.

In Thessalonica

17 They traveled on through Amphipolis and Apollonia, and came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ²According to his usual habit, Paul went to the synagogue. There during three Sabbath days he argued with the people from the Scriptures, ³explaining them and proving from them that the Messiah had to suffer, and rise from death. "This Jesus whom I announce to you," Paul said, "is the Messiah." ⁴Some of them were convinced and joined Paul and Silas; so did a large group of Greeks who worshiped God, and many of the leading women.

the city. After Paul and 40 Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left.

In Thessalonica

17 When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said. Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

would address a letter to them. **And left.** They go on to Thessalonica. Philippi was the first place (so far as we know) in Europe where the gospel was preached; the first one to obey the truth was a woman; the preachers of the Good News were severely beaten and jailed; but through God's grace and power, a great victory was won. This young church sent aid to Paul at Thessalonica (*Phil. 4:15-16*).

1-4. They traveled on. They went along the Roman military road that crossed Macedonia and Greece to the seaport of Dyrrachium; and resuming at the port of Brundisium on the coast of Italy, continued to Rome itself. Amphipolis was some thirty miles from Philippi (about one day's travel time); Apollonia about thirty miles still farther west; and Thessalonica about twenty-eight miles more. Thessalonica was a rich commerical city, the captial of Macedonia. **According to his usual habit.** Where there was a Jewish synagogue, this is where Paul began. Here he found people, both Jew and Gentile, who believed in the living God and the Old Testament Scriptures. He would show how the prophets predicted the death and resurrection of the Messiah, and that this proved Jesus to be the Messiah who was to come. **Three Sabbath days.** This is how long he argued in the synagogue. **Some of them were convinced.** These were Jews. **A large group of Greeks.** These were Gentiles who wanted to learn about the God of Israel, and who came to the synagogue regularly, but had not converted to Judaism and been circumcised. **And many of the leading women.** Wives of the leading citizens, who had much influence. *Ramsay* thinks the synagogue would have in it: Jews; "Gentiles converted to Judaism"; Greeks [Gentiles]; leading women [mentioned as a climax]. There seemed to be a small number of Jews converted to Christ, plus a large number of Gentiles, some of whom had been idol-worshippers (*1 Thess. 1:9 and note*).

⁵But the Jews were jealous and gathered some of the worthless loafers from the streets and formed a mob. They set the whole city in an uproar, and attacked the home of Jason, trying to find Paul and Silas and bring them out to the people. ⁶But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers to the city authorities and shouted, "These men have caused trouble everywhere! Now they have come to our city, ⁷and Jason has kept them in his house. They are all breaking the laws of the Emperor, saying that there is another king, by the name of Jesus." ⁸With these words they threw the crowd and the city authorities in an uproar. ⁹The authorities made Jason and the others pay the required amount of money to be released, and then let them go.

In Berea

¹⁰As soon as night came, the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹The people were more open-minded than the people in Thessalonica. They listened to the message with great eagerness, and every day they studied the Scriptures to see if what Paul said was really true. ¹²Many of them believed; and many Greek women of high social standing and many Greek men also be-

But the Jews were jealous; ⁵ so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd. But when ⁶ they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, and Jason has welcomed ⁷ them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." When they heard ⁸ this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. Then they made ⁹ Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

In Berea

As soon as it was night, ¹⁰ the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. Now ¹¹ the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews ¹² believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

5-9. **But the Jews were jealous.** As usual, those who did not believe were filled with hatred. **And attacked the home of Jason.** Paul and Silas had been staying with him (*verse 7*). **To the city authorities.** It is ironic that *Jews* would go to the Roman authorities and complain that Paul and Silas were promoting *another king*. **These men have caused trouble everywhere!** This shows the revolutionary power of the Faith. It changed the world! **With these words.** They were charging Paul and Silas with the crime of treason against the Romans. **Pay the required amount of money.** A *bond* that they would keep the peace.

10-12. **The brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea.** Between forty-five and sixty miles west of Thessalonica. **The people there were more open-minded.** They were willing to investigate the claims of Paul and Silas. **Many of them believed.** See note on *verse 2*. The same types of people were always the first to respond to the preaching of the Good News.

lieved. ¹³But when the Jews in Thessalonica heard that Paul had preached the word of God in Berea also, they came there and started exciting and stirring up the mobs. ¹⁴At once the brothers sent Paul away to the coast; but both Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea. ¹⁵The men who were taking Paul went with him as far as Athens. Then they went back to Berea with instructions from Paul that Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible.

In Athens

¹⁶While Paul was waiting in Athens for Silas and Timothy, he was greatly upset when he noticed how full of idols the city was. ¹⁷So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the Gentiles who worshiped God, and in the public square every day with the people who happened to come by. ¹⁸Certain Epicurean and Stoic teachers also debated with him. Some said, "What is this ignorant show-off trying to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be talking about foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹So they took Paul, brought him before the meeting of the Areopagus, and said, "We would like to know this new teaching that you are talking

When the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, they went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. The brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. The men who accompanied Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.

In Athens

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?"

13-15. **They came there.** A certain type of Jew followed Paul and tried to destroy the message of Christ. See note on *Acts 14:19-20*. **Sent Paul away to the coast.** Ramsay says Luke often passes over the difficulties and dangers which drove Paul from place to place. Alford says the language implies Paul and the others went by sea to Athens. It would have been some 250 miles by land. When Timothy came to Athens, he was at once sent back to Thessalonica (*1 Thess. 3:1-2 and note*).

16-18. **While Paul was waiting in Athens.** Some think he had intended to wait until the others came, before beginning his work. **He was greatly upset.** ΠΑΡΟΞΥΝΕΤΟ: burning with anger [righteous indignation]. He saw that they were worshiping what God had created, rather than the Creator himself (compare *Rom. 1:25*). The attitude of the people toward these beautiful sculptured images, turned them away from God. **So he argued.** He went first to those who had some knowledge of God (see note on *verse 2*), but he did not stop there. **Epicurean.** They taught that happiness is the highest goal of life. **Stoic.** They taught that happiness is found in being completely free from both pain and pleasure. **They said this because.** Note Paul's message: Jesus Christ is Lord and Messiah; the dead will be raised to life.

19-21. **So they took Paul.** *Areopagus* was the name of both the hill and the group which met there.

about. ²⁰Some of the things we hear you say sound strange to us, and we would like to know what they mean." ²¹(For all the citizens of Athens and the foreigners who lived there liked to spend all their time telling and hearing the latest new thing.)

²²Paul stood up in front of the meeting of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I walked through your city and looked at the places where you worship, I found also an altar on which is written, 'To an Unknown God.' That which you worship, then, even though you do not know it, is what I now proclaim to you. ²⁴God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth, and does not live in temples made by men. ²⁵Nor does he need anything that men can supply by working for him, since it is he himself who gives life and breath and everything else to all men. ²⁶From the one man he created all races of men, and made them live over the whole earth. He himself fixed beforehand the exact times and the limits of the places

You are bringing some 20
strange ideas to our ears,
and we want to know what
they mean." (All the Athen- 21
ians and the foreigners who
lived there spent their time
doing nothing but talking
about and listening to the
latest ideas.)

Paul then stood up in the 22
meeting of the Areopagus
and said?

"Men of Athens! I see
that in every way you are
very religious. For as I walk- 23
ed around and observed
your objects of worship, I
found even an altar with this
inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN
GOD. Now what you worship
as something unknown I am
going to proclaim to you.

"The God who made the 24
world and everything in it is
the Lord of heaven and earth
and does not live in temples
built by hands. And he is not 25
served by human hands, as
if he needed anything, be-
cause he himself gives all
men life and breath and
everything else. From one 26
man he made every nation of
men, that they should in-
habit the whole earth; and
he determined the times set
for them and the exact
places where they should

[Mars-hill is a Latin name applied to it.] This group compared to our Supreme Court. Remember that Athens was the literary capital of the ancient world; the most cultured city; and the place where Romans went to complete their education at the University where thousands came to study. The hill itself is about fifty feet high, and at that time was surrounded by the most beautiful sculptures in Athens. **The latest new thing.** Curiosity, not a love for truth, motivated these people.

22-31. **Paul stood up.** Many seem to think Paul made a great mistake in what he said to this group, and see a resolve never to repeat this error in what he says in *1 Cor. 2:1-5*. But this cannot be! Paul was an inspired apostle! Therefore, what he said was proper for this situation. (1) *These people were totally ignorant of God.* (2) *Verse 19* implies they were hostile to some degree. (3) Paul spoke the truth plainly, without any verbal trickery. (4) He followed the principle of *1 Cor. 9:21*. **Men of Athens.** Since this is an unofficial meeting, he says this to call them to order. **You are very religious.** [Superstitious *originally meant* religious.] This is a compliment. He saw this wherever he went in Athens. **To an Unknown God.** We infer that there were a number of altars in Athens with this inscription which he quotes. **Is what I now proclaim to you.** "I, whom you consider an ignorant show-off, proclaim to you the God whom you are only dimly aware of." This is not an insult, but is designed to make them listen. **God, who made the world.** He describes God: (1) He made the world. (2) Lord of heaven and earth. (3) Does not live in temples. (4) Does not need the service of men. (5) Is the source of life to all men. (6) Created all races from the one man. (7) Decrees that men should look for him. (8) We too are his children. (9) God is not

where they would live. ²⁷He did this so that they would look for him, and perhaps find him as they felt around for him. Yet God is actually not far from any one of us; ²⁸as some one has said,

‘In him we live and move and exist.’

It is as some of your poets have said,

‘We too are his children.’

²⁹Since we are God’s children, we should not suppose that his nature is anything like an image of gold or silver or stone, shaped by the art and skill of man. ³⁰God has overlooked the times when men did not know, but now he commands all men everywhere to turn away from their evil ways. ³¹For he has fixed a day in which he will judge the whole world with justice, by means of a man he has chosen. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising that man from death!”

³²When they heard Paul speak about a raising from death, some of them made fun of him, but others said, “We want to hear you speak about this again.” ³³And so Paul left the meeting. ³⁴Some men joined him and believed; among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and some others.

live. God did this so that ²⁷ men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his children.’

²⁸“Therefore since we are God’s children, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man’s design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

²⁹When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” At that, Paul left the ³⁰ Council. A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others. ³¹ ³² ³³ ³⁴

like any image shaped by man. It dishonors him to worship an idol. **God has overlooked the times.** Before Christ came, the Gentiles had no revelation from God, and the Jews had only an imperfect one (*Heb. 1:1-2; 8:6-7*). Since Christ has come, God’s final and complete Truth has been given to mankind. **To turn away from their evil ways.** Knowledge implies responsibility. When men learn the truth, they are obligated to obey it. The gospel leaves no one out. God’s command is to *all men everywhere*. **For he has fixed a day.** Everyone will be required to account for how he has used his earthly life. **By means of a man.** It will be Jesus Christ who sits at Judgment. **He has given proof of this.** The proof is the Resurrection. If Jesus is raised from death, then all will be raised (*1 Cor. 15:20*); this proves the Judgment.

32-34. Some of them made fun of him. Many want to believe that death “ends it all.” Some wanted to hear him talk about this again. This does not show any great interest, and Athens does not seem to have been such a great success. However, notice that some did believe, Not bad results from *one* sermon to people who did not even know the living God. Nothing is said of planting a church here, and even as late as Constantine the Great, Athens remained a center of Paganism. Paul did not return to Athens, nor did he write to Christians at Athens. But his greeting to “all God’s people in Greece” (*2 Cor. 1:1*) would have included any Christians in Athens.

In Corinth

18 After this, Paul left Athens and went on to Corinth. ²There he met a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had just come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Emperor Cladius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³and stayed and worked with them, because he earned his living by making tents, just as they did. ⁴He argued in the synagogue every Sabbath, trying to convince both Jews and Greeks.

⁵When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul gave his whole time to preaching the message, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. ⁶When they opposed him and said evil things about him, he protested by shaking the dust from his clothes and saying to them, "If you are lost, you yourselves must take the blame for it! I am not responsible. From now

In Corinth

18 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. Every Sabbath he argued in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

1. **And went on to Corinth.** This distance is forty-five miles by sea. The Romans had destroyed this city in 146 B.C., and it had been rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. It was a *gateway* for commerce between Italy and Asia. Its *moral climate* was demonstrated by the Temple of Venus Pandemos, which utilized a thousand *prostitutes*.

2. **A Jew named Aquila.** Some think the term "Jew" shows he was not yet a Christian. *Johnson* thinks both Aquila and Priscilla became Christians at Corinth. Yet Paul may mention that this man was a Jew, only to account for the fact he had just come from Italy.

3. **And stayed and worked with them.** They both made tents. Every Jewish boy was taught a manual trade, no matter what future had been planned for him. They said: "*Whoever does not teach his son to work, teaches him to steal.*" Paul sometimes worked at his trade to support himself. See *Acts 20:34; 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8; 1 Cor. 4:12*. Other times he received money from others (*Phil. 4:15-16*).

4. **He argued in the synagogue.** After working six days making tents, he spent the seventh day proclaiming the Good News of Christ.

5. **When Silas and Timothy arrived.** They had stayed at Berea (*Acts 17:14*), but Paul had sent for them to join him. Timothy must have joined him at Athens, and been immediately sent back to Thessalonica (*1 Thess. 3:1*). He would now be returning from there to be with Paul. Some, however, think Timothy is just now meeting with Paul the first time since Berea. Paul now devoted full time to preaching the message of Christ.

6. **When they opposed him.** They became hostile and said evil things against both him and the Christ he preached. **He protested.** Shaking the dust off was symbolic (*see Luke 9:5 and note*). **I am not responsible.** The choice was their own. Paul had fulfilled his mission. He would now go to the Gentiles in this area. [But see *Acts 19:8*.]

on I will go to the Gentiles.” ⁷So he left them and went to live in the house of a Gentile named Titius Justus, who worshiped God; his house was next to the synagogue. ⁸Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, he and all his family; and many other people in Corinth heard the message, believed, and were baptized.

⁹One night Paul had a vision, in which the Lord said to him, “Do not be afraid, but keep on speaking and do not give up, ¹⁰because I am with you. No one will be able to harm you, because many in this city are my people.” ¹¹So Paul stayed there for a year and a half, teaching the people the word of God.

¹²When Gallio was made the Roman governor of Greece, the Jews got together, seized Paul and took him into court. ¹³“This man,” they said, “is trying to persuade people to worship God in a way that is against the law!”

¹⁴Paul was about to speak, when Gallio said to the Jews, “If this were a matter of some wrong or evil crime that has been committed, it would be reasonable for me to be patient with you Jews. ¹⁵But since it is an argument about words and names and your own law, you yourselves must settle it. I will not be the judge of such things!”

Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.” So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him into court. “This man,” they charged, is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law.”

Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, “If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanor or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law—settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such

7-11. **So he left them.** Paul now makes the house of a Gentile into his own synagogue, next door to the Jewish synagogue! **Titus Justus** may be the Titus to whom Paul wrote a letter. See introduction to *Titus*. **Crispus.** Paul baptized the leader of the synagogue with his own hands (*1 Cor. 1:14*). **One night Paul had a vision.** God promised success in his mission to turn people to Christ. No political ideology can give Christianity a greater test than it received at Corinth. Yet there were many even here who would and did respond to the Good News of God’s act in Christ to set men free. See what Paul says in *1 Cor. 6:9-11*. **So Paul stayed there.** During this time he wrote the two letters to the Thessalonians.

12-17. **When Gallio was made.** Ramsay thinks this was in the summer of 52 A.D. Gallio’s brother, Seneca, was the teacher of Nero. **Seized Paul and took him into court.** This implies they could not stir up a mob against him, as had been done at other places. **In a way that is against the law.** Rome permitted many religions, including Judaism. Since these Jews have no authority over Paul, they try to make him “look bad” to Gallio. **Paul was about to speak.** Gallio interrupts to scold the Jews for bringing this to him. He seems to think Christianity is just another sect of Judaism. He has no love for either the Jews or the Christians, and throws the whole thing out of court. This does show that the Roman

¹⁶And he drove them out of the court. ¹⁷They all grabbed Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the court. But that did not bother Gallio a bit.

things." So he had them e- 16
jected from the court. Then 17
they all turned on Sosthenes,
the synagogue ruler, and
beat him in front of the court.
But Gallio showed no concern
whatever.

The Return to Antioch

¹⁸Paul stayed on in Corinth with the brothers for many days, then left them and sailed off with Priscilla and Aquila for Syria. Before sailing he made a vow in Cenchreae and had his head shaved. ¹⁹They arrived in Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He went into the synagogue and argued with the Jews. ²⁰They asked him to stay with them a long time, but he would not consent. ²¹Instead, he told them as he left, "If it is the will of God, I will come back to you." And so he sailed from Ephesus.

Apollos

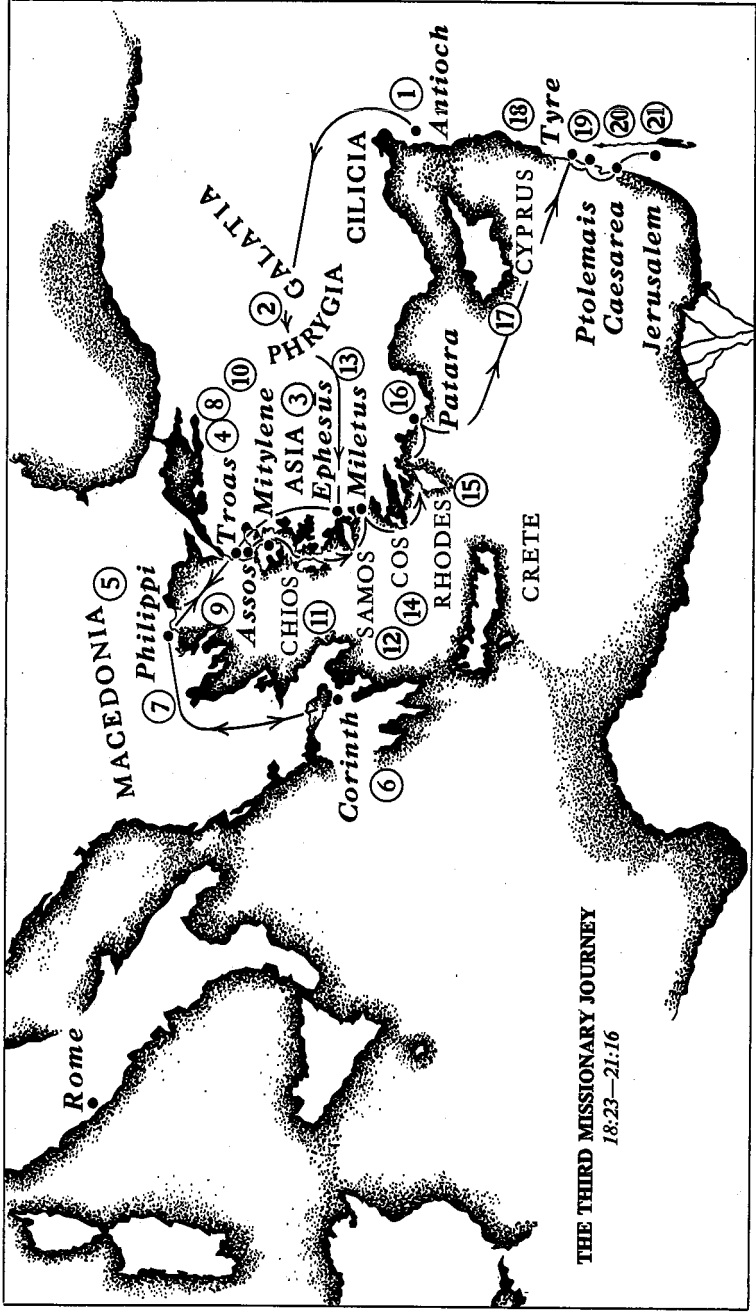
Paul stayed on in Corinth 18
for some time. Then he left
the brothers and sailed for
Syria, accompanied by Priscilla
and Aquila. Before he
sailed, he had his hair cut
off at Cenchrea because of a
vow he had taken. They ar- 19
rived at Ephesus, where Paul
left Priscilla and Aquila. He
himself went into the syna-
gogue and reasoned with the
Jews. When they asked him 20
to spend more time with
them, he declined. But as he
left, he promised, "I will 21
come back if it is God's
will." Then he set sail from
Ephesus.

²²When he arrived at Caesarea he went to Jerusalem and greeted the church, and then went to Antioch. ²³After spending some time there he left. He went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the believers.

When he landed at Caes- 22
area, he went up and greeted
the church and then went
down to Antioch. After 23
spending some time in An-
tioch, Paul set out from there
and traveled from place to
place throughout the region
of Galatia and Phrygia,
strengthening all the
disciples.

authorities would do nothing to stop the spread of Christianity at this time. **And he drove them out.** The guards ejected them. **They all grabbed Sosthenes.** They take out their frustration on their own leader by beating him. Gallio ignored the whole thing. It was only the Jews, who he considered irrational anyway.

18-23. **Paul stayed on in Corinth.** This may be included in the year and a half (*verse 11*). The point is that he was not forced to leave the area by what the Jews were doing. **Then left them and sailed off.** Heading back to Antioch in Syria, to the "parent church" that sent him out. **Before sailing he made a vow.** Cenchreae was the eastern harbor of Corinth, where shipping for the East arrived and departed. Jews often made vows for personal reasons. Why Paul did this just now, we do not know. It could be that it was part of some custom which would help him reach his Jewish people with the gospel (*compare Acts 21:24*). **They arrived in Ephesus.** On the coast of the Roman province of Asia. **He went into the synagogue.** As he always did. Compare note on *Acts 17:2*. They seemed to be interested in what he said, but he could not stay. **If it is the will of God.** See *James 4:13-17*. Paul was making a hurried trip to Jerusalem, perhaps for the feast of Pentecost. He did return (*Acts 19:1*). He sailed from Ephesus to Caesarea, then traveled some seventy miles inland to Jerusalem. **And greeted the church.** We are told nothing else about this visit. This would be his fourth visit to Jerusalem since becoming a Christian (*Acts 9:26; 11:30; 12:25*). It could be that he made this fourth visit to complete a vow (*verse 18*). **Then went to Antioch.** The "parent church" of the Gentile Christians. He did not stay long, but started his third tour of missions.



THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY
18:23—21:16

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

18:23—21:16

1. IN ANTIOCH OF SYRIA. 18:23a
Having spent some time here they prepare for the third journey. 23a
2. THROUGH THE PROVINCES OF GALATIA AND PHYRGIA. 18:23b
3. AT EPHEBUS. 18:24—19:41
 - a. Apolos teaching the baptism of John is corrected by Priscilla and Aquilla. 18:24-28
 - b. Paul corrects some on the baptism of John, Baptizes them, lays hands on them; they receive the spiritual gifts. 19:1-7
 - c. Paul preaches in the synagogues and the school of Tyrannus. 19:8-12
 - d. Exorcists overcome by evil spirit. The name of the Lord magnified. 19:13-20
 - e. Paul's far reaching plans. 19:21, 22
 - f. The riot of the silversmiths. 19:23-41
4. AT TROAS. 2 Cor. 2:12, 13
 - a. A door opened for the word. 12
 - b. Greatly troubled at the failure to find Titus; presses on into Macedonia. 13
5. IN MACEDONIA. 20:1, 2
 - a. A tender parting. 1
 - b. Spoke on the way to Macedonia. 2
6. AT CORINTH IN GREECE. 20:3-5
 - a. His labors with the Corinthian church. 3-5
 - b. He probably wrote the epistle of Romans. Cf. Rom. 15:23, 24; 16:23
 - c. Also the epistle of Galatians from here.
 - d. Learning of the plot for his life he changes his plans. 5
 - e. A collection was taken from here by Paul according to previous instructions. Cf. 1 Cor. 16:1, 2
7. AT PHILIPPI. 20:6a
Sailed from here after "the days of unleavened bread" on his way to Jerusalem. 6a
8. IN TROAS. 20:6b-13
 - a. The seven days stay. 6b
 - b. The worship on the first day of the week. 7
 - c. Paul's sermon. The raising of Eutychus. 8-13
9. AT ASSOS. 20:14a
Met Paul here as he had walked from Troas. 14a
10. AT MITYLENE. 20:14b
Overnight stop. 14b
11. OVER AGAINST CHIOS. 20:15a
Overnight stop. 15a
12. AT SAMOS. 20:15b
Overnight stop. 15b
13. IN MILETUS. 20:15c-38
 - a. Past Ephesus to Miletus. Calls elders. 15c-17
 - b. Paul's past ministry, as exemplified at Ephesus. 18-21; 26
 - c. His attitude to his own future. 22-24
 - d. His ultimate concern as touching his hearers. 25
 - e. Conditions at Ephesus in the near future. 28-30
 - f. The self-sacrificing spirit of his example. 31-35
 - g. The tender farewell. 36-38
14. AT COS. 21:1a
Anchored overnight. 21a
15. AT RHODES. 21:1b
Overnight stop. 1b
16. AT PATARA. 21:1c-2
Change of ships. 1c-2
17. IN THE SIGHT OF CYPRUS ON THE LEFT. 21:3a
18. AT TYRE. 21:3b-6
 - a. Tarrying seven days. 3b-4a
 - b. Tried to prevent Paul from going to Jerusalem. 4b
 - c. Sorrowful parting. 5, 6
19. IN PTOLEMAIS. 21:7
Saluted the brethren and abode one day. 7
20. CAESAREA. 21:8-14
 - a. Stayed with Philip the evangelist and his four gifted daughters. 8
 - b. Prophetic promise of affliction in Jerusalem. 9-14
21. IN JERUSALEM. 21:15, 16
On to Jerusalem to stay in the home of Mnason. 15, 16

Apollos in Ephesus and Corinth

²⁴A certain Jew named Apollos, born in Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker and had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. ²⁵He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm spoke and taught correctly the facts about Jesus. However, he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him home with them and explained to him more correctly the Way of God. ²⁷Apollos decided to go to Greece, so the believers in Ephesus helped him by writing to their brothers in Greece, urging them to welcome him there. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who through God's grace had become believers. ²⁸For with his strong arguments he defeated the Jews in public debates, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.

Paul in Ephesus

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the province and arrived in Ephesus. There he found

Meanwhile a Jew named ²⁴ Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, knowing only the baptism of John. He began to speak ²⁶ boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

When Apollos wanted to ²⁷ go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For ²⁸ he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Paul in Ephesus

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disci-

24-28. A certain Jew named Apollos. Alexandria was the cultural center of the Greek-speaking Jews. The Septuagint [Greek translation of the Old Testament] was written there; and the most magnificent synagogue was there. Johnson thinks this man was a teacher of the Law. And taught correctly the facts about Jesus. He may have known as much of the facts as were contained in Mark's Gospel, in its mutilated form (*without the longer ending*), and so knew only John's water baptism. See note on Acts 19:4. He knew nothing of the final instructions Christ had given (Matt. 28:19-20) and the events of Pentecost. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him. The fact that he knew only the baptism of John distorted his understanding, and it was necessary to explain more correctly the Way of God. Nothing is said about him being re-immersed (baptized), but Acts 19:5 would strongly imply that he was. Apollos decided to go to Greece. The believers send letters along with him to "identify" him to their brothers (in Christ) there. He was a great help. His knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures helped him present a powerful argument to prove Jesus is the Messiah.

1. Paul traveled through the interior of the province. He took the less traveled but shorter mountainous route. Ephesus was on the coast, near sea level. There he found some disciples. These disciples BELIEVED in Christ as the Messiah, yet did not have a complete knowledge of him, and they had not received "Christian baptism" (verse 3). We do not have enough facts to get the whole picture of their exact situation. They had been baptized with John's baptism - after the Great Commission had been given, and were likely Jews. Some connect them with Apollos (Acts 18:25), and think he had baptized them with John's baptism.

some disciples, ²and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

"We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit," they answered.

³"Well, then, what kind of baptism did you receive?" Paul asked.

"The baptism of John," they answered.

"Paul said, "The baptism of John was for those who turned from their sins; and he told the people of Israel to believe in the one who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus."

ples and asked them, "Did ² you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

They answered, "No, we have not even heard that the Holy Spirit has been given."

So Paul asked, "Then ³ what baptism did you receive?"

"John's baptism," they replied.

Paul said, "John's bap- ⁴ tism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in

2. **Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?** Paul's question must refer to the special gifts, since a believer would be expected to have the Spirit living (indwelling) in him (*1 Cor. 6:19-20*). Their answer shows a defect in their basic relationship to Christ. **We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.** John the Baptist taught that the Spirit would be given. Their answer must mean: "We do not know the role of the Holy Spirit in this." They seemed to know nothing about Pentecost and all that happened there. They live nearly a thousand miles from Jerusalem, without means of rapid communication.

3. **What kind of baptism did you receive?** Their ignorance immediately causes Paul to question their basic obedience in baptism. Note he does not question their faith. This implies that receiving the Spirit as a gift (indwelling) is to be associated with "Christian baptism." Compare *Acts 2:38; 5:32; Titus 3:5*. Their ignorance of the role of the Holy Spirit being given - showed something wrong with the baptism they had received. **The baptism of John.** The baptism of John the Baptist was for a different purpose, and did not confer the rights and privileges which Christian baptism does.

John's Baptism

Christian Baptism

Subjects: the saved (fleshly Israel).
Qualifier: repentance.
Purpose: to demonstrate repentance. renewal only - no change in state.
Elements: water only. by the authority of God, but in/into no Name.
Result: spiritual re-activation of one who was already God's child and already in the kingdom by a natural birth.

Subjects: the unsaved.
Qualifier: faith in Christ, repentance, confession.
Purpose: a change in state - a whole new relationship to God. new birth (regeneration).
Elements: water & Spirit [John 3:5; Titus 3:5], by the authority of God. IN the name of Jesus Christ. INTO the Three Names of God. INTO the death of Jesus [Rom. 6:3-4]. INTO many precious promises.
Result: forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit as a gift [Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 6:19-20]; transfer into the Kingdom/church [Col. 1:13]; transformed into God's friend.

4. **The baptism of John was for those who turned from their sins.** John's baptism was a *sign* of repentance - in water only. Christian baptism is *so that your sins will be forgiven* and to *receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit*. It is a *new birth* of "water and the Spirit." Also, the baptism of John the Baptist pointed people forward to Jesus and prepared them to accept him.

⁵When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them; they spoke in strange tongues and also proclaimed God's message. ⁷They were about twelve men in all.

⁸Paul went into the synagogue, and for three months spoke boldly with the people, arguing with them and trying to convince them about the Kingdom of God. ⁹But some of them were stubborn and would not believe, and said evil things about the Way of the Lord before the whole group. So Paul left them and took the disciples with him; and every day he held discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This went on for two years, so that all the people who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Gentiles, heard the word of the Lord.

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were baptized into the name
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licly maligned the Way. So
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ture hall of Tyrannus. This 10
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lived in the province of Asia
heard the word of the Lord.

5. **When they heard this.** Paul explained the difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism. They immediately were baptized into the union with Christ (*Gal. 3:27*). This example shows it is not wrong to correct a defect in obedience, upon learning the will of Christ.

6. **Paul placed his hands on them.** The special *gifts* the Spirit gives were only transmitted in this way [through an apostle, or with an apostle present]. Paul lays his hands on them (*compare Acts 8:17; Rom. 1:11*). **They spoke in strange tongues.** Languages sound strange to one who does not understand them. This gift: (1) God understood (*1 Cor. 14:2*); (2) helped only the speaker (*1 Cor. 14:4*); (3) had to be explained to benefit others (*1 Cor. 14:5-27*). All Christians have the Spirit living in them (*Rom. 8:9*); but not all Christians received the special *gifts* the Spirit gives (*1 Cor. 12:4-7*).

7. **They were about twelve men in all.** These men appear here and nowhere else. Perhaps this type of thing happened many times, but God included this one to show the contrast between John's baptism and Christian baptism. John's baptism expired at the Cross.

8. **Paul went into the synagogue.** This is the one he spoke in before (*Acts 18:19-20*).

9. **But some of them were stubborn.** Those who refused to believe severely opposed the Good News of Christ. So Paul left, taking all the believers with him, and began using the lecture hall of Tyrannus as a base of operations. This is very much like the case of Titus Justus (*Acts 18:7*).

10. **This went on for two years.** He used this lecture hall for two years. His total time in Ephesus was three years (*Acts 20:31*). **So that all the people.** Paul's preaching had strong influence in the province of Asia. We know this from: (1) the effect on those who practiced magic; (2) from what Demetrius says (*verses 24-27*); (3) about forty years later, Pliny wrote in a letter to Trajan that Christianity had caused the temples of the gods to be deserted.

The Sons of Sceva

¹¹God was performing unusual miracles through Paul. ¹²Even handkerchiefs and aprons he had used were taken to the sick, and their diseases were driven away and the evil spirits would go out of them. ¹³Some Jews who traveled around and drove out evil spirits also tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus to do this. They said to the evil spirits, "I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches." ¹⁴There were seven sons of a Jewish High Priest named Sceva who were doing this.

¹⁵But the evil spirit said to them, "I know Jesus and I know about Paul; but you—who are you?"

¹⁶The man who had the evil spirit in him attacked them with such violence that he defeated them. They all ran away from his house, wounded and with their clothes torn off. ¹⁷All the Jews and Gentiles who lived in Ephesus heard about this; they were all filled with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was given greater honor. ¹⁸Many of the believers came, publicly admitting

God did extraordinary 11
miracles through Paul,
Handkerchiefs and aprons 12
that had touched him were
taken to the sick, and their
illnesses were cured and the
evil spirits left them.

Some Jews who went a- 13
round driving out evil spirits
tried to invoke the name of
the Lord Jesus over those
who were demon-possessed.
They would say, "In the
name of Jesus whom Paul
preaches, I command you to
come out." Seven sons of 14
Sceva, a Jewish chief priest,
were doing this. The evil 15
spirit answered them, "Jesus
I know and Paul I know, but
who are you?" Then the 16
man who had the evil spirit
jumped on them and over-
powered them all. He gave
them such a beating that
they ran out of the house
naked and bleeding.

When this became known 17
to the Jews and Greeks living
in Ephesus, they were all
seized with fear, and the
name of the Lord Jesus was
held in high honor. Many of 18
those who believed now came
and openly confessed their

11-12 **God was performing unusual miracles.** Miracles are always God's doing. To show Paul spoke by his authority, God let his power go with things carried from Paul to the sick. The people could see that the charms and amulets which they had trusted, did not have the power which handkerchiefs and aprons from Paul had.

13-16. **Some Jews.** These were "professional exorcists" who made their living by driving out evil spirits. *Justin Martyr* says that most of these Jewish exorcists had adopted the same superstitions and magic-aids as the heathen. **Also tried to use the name.** They thought the name of "Jesus Christ" was an *incantation* to drive out evil spirits. **There were seven sons.** Sceva may have been a *chief priest* at Jerusalem, who had been deposed. "High Priest" may only mean he was from a high-priestly family (*compare Acts 4:6*). **But the evil spirit said to them.** The spirit spoke and acted through the man he possessed. God may have directed this to show Paul's authority. [On demon possession, see note on *Matt. 4:24*.] **Attacked them with such violence.** This would show that they had no power at all over the evil spirit.

17-20. **All the Jews and Gentiles.** Ephesus was a center of magic and the black arts. This happening would have a strong effect on those who sold magic charms, etc., and would honor the Christ whom Paul preached. **Many of the believers came.** Many had believed in Christ, but secretly continued to hold on to their belief and practice of magic. There are Christians today who wear charms, go by signs,

and revealing what they had done. ¹⁹Many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the presence of everyone. They added up the price of the books and the total came to fifty thousand dollars. ²⁰In this powerful way the word of the Lord kept spreading and growing stronger.

The Riot in Ephesus

²¹After these things had happened, Paul made up his mind to travel through Macedonia and Greece and go on to Jerusalem. "After I go there," he said, "I must also see Rome." ²²So he sent Timothy and Erastus, two of his helpers, to Macedonia, while he spent more time in the province of Asia.

²³It was at this time that there was serious trouble in Ephesus because of the Way of the Lord. ²⁴A certain silversmith named Demetrius made silver models of the temple of the goddess Artemis, and his business brought a great deal of profit to the workers. ²⁵So he called them all together, with others whose work was like theirs, and said to them, "Men, you know that our

evil deeds. A number who ¹⁹ had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the ²⁰ word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

After all this had hap- ²¹ pened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also." He sent two of his ²² helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

The Riot in Ephesus

About that time there ²³ arose a great disturbance about the Way. A silversmith ²⁴ named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. He called them together, ²⁵ along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this

and go to fortune-tellers. **Brought their books together.** Books of charms, incantations, etc., which claimed to make it possible to force spirits to work for a person, gain health, wealth and fame. They showed their repentance by their action. **Fifty thousand dollars.** This itself would be a strong argument in the minds of the people. **In this powerful way.** About this time Paul wrote in his First Letter to the Corinthians: "*There is a real opportunity here for great and worthwhile work*" (1 Cor. 16:9).

21-22. **After these things had happened.** The things just mentioned. He is now ready to move on to other places. He sends Timothy and Erastus on ahead to Macedonia. Compare 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10-11. Erastus is mentioned in Rom. 16:23 as the "city treasurer" of Corinth [although it might not be the same man], and in 2 Tim. 4:20.

23-34. **That there was serious trouble.** Things had been peaceful up to now. Notice trouble starts from a Gentile source. **Made silver models of the temple.** The temple of Artemis [Diana] was one of the wonders of the world. The third temple then stood, built of white marble, 425 feet long by 220 feet wide, with 127 columns. In it was a "sacred stone that fell down from heaven," probably a meteorite, which may have been carved into an image of Artemis. Thousands came to this temple, and brought these silver models which were small enough to wear as a "charm" on a bracelet. Demetrius and the

prosperity comes from this work. ²⁶You can see and hear for yourselves what this fellow Paul is doing. He says that gods made by men are not gods at all, and has succeeded in convincing many people, both here in Ephesus and in nearly the whole province of Asia. ²⁷There is the danger, then, that this business of ours will get a bad name. Not only that, there is also the danger that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will come to mean nothing, and that her greatness will be destroyed—the goddess worshiped by everyone in Asia and in all the world!”

²⁸As the crowd heard these words they became furious, and started shouting, “Great is Artemis of Ephesus!” ²⁹The uproar spread throughout the whole city. The mob grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus, two Macedonians who were traveling with Paul, and rushed with them to the theater. ³⁰Paul himself wanted to go before the crowd, but the believers would not let him. ³¹Some of the provincial authorities, who were his friends, also sent him a message begging him not to show himself in the theater. ³²Meanwhile, the whole meeting was in an uproar: some people were shouting one thing, others were shouting something else, because most of them did not

business. And you see and ²⁶hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. There is danger not ²⁷only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.”

When they heard this, ²⁸they were furious and began shouting: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” Soon ²⁹the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. Paul ³⁰wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. Even ³¹some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.

The assembly was in con- ³²fusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were

others were making themselves rich by selling these. **You can see and hear.** As Paul led people to Christ, they quit buying the silver models. The religious zeal of Demetrius was based on greed. **Johnson** says that when paganism fell, much of the material of this temple was taken to Constantinople and used in building the church of St. Sophia. **The uproar spread.** Nothing would stir up a mob more quickly than to believe both their business and their religion were in danger. **And rushed with them to the theater.** This was a large amphitheater, which would seat 20,000 to 30,000 people. It was used for public meetings. **Paul himself wanted to go.** He wanted to speak to the mob and answer the charges, but the believers were afraid the frenzied mob would kill him. **Some of the provincial authorities.** Ten of these “Asiarchs” were chosen each year to take charge of the games and festivals. Their president always lived in Ephesus. We see many times in the life of Paul when the Roman officials treat him not only with respect, but empathy. **Most of them did not even know.** It was a “blind mob,” caught up in the

even know why they had come together. ³³Some of the people concluded that Alexander was responsible, since the Jews made him go up to the front. Then Alexander motioned with his hand and tried to make a speech of defense before the people. ³⁴But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all shouted together the same thing for two hours, "Great is Artemis of Ephesus!"

³⁵At last the city clerk was able to calm the crowd. "Men of Ephesus!" he said. "Everyone knows that the city of Ephesus is the keeper of the temple of the great Artemis and of the sacred stone that fell down from heaven. ³⁶Nobody can deny these things. So then, you must calm down and not do anything reckless. ³⁷You have brought these men here, even though they have not robbed temples or said evil things about our goddess. ³⁸If Demetrius and his workers have an accusation against someone, there are the regular days for court and there are the authorities; they can accuse each other there. ³⁹But if there is something more that you want, it will have to be settled in the legal meeting of citizens. ⁴⁰For there is the danger that we will be accused of a riot in what has happened today. There is no excuse for all this uproar, and we would not be able to give a good reason for it." ⁴¹After saying this, he dismissed the meeting.

there. The Jews pushed 33 Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people. But when they realized he was a Jew, they all 34 shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

The city clerk quieted the 35 crowd and said:

"Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven? Therefore, since these facts 36 are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash. You have brought 37 these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess. If, then, Demetrius 38 and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges. If 39 there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. As it is, we are in danger of 40 being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it." After he had 41 said this, he dismissed the assembly.

passion of the moment. **That Alexander was responsible.** One of the Jewish leaders, who intended to speak to the mob and put all the blame on the Christians. But this "backfires," and the mob places the guilt on he and the other Jews. They will not allow him to speak, and they shout for two hours!

35-40. **At last the city clerk.** He ranked next to the mayor, and was sometimes "acting mayor." He is able to calm them and reason with them. **Of the sacred stone.** Meteorites were believed to be supernatural, and heathen priests often built religions around them. This one may have been carved into an image of Artemis. Other such *sacred stones from heaven* were: the Palladium of Troy; the Diana of Tauris; and the Pallas of Athens. **You have brought these men.** Gaius and Aristarchus (*verse 29*). They had neither robbed temples nor said evil things about the goddess. **If Demetrius.** He must respect the "due process of law." **For there is the danger.** Roman authorities were severe to those who started riots (*see Mark 15:7*). Ephesus was a "free city," with its own government, but could lose this freedom for just such things as this riot.

To Macedonia and Greece

20 After the uproar died down, Paul called together the believers, and with words of encouragement said good-bye to them. Then he left and went on to Macedonia. ²He went through those regions and encouraged the people with many messages. Then he came to Greece, ³where he stayed three months. He was getting ready to go to Syria when he discovered that the Jews were plotting against him; so he decided to go back through Macedonia. ⁴Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, from Berea, went with him; so did Aristarchus and Secundus, from Thessalonica; Gaius, from Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus, from the province of Asia. ⁵They went ahead and waited for us in Troas. ⁶We sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined them in Troas, where we spent a week.

Paul's Last Visit in Troas

⁷On Saturday evening we gathered together for the fellowship meal. Paul spoke to the people, and kept on speaking until midnight, since he

Through Macedonia and Greece

20 When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said good-bye and set out for Macedonia. He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece, where he stayed three months. Because the Jews made a plot against him just as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to go back through Macedonia. He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy, and from the province of Asia Tychicus and Trophimus. These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas. But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days.

Eutychus Raised from the Dead at Troas

On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul preached

1-6. **After the uproar died down.** Paul had already decided to go through Macedonia and Greece (*Acts 19:21*), but planned to stay in Ephesus until after Pentecost (*1 Cor. 16:8*). This time had come (about the middle of May, 55 or 56 A.D. by the corrected calendar). **After he encouraged the disciples,** he left for Macedonia. **He went through those regions.** Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and perhaps other churches. **Then he came to Greece.** To Corinth. During the three months there, he wrote the Letter to the Romans (*Ramsay* gives the spring of 57 A.D. as the date for this). **When he discovered.** We have no details of this. To avoid them, he did not sail to Syria, but went back through Macedonia. **Sopater.** Only mentioned here. [Sosispater (*Rom. 16:21*) is a different person.] **Aristarchus.** *Acts 19:29*. **Secundus.** Only mentioned here. **Gaius, from Derbe.** Not the Gaius of *Acts 19:29*. **Timothy.** See notes on *Acts 16:1-4* **Tychicus.** *Col. 4:7-8*. **Trophimus.** *Acts 21:29*. **They went ahead.** Paul stayed in Philippi while they went ahead to Troas and waited for him. **Waited for us.** *Us* implies Luke was along also. We see Luke with Paul a few years before this (see note on *Acts 16:10*). Some think Luke had stayed on at Philippi until this time, working with the church there. **And five days later.** This had only taken two days before (*Acts 16:11-12*), which implied bad weather.

7. **On Saturday evening.** This is the evening of the "first day of the week." By the Jewish way of figuring time, the Sabbath expired at 6:00 P.M. on the day we call Saturday, and the first day of the week began there and continued until 6 P.M. of the day we call Sunday, at which time it terminated and the second day of the week began. We follow the Roman method of counting from midnight to midnight.

was going to leave the next day. ⁸There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. ⁹A young man named Eutychus was sitting in the window; and as Paul kept on talking, Eutychus got sleepier and sleepier, until he finally went sound asleep and fell from the third story to the ground. They picked him up, and he was dead. ¹⁰But Paul went down and threw himself on him and hugged him. "Don't worry," he said, "he is still alive!" ¹¹Then he went back upstairs, broke bread, and ate. After talking with them for a long time until sunrise, Paul left. ¹²They took the young man home alive, and were greatly comforted.

to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.

From Troas to Miletus

¹³We went on ahead to the ship and sailed off to Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard. He had told us to do this, because he

Paul's Farewell to the Ephesian Elders

We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos,

We gathered together. This is a clear example of the practice of the believers which began immediately after the Lord Jesus raised from death. They met together on the first day of the new week for religious purposes (*compare 1 Cor. 16:1-2*). This was their regular meeting, at which Paul spoke. **For the fellowship meal.** It was the custom well into the middle of the second century to eat the Lord's Supper [Holy Meal] in the CONTEXT of a "fellowship meal" (also known as a "love feast," "agape," "eucharist"). Compare notes on *Acts 2:42,46; Jude 12*. Note they gathered together for this. *Verse 11* shows the actual eating of the Lord's Supper [Holy Meal]. **The next day.** Sunday morning. The Sabbath (Saturday) was still a day of rest for many. [On the use of *day*, see *John 11:9*.] Sunday is the *Lord's Day* (see note on *Rev. 1:10*).

8-10. **There were many lamps.** These were their source of light. On the "upstairs room," see note on *Mark 14:15*. **Eutychus was sitting in the window.** The language implies that he was killed by the fall, and that he was then brought back to life by a miracle (*similar to 2 Kings 4:34*).

11. **Broke bread, and ate.** This is the Lord's Supper [Holy Meal]. The Fellowship Meal would follow this. The two were closely associated, yet distinct from each other. *McGarvey* says: "To the objection that Paul alone is said to have broken and eaten the bread, I answer, that this would be a very natural expression to indicate that Paul officiated at the table; but, on the other hand, if it was a common meal, it would be strange that he alone should eat, especially to the exclusion of his traveling companions, who were going to start as early in the morning as he did." *Johnson* says: "It is probable that this meeting at Troas began at the close of the Sabbath, in the evening, was continued through the night, the Lord's Supper being celebrated in the latter part of the night, before dawn of Sunday, and that at day-break Paul departed."

WHEN WE MEET TOGETHER ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, AND TOGETHER WE EAT THE SUPPER OF THE LORD, WE HAVE DONE WHAT GOD AUTHORIZED US TO DO.

13-16. **And sailed off to Assos.** Luke says: "we went on ahead," implying that he and some others went by ship. Paul followed the Roman road that connected Troas with Assos (a distance of twenty miles). It was about twice as far by ship, but Paul could expect to arrive there about the same time. We do not

was going there by land. ¹⁴When he met us in Assos, we took him aboard and went on to Mitylene. ¹⁵We sailed from there and arrived off Chios the next day. A day later we came to Samos, and the following day we reached Miletus. ¹⁶Paul had decided to sail on by Ephesus, so as not to lose any time in the province of Asia. He was in a hurry to arrive in Jerusalem, if at all possible, by the day of Pentecost.

Paul's Farewell Speech to the Elders of Ephesus

¹⁷Paul sent a message from Miletus to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. ¹⁸When they arrived, he said to them, "You know how I spent the whole time I was with you, from the first day I arrived in the province of Asia. ¹⁹With all humility and many tears I did my work as the Lord's servant, through the hard times that came to me because of the plots of the Jews. ²⁰You know that I did not hold back anything that would be of help to you as I preached and taught you in public and in your homes. ²¹To Jews and Gentiles alike I gave solemn warning that they should turn from their sins to God,

where we were going to take Paul aboard. He had made this arrangement because he was going there on foot. When he met us at Assos, we took him aboard and went on to Mitylene. The next day we set sail from there and arrived off Chios. The day after that we crossed over to Samos, and on the following day arrived at Miletus. Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, for he was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem, if possible, by the day of Pentecost.

From Miletus, Paul sent ¹⁷ to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them: ¹⁸

"You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I ¹⁹ served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. You ²⁰ know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I ²¹ have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

know why Paul walked, or whether he went by himself. *Johnson* thinks a number of brethren walked with Paul. **Mitylene.** About thirty miles from Assos, it is the capital of the island of Lesbos. **Chios.** An island near the coast of Asia (the Roman province), famous for its wine. **Samos.** Another island, separated from the mainland by a narrow channel. **Miletus.** About thirty miles south of Ephesus. *Ramsay* thinks the route of the ship forced Paul to land here rather than Ephesus. Paul may have done this deliberately, because of his hurry to reach Jerusalem before Pentecost. *Verse 16* seems to say this.

17-27. **Asking the elders of the church to meet him.** We are not told about them before this, but it was Paul's custom to appoint elders in each church (*Acts 14:23*). Elders [church leaders] are also called shepherds [bishops] in *verse 28*. The modern system of a "heirarchical series of bishops" is *post-apostolic*, not beginning until after the death of Paul and the other apostles. **You know how.** He reminds them of the example he set in his own life. **As I preached and taught you in public and in your homes.** Three months in the synagogue at Ephesus; two years in the lecture-hall of Tyrannus; plus many other times and places. **I gave solemn warning.** The positive message of God's act in Christ to

and believe in our Lord Jesus. ²²And now, in obedience to the Holy Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. ²³I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit has warned me that prison and troubles wait for me. ²⁴But I reckon my own life to be worth nothing to me, in order that I may complete my mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do, which is to declare the Good News of the grace of God.

²⁵"I have gone about among all of you, preaching the Kingdom of God. And now I know that none of you will ever see me again. ²⁶So I solemnly declare to you this very day: if any of you should be lost, I am not responsible. ²⁷For I have not held back from announcing to you the whole purpose of God. ²⁸Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock which the Holy Spirit has placed in your care. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he made his own through the death of his own Son. ²⁹I know that after I leave, fierce wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock. ³⁰The time will come when some men from your own group will tell lies to lead the believers away after them. ³¹Watch, then, and remember that with many tears, day and night, I taught every one of you for three years.

"And now, compelled by ²² the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life ²⁴ worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

"Now I know that none of ²⁵ you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I ²⁷ have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you ²⁸ overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, ²⁹ savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your ³⁰ own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! ³¹ Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

set men free, also contains some negative warnings. In obedience to the Holy Spirit. He was obeying the instructions of the Spirit. **That none of you will ever see me again.** This is his personal opinion. He may have expected to die for Christ at Jerusalem. Some are almost certain that Paul did revisit these churches during the time of his release from the first imprisonment until he was again imprisoned and put to death. **If any of you should be lost.** He would not be responsible, if they were lost, because he had already announced to them the whole purpose of God.

28-31. Keep watch. This is said especially to elders [church leaders]. Compare *Heb. 13:17*. **Over yourselves.** Their first responsibility was over themselves, since they could not fulfill their mission unless they themselves set an example by their own lives. **And over all the flock.** The flock is the group of believers who make up the church in a locality. "Church leaders [elders] are a horizontal extension of the congregation, called to guide the spiritual growth and development of each member." **Through the death of his own Son.** Death is symbolic of the totality of God's act in Christ. Compare *Matt. 20:28*; *Mark 10:45*; *Titus 2:14*; *Heb. 2:9, 14-17*; *Gal. 3:13*. [Blood is symbolic of both life and death (*Lev. 17:11*).] **Fierce wolves will come among you.** He still uses the symbolism of the flock. "Fierce wolves" are false teachers, and the special reference is to the "circumcisers" (*Acts 15:1-2*). Paul's whole ministry was a battle with these people. The early church faced all the problems which we face today! See the *Third Letter of John*.

³²“And now I place you in the care of God and the message of his grace. He is able to build you up and give you the blessings he keeps for all his people. ³³I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. ³⁴You yourselves know that with these hands of mine I have worked and provided everything that my companions and I have needed. ³⁵I have shown you in all things that by working hard in this way we must help the weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus himself said, ‘There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.’”

³⁶When Paul finished, he knelt down with them all and prayed. ³⁷They were all crying as they hugged him and kissed him good-bye. ³⁸They were especially sad at the words he had said that they would never see him again. And so they went with him to the ship.

Paul Goes to Jerusalem

21 We said good-bye to them and left. After sailing straight across, we came to Cos; the next day we reached Rhodes, and from there we went on to Patara. ²There we found a ship that was going to Phoenicia; so we went aboard

“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

When he had said this, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

On to Jerusalem

21 After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on

32-35. **And now I place you in the care of God.** He places a solemn obligation upon them. Compare *James 1:21; Heb. 4:12. For all his people.* See *1 Cor. 1:2; 6:9-11. I have not coveted.* He had not preached because of any motives of self-interest or a desire to make himself rich. At Ephesus he had worked at making tents to support both himself and his companions. See note on *Acts 18:3.* The “love of money” is sinful (*1 Tim. 6:10*). **There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.** These are genuine words of Jesus. The *Four Gospels* give only a small part of all Jesus said and did (*John 21:25*). Paul had “acted out” these words of Jesus in his life!

36-38. **He knelt down with them all and prayed.** This is the final good-bye. These people are more emotional than we are, but remember Paul is their spiritual leader and close friend, and they never expect to see him again in this world of time!!! *Johnson* thinks Paul did get to see them one more time, after his release from the first imprisonment (see note on verse 25).

1. **We said good-bye to them and left.** The Greek implies “tearing themselves away,” a separation both difficult and painful. **We came to Cos.** A small island, forty miles south of Miletus. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, was born there. **Rhodes.** Fifty miles further south. The Colossus of Rhodes was one of the wonders of the world, but an earthquake had brought it to the ground by this date. **Patara.** On the coast of Lycia, some thirty miles west of Myra. His ship ended its route here, and he found another ship which was going to Phoenicia (see *Tyre*). **Where we could see Cyprus.** He had worked there on his first tour of missions (*Acts 13:4-13*). **On to Syria.** The Romans used Syria as the general name for Phoenicia, Palestine, and Antioch. **We went ashore at Tyre.** Tyre was a city of

and sailed away. ³We came to where we could see Cyprus, and sailed south of it on to Syria. We went ashore at Tyre, where the ship was going to unload its cargo. ⁴We found some believers there, and stayed with them a week. By the power of the Spirit they told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. ⁵But when our time with them was over, we left and went on our way. All of them, with their wives and children, went with us out of the city. We all knelt down on the beach and prayed. ⁶Then we said good-bye to one another, and we went on board the ship while they went back home.

⁷We continued our voyage, sailing from Tyre to Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. ⁸On the following day we left and arrived in Caesarea. There we went to the house of the evangelist Philip, and stayed with him. He was one of the seven men who had been chosen in Jerusalem. ⁹He had four unmarried daughters who proclaimed God's message. ¹⁰We had been there for several days when a prophet named Agabus arrived from Judea. ¹¹He came to us, took Paul's belt, tied

board and set sail. After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. After saying good-by to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.

We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. He had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy.

After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied

Phoenicia. "It's most important ruins now lie beneath the sea and can be seen through its waters." **We found some believers there.** They did not "stumble on them," but knew they were there (*Acts 15:3*). **And stayed with them a week.** This seems to be Paul's usual plan of action (*compare Acts 20:6; 28:14*). It implies he would wait to have one solemn meeting with them on the Lord's Day, and eat the Lord's Supper [Holy Meal] with them. **By the power of the Spirit.** They warned him of the dangers waiting for him at Jerusalem. This does not contradict *Acts 20:22*, since he himself speaks of the fact that the same Holy Spirit had warned him in the next verse of that chapter. **We all knelt down.** The whole congregation, men, women, and children. They prayed together, then Paul and the others went on board the ship.

7-14. **To Ptolemais.** On the coast, about half-way to Caesarea. Named for the Egyptian king who rebuilt the city. This is the Accho of *Judges 1:31*. **And arrived in Caesarea.** Some thirty or forty miles south. Paul had been here twice before (*Acts 9:30; 18:22*). The first Gentiles were brought to Christ here. **To the house of the evangelist Philip.** He had preached in the cities of the sea coast (*Acts 8:40*). **Who proclaimed God's message.** *Compare Acts 2:17*. The fact that they were unmarried does not mean they were members of a special religious order. The spirit of prophecy is not confined to men, either in the Old or New Testaments. Deborah and Huldah are Old Testament examples. Elizabeth, Mary, Anna, and the daughters of Philip are New Testament examples. On the role of a prophet, see note on *Eph. 4:11*. In the East, men would not be free to spend much time teaching women in private, but a woman prophet could. *Compare Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 14:34-35*. **A prophet named Agabus.** He had come especially to meet Paul. [We met this man in *Acts 11:28*.] In the style of the Old Testament prophets, Agabus takes Paul's belt and in a dramatic way shows what will happen to Paul. *Compare*

up his own feet and hands with it, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says: The owner of this belt will be tied up in this way by the Jews in Jerusalem, and they will hand him over to the Gentiles."

¹²When we heard this, we and the others there begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. ¹³But he answered, "What are you doing, crying like this and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be tied up in Jerusalem but even to die there for the sake of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁴We could not convince him, so we gave up and said, "May the Lord's will be done."

¹⁵After spending some time there, we got our things ready and left for Jerusalem. ¹⁶Some of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, and took us to the house of the man we were going to stay with—Mnason, from Cyprus, who had been a believer since the early days.

Paul Visits James

¹⁷When we arrived in Jerusalem the brothers welcomed us warmly. ¹⁸The next day Paul went with us to see James; and all the church elders were present. ¹⁹Paul greeted them and gave a complete report of everything that God had done among the Gentiles through his work. ²⁰After hearing him, they all praised God. Then they

his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'"

When we heard this, we ¹²and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When he ¹⁴would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."

After this, we got ready ¹⁵and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples.

Paul's Arrival at Jerusalem

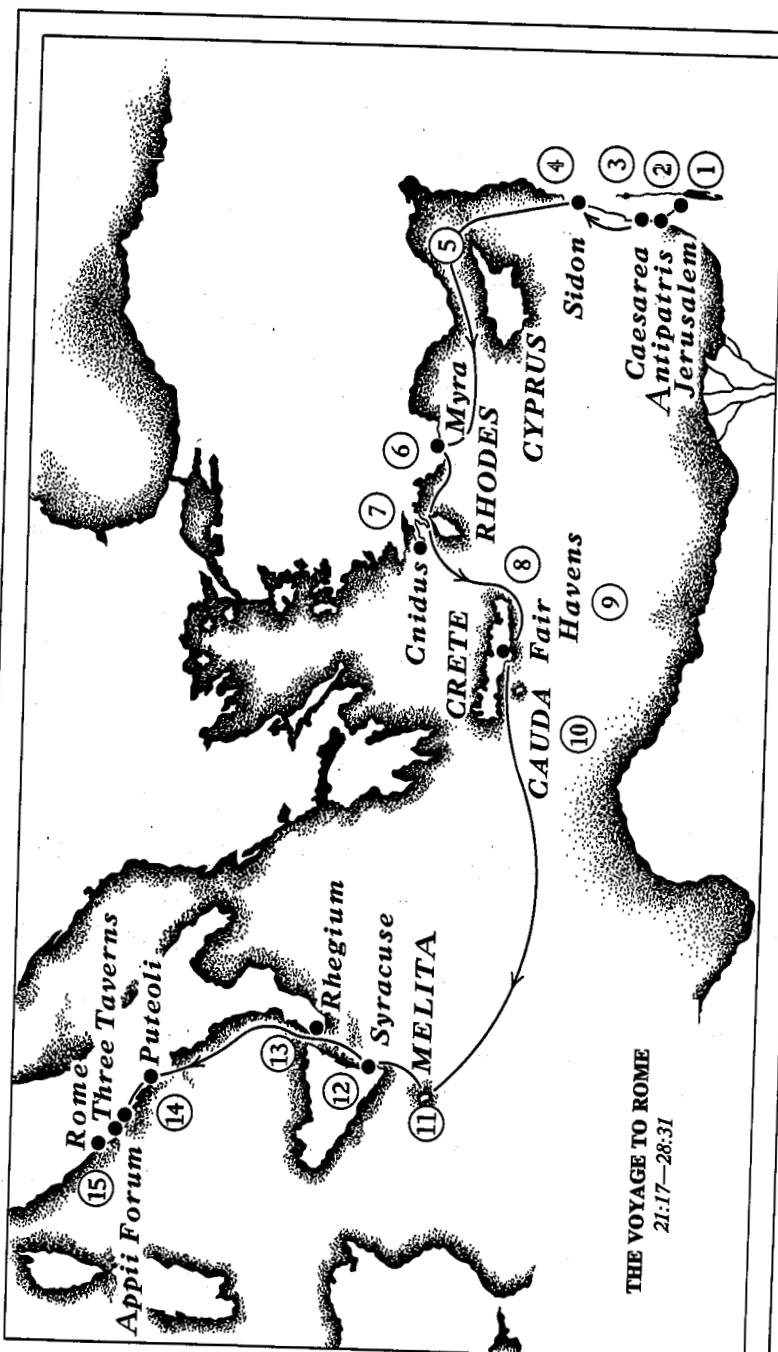
When we arrived at Jerusalem, ¹⁷the brothers received us warmly. The next day ¹⁸Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. Paul ¹⁹greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

When they heard this, ²⁰they praised God. Then they said to Paul:

1 Kings 22:11; Isa. 20:2; etc. Agabus either lived in Jerusalem or was closely connected with that city, and had first-hand knowledge of what would happen to Paul there. The prophecies of the danger Paul faced were designed to focus the attention of the entire church on Jerusalem. Paul deliberately walked into the danger to prevent a schism that threatened the church (*compare Acts 15*)! Jerusalem was the headquarters of the "circumcision party."

15-17. Some of the disciples from Caesarea. Groups often went along with Paul as he traveled. They could talk together and he could teach them. **Mnason, from Cyprus.** The Latin Vulgate has Mnason in Caesarea, and going along with Paul to Jerusalem. **When we arrived in Jerusalem.** This is the fifth time Paul entered Jerusalem, since he left for Damascus about twenty-two years before. *Ramsay* dates this 57 A.D., near Pentecost (the latter part of May).

18-27. To see James. This James was *not* one of the Twelve, but is the human brother of Jesus (see note on *1 Cor. 15:7; Acts 15:6*). He seemed to be a man of great influence in the Jerusalem church (*Gal. 1:19*). **And gave a complete report.** *McGarvey* says Paul also brought "money to God's people in Judea," the contribution to help the poor (*compare 1 Cor. 16:1-4; Acts 24:17*). **They all praised God.**



THE VOYAGE TO ROME
21:17-28:31

THE VOYAGE TO ROME

21:17—28:31

1. AT JERUSALEM. 21:17—23:30
 - a. Paul's salutation and advice of the elders. 21:17-26
 - b. Jews from Asia cause Paul's arrest. 21:27-40
 - c. Paul addresses the Jewish mob. 22:1-21
 - d. The response of the mob. Paul imprisoned. 22:22-30
 - e. Paul addresses the council. 23:1-10
 - f. The Lord encourages Paul. 23:11
 - g. The plot for Paul's life and his escape. 23:12-30
 2. AT ANTIPATRIS. 23:31, 32
The soldiers traveled this far and returned, the horsemen went on with Paul. 31, 32
 3. IN CAESAREA. 23:33—27:1
 - a. Paul is brought before Felix the governor. 23:33-35
 - b. Paul's trial before Felix the governor. 24:1-22
 - c. Paul's two year's imprisonment in Caesarea. 24:23-27
 - d. Festus visits Jerusalem. 25:1-6a
 - e. Paul's trial, defense and appeal to Caesar. 25:6b-12
 - f. Paul's defense before King Agrippa. 25:13—26:32
 - g. Preparations for leaving. 27:1, 2
 4. AT SIDON. 27:3
A stop for refreshment. 3
 5. UNDER THE LEE OF CYPRUS. 27:4
 6. AT MYRA. 27:5, 6
Changed ships. 5, 6
 7. AT CNIDUS. 27:7a
Over against this place with difficulty. 7a
 8. UNDER THE LEE OF CRETE. 27:7b
 9. AT FAIR HAVENS. 27:8-15
 - a. Came into port. 8
 - b. Because of the weather Paul wants to stay. 9, 10
 - c. The centurion listened to the captain who advised that they sail on. 11, 12
 10. CAUDA. 27:16-17
 - a. Strengthened the ship. 16, 17
- DRIVEN FOR FOURTEEN DAYS BY THE WIND. 18-27
LANDING ON MELITA. 28-44
11. MELITA. 28:1-10
 - a. Barbarians show them much kindness. 1, 2
 - b. Incident of Paul and the snake. 3-6
 - c. Paul heals Publius' father and many others. 7-9
 - d. Leave with many honors on a ship from Alexandria. 10
 12. AT SYRACUSE. 28:11, 12
Stayed here three days. 11, 12
 13. AT RHEGIUM. 28:13a
A stop on the way. 13a
 14. IN PUTEOLI. 28:13b, 14
 - a. Found brethren and tarried with them seven days.
- THE MARKET OF APPIUS AND THE THREE TAVERNS. 15
15. AT ROME. 28:16-31
 - a. Paul dwelt alone with a guard. 16
 - b. Paul speaks with the chief Jews. 17-29
 - c. Stays two years in his own hired dwelling while preaching the kingdom of God. 30, 31

said to Paul, "You can see how it is, brother. There are thousands of Jews who have become believers, and they are all very devoted to the Law. ²¹They have been told about you that you have been teaching all the Jews who live in Gentile countries to abandon the Law of Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or follow the Jewish customs. ²²They are sure to hear that you have arrived. What should be done, then? ²³Do what we tell you. There are four men here who have taken a vow. ²⁴Go along with them and join them in the ceremony of purification and pay their expenses; then they will be able to shave their heads. In this way everyone will know that there is no truth in any of the things that they have been told about you, but that you yourself live in accordance with the Law of Moses. ²⁵But as to the Gentiles who have become believers, we have sent them a letter telling them we decided that they must not eat any food that has been offered to idols, or any blood, or any animal that has been strangled, and that they must keep themselves from immorality."

²⁶So Paul took the men and the next day performed the ceremony of purification with them.

"You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. They ²¹ have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What shall we ²² do? They will certainly hear that you have come, so do ²³ what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. Take these ²⁴ men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. As for the Gentile ²⁵ believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food offered to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality."

The next day Paul took ²⁶ the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

James and the church elders approved of what Paul was doing (*Acts 15:12-22*). And they are all very devoted to the Law. Many thousands of Jewish Christians had come to Jerusalem to take part in the Feast of Pentecost. This proves that in Christianity there is room to do the "same thing in different ways." Jewish Christians could practice Jewish customs and traditions without disturbing their relationship to Christ. Gentile Christians could practice their own special customs, etc. Compare what Paul says in *1 Cor. 9:19-23; 7:17-24*. However, to force Gentile Christians to obey the Law of Moses as a RELIGIOUS RITE, would have been a sin (*Gal. 5:4*). Jewish pride was the real source of the problem. It took a direct act of the Holy Spirit to prove to them that God would accept the Gentiles (*Acts 10*). They have been told. Certain Jewish leaders were telling the people a distorted version of what Paul taught. They did this to try to destroy Paul's influence. What should be done, then? To prove that this distorted version of Paul's message was not what he really taught. Do what we tell you. A "ceremony of purification" seems to have grown out of the "Nazirite vow" (*Num. 6:1-18*). Any Jew, like Paul, who had been living with Gentiles, and who had not kept the "ritual law of cleanness," would be excluded from the Temple until he had been purified. The hair was shaved off the head, and burnt as an offering to God, and sacrifices were also offered on the altar. Evidently Paul's action in Cenchræe (*Acts 18:18*) was to prepare him for this. He would have saved the hair and brought it along. So Paul took the men. They performed the ceremony together, then Paul went into the temple and notified the priest when the sacrifice would be offered (so that all necessary things would be there).

Then he went into the temple and gave notice of how many days it would be until the end of the period of purification, when the sacrifice for each one of them would be offered.

Paul Arrested in the Temple

²⁷When the seven days were about to come to an end, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and grabbed Paul. ²⁸"Men of Israel!" they shouted, "Help! This is the man who goes everywhere teaching everyone against the people of Israel, the Law of Moses, and this temple. And now he has even brought some Gentiles into the temple and defiled this holy place!" ²⁹(They said this because they had seen Trophimus from Ephesus with Paul in the city, and they thought that Paul had taken him into the temple.)

³⁰Confusion spread through the whole city, and the people all ran together, grabbed Paul, and dragged him out of the temple. At once the temple doors were closed. ³¹The mob was trying to kill Paul when a report was sent up to the commander of the Roman troops that all of Jerusalem was rioting. ³²At once the commander took some officers and soldiers and rushed down to the crowd. When the people saw him with the

Paul Arrested

When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, shouting, ²⁸ "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place." (They had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area.) ²⁹

The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. While they were trying ³⁰ to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³¹ ³²

27-40. **Some Jews from the province of Asia.** These were not Christian Jews, but probably the Jews from Ephesus mentioned in *Acts 20:3*. The language implies they did not see Paul until the seven days of purification were about to end. When they see him, they stir up the people and grab Paul. **And defiled this holy place.** Note how they try to build up charges against him. They charge him with trying to turn people against the Jews, the Law of Moses, and the Temple of God at Jerusalem. Not only this, but they also charge him with defiling the sacred temple by bringing unclean Gentiles into it. Nothing would arouse fanatical frenzy more than to think that Paul had done this!!! **And dragged him out of the temple.** They were willing to murder him, but not in the temple. **The mob was trying to kill Paul.** Probably in their frenzy they were fighting each other and getting in each other's way, as they attempted to kill Paul. Stoning would be the right way to kill a *religious criminal* (*Acts 7:57-60 and notes*.) **When a report was sent up.** The Roman soldiers would be in the Castle of Antonia. The men standing guard would have seen the riot, and the commander would have rushed down the stairs to the temple area.

soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³The commander went over to Paul, arrested him, and ordered him to be tied up with two chains. Then he asked, "Who is this man, and what has he done?" ³⁴Some in the crowd shouted one thing, others something else. There was such confusion that the commander could not find out exactly what had happened; so he ordered his men to take Paul up into the fort. ³⁵They got with him to the steps, and then the soldiers had to carry him because the mob was so wild. ³⁶They were all coming after him and screaming, "Kill him!"

Paul Defends Himself

³⁷As they were about to take Paul into the fort, he spoke to the commander, "May I say something to you?"

"Do you speak Greek?" the commander asked. ³⁸"Then you are not that Egyptian fellow who some time ago started a revolution and led four thousand armed terrorists out into the desert?"

³⁹Paul answered, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, a citizen of an important city. Please, let me speak to the people."

⁴⁰The commander gave him permission, so Paul stood on the steps and motioned with his

The commander came up ³³ and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. Some in the crowd ³⁴ shouted one thing and some another, and since the commander could not get at the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. When Paul reached the ³⁵ steps, the violence of the mob was so great he had to be carried by the soldiers. The crowd that followed ³⁶ kept shouting, "Away with him!"

Paul Speaks to the Crowd

As the soldiers were about ³⁷ to take Paul into the barracks, he asked the commander, "May I say something to you?"

"Do you speak Greek?" he replied. "Aren't you the ³⁸ Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the desert some time ago?"

Paul answered, "I am a ³⁹ Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city. Please let me speak to the people."

Having received the com- ⁴⁰ mander's permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the crowd. When they were all silent, he said to them in Aramaic:

The Castle was built against the temple wall. **The commander went over to Paul.** He thought Paul was an Egyptian revolutionary (*verse 38*). Note the confusion of the mob, and how wild they were! The soldiers were forced to carry Paul. **Do you speak Greek?** This surprised the commander. [Greek was the "Esperanto" of the Roman Empire, the universal language of communication. That's why it was chosen as the language of the New Testament.] **Egyptian fellow.** Josephus tells about this Egyptian. He was probably illiterate and could not speak Greek. While Felix was governor, he gathered a crowd of 30,000 people on the Mount of Olives, and said that at his word, the walls of Jerusalem would fall down (like Jericho). Felix had brought the army against this fellow, who fled into the desert, while the majority of his followers were captured or killed. *Josephus* says of these armed terrorists: "They mingled with the crowds at the Festivals, stabbed their political opponents unobserved, and drew suspicion from themselves by apparent indignation at such crimes." They are also known as "Assassins." **I am a Jew, born in Tarsus.** This fact places Paul above suspicion. **Please, let me speak to the people.** He has the legal right to do this. The commander knows nothing of Paul and the reason for this riot. He may think that allowing Paul to speak will clear up the mystery. **Paul spoke to them in Hebrew.** He stands, tied up with two chains, ready to make his defence. He speaks in their beloved Hebrew language, in the dialect spoken in Judea (*see note on Acts 26:14*).

hand to the people. When they were quiet, Paul spoke to them in Hebrew,

22 "Men, brothers and fathers, listen to me as I make my defense before you!" ²When they heard him speaking to them in Hebrew, they were even quieter; and Paul went on,

³"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up here in Jerusalem as a student of Gamaliel. I received strict instruction in the Law of our ancestors, and was just as dedicated to God as all of you here today are. ⁴I persecuted to the death the people who followed this Way. I arrested men and women and threw them into prison. ⁵The High Priest and the whole Council can prove that I am telling the truth. I received from them letters written to the Jewish brothers in Damascus, so I went there to arrest these people and bring them back in chains to Jerusalem to be punished."

Paul Tells of His Conversion

(Also Acts 9.1-19; 26.12-18)

⁶"As I was traveling and coming near Damascus, about midday a bright light from the sky flashed suddenly around me. ⁷I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?' ⁸"Who are you, Lord?" I asked. 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom

22 "Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense."

When they heard him speak to them in Aramaic, they became very quiet. 2

Then Paul said:

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, as also the high priest and all the council can testify. I even obtained letters from them to their brothers in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished. 3

"About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?' 4

"Who are you, Lord?' I asked. 5

"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting," 6

1-3. When they heard him speaking to them in Hebrew. The Aramaic or Chaldee dialect of Hebrew was the standard language which every Jew could speak and understand. Even though their "native language" (see Acts 2:8 and note) might be different, all were taught Hebrew in the synagogue schools. I am a Jew. To disprove their charge that he prejudiced people against the Jews, he shows that he is himself a Jew, brought up in Jerusalem [but evidently not here during Christ's public ministry, crucifixion and resurrection], educated in the Law by Gamaliel (see Acts 5:34). And was just as dedicated to God. Note how he makes himself one of them! This is his first opportunity to explain to the Jewish leaders the reason why he had become a Christian.

4-5. I persecuted to the death. He did this because he thought his loyalty to God demanded it! The High Priest and the whole Council. A different man was high priest now, than when Paul had been "deputized," but he knew the facts, as did the council. Probably most of the crowd also knew these facts.

6-11. And coming near Damascus. See notes on Acts 9:3-9. The bright light flashed at the time the sun was the brightest, and was much brighter than the sun (Acts 26:13). Saul, Saul. The voice spoke in Hebrew (Acts 26:14). Why do you persecute me? By persecuting the messianic community, he was

you persecute,' he said to me. ⁹The men with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. ¹⁰I asked, 'What shall I do, Lord?' and the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything that God has determined for you to do.' ¹¹I was blind because of the bright light, and so my companions took me by the hand and led me into Damascus.

¹²"There was a man named Ananias, a religious man who obeyed our Law and was highly respected by all the Jews living in Damascus. ¹³He came to me, stood by me and said, 'Brother Saul, see again!' At that very moment I saw again and looked at him. ¹⁴He said, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see his righteous Servant, and hear him speaking with his own voice. ¹⁵For you will be a witness for him to tell all men what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶And now, why wait any longer? Get up and be baptized and have your sins washed away by calling on his name.'"

Paul's Call to Preach to the Gentiles

¹⁷"I went back to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple I had a vision, ¹⁸in which I saw the Lord as he said to me, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because the people here

he replied. My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me. ⁹

"What shall I do, Lord?" I asked. ¹⁰

"Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.' My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me. ¹¹

"A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him. ¹²

"Then he said: 'The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.' ¹³

"When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance and saw the Lord speaking. 'Quick!' he said to me. ¹⁴

persecuting Christ himself! **But did not hear the voice.** From *Acts 9:4, 7* we infer that those with Paul heard the *sound*, but could not *hear* what the voice said. That is, they could not understand it. **I was blind because of the bright light.** Some think *Gal. 4:15* implies that his eyes never fully recovered from this.

12-16. **A man named Ananias.** He was a Christian (*Acts 9:10*), but kept the Law strictly. **Brother Saul, see again!** See *Acts 9:17-18* and notes. **The God of our ancestors.** Compare *Acts 7:32; 1 Pet. 1:1-2*. He says this to show they both worship the One True God. **To see his righteous Servant, Jesus Christ.** Paul had to see him, to be an apostle. Paul mentions the fact that he did see Christ, a number of times (*1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8*). **And have your sins washed away.** Paul had both believed and repented, yet he still had his sins to wash away. "Calling on his name" must refer to *baptism* as it *completes* the act of "reaching out through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make yourself part of it." Compare *Acts 2:38; 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:21; and notes*. Note also baptism is spoken of as a "washing away."

17-21. **I went back to Jerusalem.** This was three years after he became a Christian (*Gal. 1:17-18*). He goes on to show that God himself had sent him to the Gentiles. **I had a vision.** Compare *Acts 10:10*. Some think this vision might be the one mentioned in *2 Cor. 12:2-3*. **The people here will not accept your witness about me.** They believed Paul to be a traitor to Judaism. **They know very well.** This answer

will not accept your witness about me.' ¹⁹"Lord," I answered, "they know very well that I went to the synagogues and arrested and beat those who believe in you. ²⁰And when your witness Stephen was put to death, I myself was there, approving of his murder and taking care of the cloaks of his murderers.' ²¹"Go," the Lord said to me, "because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

²²The people listened to Paul until he said this; but then they started shouting at the top of their voices, "Away with him! Kill him! He's not fit to live!" ²³They were screaming, waving their clothes, and throwing dust up in the air. ²⁴The Roman commander ordered his men to take Paul into the fort, and told them to whip him to find out why the Jews were screaming like this against him. ²⁵But when they had tied him up to be whipped, Paul said to the officer standing there, "Is it lawful for you to whip a Roman citizen who hasn't even been tried for any crime?"

'Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.'

" 'Lord,' I replied, 'these 19 men know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'

"Then the Lord said to 21 me, 'Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

Paul the Roman Citizen

The crowd listened to Paul 22 until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, "Rid the earth of him! He's not fit to live!"

As they were shouting and 23 throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air, the commander ordered 24 Paul to be taken into the barracks. He directed that he be flogged and questioned in order to find out why the people were shouting at him like this. As they stretched 25 him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, "Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?"

to God showed his eagerness to work with his own race. He had a strong desire to counteract some of what he had done through ignorance. **Because I will send you far away.** The God of heaven had himself decreed that Paul go to the Gentiles.

22-23. Until he said this. As the Jews were crushed by foreign powers and occupation troops, they took comfort in the thought that when the Messiah came, the Gentile would be struck down and the Jew would stand with his foot on their neck. At this time the fires smoldered that would break out in the Jewish wars, terminating in the destruction of Jerusalem itself in 70 A.D. See *Matt. 24* and notes. When Paul claimed their God had sent him to the Gentiles they explode in frenzied rage!! "They strip off their clothes and wave them in the air, throwing dust up in the air also, as a symbol of their rage!!

24-30. And told them to whip him. Whether the Roman commander had understood a word Paul had said to the people (since it was in Hebrew), he could see from their actions that they considered him a dangerous man. It had long been a common practice to torture prisoners to make them tell the truth. The whip had bits of bone or stone tied in the ends of the thongs, and these would tear the flesh where they hit. Compare *Matt. 27:26* and note. **Paul said to the officer.** It was illegal to whip a Roman citizen, or to torture him in any way. The name "Roman" was *magic* (compare *Acts 16:38*). Since the penalty was death for falsely claiming to be a Roman citizen, the officer immediately believes what Paul says.

²⁶When the officer heard this, he went to the commander and asked him, "What are you doing? That man is a Roman citizen!"

²⁷So the commander went to Paul and asked him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes," answered Paul.

²⁸The commander said, "I became one by paying a large amount of money."

"But I am one by birth," Paul answered.

²⁹At once the men who were going to question Paul drew back from him; and the commander was afraid when he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen, and that he had put him in chains.

Paul before the Council

³⁰The commander wanted to find out for sure what the Jews were accusing Paul of; so the next day he had Paul's chains taken off and ordered the chief priests and the whole Council to meet. Then he took Paul, and made him stand before them.

23 Paul looked straight at the Council and said, "My brothers! My conscience is perfectly clear about my whole life before God, to this very day." ²The High Priest Ananias ordered those who were standing close to Paul to strike him on the mouth. ³Paul said to him, "God will certainly strike you—you whitewashed wall! You

When the centurion heard **26** this, he went to the commander and reported it. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "This man is a Roman citizen."

The commander went to **27** Paul and asked, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes, I am," he answered.

Then the commander **28** said, "I had to pay a big price for my citizenship."

"But I was born a citizen," Paul replied.

Those who were about to **29** question him withdrew immediately. The commander himself was alarmed when he realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains.

Before the Sanhedrin

The next day, since the **30** commander wanted to find out exactly why Paul was being accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Sanhedrin to assemble. Then he brought Paul and had him stand before them.

23 Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day." At this the high priest **2** Ananias ordered those standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth. Then **3** Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed

Are you a Roman citizen? The commander himself asks this. He says he paid a large sum of money to become a Roman. Paul, however, was born a Roman, which means his father had been a Roman citizen as well (*compare note on Acts 6:9*). Tarsus was a *free city*, which gave its citizens *status*. **And the commander was afraid.** He had broken the law by tying Paul with chains. **So the next day.** To find out just what this was all about, the Roman commander orders the whole Council to meet and takes Paul before them. *Acts 23:10* implies that Paul faced the Council, not in any way as a prisoner, but as an equal.

1. Paul looked straight at the council. He speaks to them, not as judges, but as fellow countrymen. He probably knew some of those who formed the Council. **My conscience is perfectly clear.** His whole life had been lived to please God. He deeply regretted the time he spent opposing Christ, but he had been sincere in doing it (even though wrong).

2-5. To strike him on the mouth. This is not the Annas of *Acts 4:7*, but the son of Nebedaeus, whom Herod had appointed to be high priest. He served from 47 - 59 A.D. He flares up in anger when Paul claims to have a clear conscience about all that he had done. **God will certainly strike you.** Paul is

sit there to judge me according to the Law, yet you break the Law by ordering them to strike me!"

⁶The men close to Paul said to him, "You are insulting God's High Priest!"

⁷Paul answered, "I did not know, my brothers, that he was the High Priest. The scripture says, 'You must not speak evil of the ruler of your people.'"

⁸When Paul saw that some of the group were Sadducees and that others were Pharisees, he called out in the Council, "My brothers! I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees. I am on trial here because I hope that the dead will rise to life!"

⁹As soon as he said this, the Pharisees and Sadducees started to quarrel, and the group was divided. ¹⁰(For the Sadducees say that people will not rise from death, and that there are no angels or spirits; but the Pharisees believe in all three.)

¹¹The shouting became louder, and some of the teachers of the Law who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and protested strongly, "We cannot find a thing wrong with this man! Perhaps a spirit or an angel really did speak to him!"

wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!"

Those who were standing near Paul said, "You dare to insult God's high priest?" 4

Paul replied, "Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: 'Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people.'" 5

Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead." 6

When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 7

(The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.) 8

There was a great uproar, and some of the teachers of the law who were Pharisees stood up and argued vigorously. "We find nothing wrong with this man," they said. "What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" 9

indignant at this mockery of justice. "Whitewashed wall" means hypocrite (*compare note on Matt. 23:27*). What Paul says is a prediction, and this man Ananias was dragged from a sewer where he had hidden himself and killed by armed terrorists [Zealots] in 66 A.D. **I did not know.** Since the high priest would only wear his distinctive robes in the temple service, nothing would here identify him. Paul may never have seen this high priest before.

6-10. **When Paul saw.** The Council [Sanhedrin] was made up of both parties. The teachers of the Law were Pharisees, and the chief priests were usually Sadducees. It was the teaching about the raising from death that made the Sadducees so angry against the Gospel (*see Acts 4:2*). *Alford* (Greek Testament) says: "All prospect for a fair trial was hopeless. Paul well knew from experience that personal odium [hatred] would bias his judges, and violence prevail over justice. He therefore uses in the cause of truth the maxim [principle of action] so often perverted to the use of falsehood, *Divide and conquer.*" "I am on trial here because I hope that the dead will rise to life!" **And the group was divided.** This puts the Pharisees on Paul's side against the Sadducees. **We cannot find a thing wrong with this man!** They find they have more in common with Paul, than with the Sadducees. **Perhaps a spirit or an angel.** This is a "slap" at the Sadducees, who believed in neither (*verse 8*). **The argument became so violent.** They had argued this question many times, and there was no way one side could agree with the other. To protect Paul, he is taken into the Castle of Antonia (which was a fort).

¹⁰The argument became so violent that the commander was afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them. So he ordered his soldiers to go down into the group and get Paul away from them, and take him into the fort.

¹¹The following night the Lord stood by Paul and said, "Courage! You have given your witness to me here in Jerusalem, and you must do the same in Rome also."

The Plot against Paul's Life

¹²The next morning some Jews met together and made a plan. They took a vow that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul. ¹³There were more than forty of them who planned this together. ¹⁴Then they went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have taken a solemn vow together not to eat a thing until we kill Paul. ¹⁵Now then, you and the Council send word to the Roman commander to bring Paul down to you, pretending that you want to get more accurate information about him. But we will be ready to kill him before he ever gets here."

¹⁶But the son of Paul's sister heard of the plot; so he went and entered the fort and told it to Paul. ¹⁷Then Paul called one of the officers and said to him, "Take this young man to the com-

The dispute became so violent that the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them. He ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks.

The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

The Plot to Kill Paul

The next morning the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. More than forty men were involved in this plot. They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have taken a solemn oath not to eat anything until we have killed Paul. Now then, you and the Sanhedrin petition the commander to bring him before you on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about his case. We are ready to kill him before he gets here."

But when the son of Paul's sister heard of this plot, he went into the barracks and told Paul.

Then Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the commander; he has some-

11. **The following night.** We would say *that same night*. The Lord Jesus stood beside Paul and spoke words to give him courage. This was supernatural help. Paul needed it: he was a prisoner; even the Jerusalem church suspected him; his own race wanted to kill him; twice, in two days' time, he had narrowly escaped death. **In Rome also.** This said that Paul would survive, and that he would be allowed to go to Rome.

12-24. **They took a vow.** These Jews may have been some of his bitter enemies from Ephesus who had grabbed him in the temple. They may have been "armed terrorists" [Zealots - Assassins], who later played such an important part in the Jewish wars against Rome. [A vow was cancelled, if it was impossible to perform it.] *Verse 15* shows what their plot was. **But the son of Paul's sister.** This is the only mention in Acts of Paul's kin. The young man might be studying in Jerusalem, as Paul had done

mander; he has something to tell him." ¹⁸The officer took him, led him to the commander and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, because he has something to say to you."

¹⁹The commander took him by the hand, led him off by himself, and asked him, "What do you have to tell me?"

²⁰He said, "The Jewish authorities have agreed to ask you tomorrow to take Paul down to the Council, pretending that the Council wants to get more accurate information about him. ²¹But don't listen to them, because there are more than forty men who will be hiding and waiting for him. They have taken a vow not to eat or drink until they kill him. They are now ready to do it, and are waiting for your decision."

²²The commander said, "Don't tell anyone that you have reported this to me." And he sent the young man away.

Paul Sent to Governor Felix

²³Then the commander called two of his officers and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go to Caesarea, together with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, and be ready to leave by nine o'clock tonight. ²⁴Provide some horses for Paul to ride, and get him safely through to Governor Felix." ²⁵Then the commander wrote a letter that went like this:

²⁶"Claudius Lysias to his Excellency, the

thing to tell him." So he ¹⁸ took him to the commander.

The centurion said, "The prisoner Paul sent for me and asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you."

The commander took the ¹⁹ young man by the hand, drew him aside and asked, "What is it you want to tell me?"

He said: "The Jews have ²⁰ agreed to ask you to bring Paul before the Sanhedrin tomorrow on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about him. Don't ²¹ give in to them, because more than forty of them are waiting in ambush for him. They have taken an oath not to eat or drink until they have killed him. They are ready now, waiting for your consent to their request."

The commander dismissed the young man and cautioned him, "Don't tell anyone that you have reported this to me."

Paul Transferred to Caesarea

Then he called two of his ²³ centurions and ordered them, "Get ready a detachment of two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea tonight at the third hour. Provide ²⁴ mounts for Paul so that he may be taken safely to Governor Felix."

He wrote a letter as follows: ²⁵

Claudius Lysias, ²⁶
To His Excellency, Governor Felix:

in his youth. We do not know whether he was a Christian, but he told Paul of the plot. He would have no trouble getting in to Paul, since both of them were Roman citizens. Compare *Acts 28:30*. Paul immediately sent his nephew to the commander with the story. **The commander took him by the hand.** To show how carefully he was listening to what he said. *Verses 20-21.* give the story of the plot. **Called two of his officers.** They are told to get 470 soldiers to guard Paul. This shows his estimate of the danger. **To Governor Felix.** Once Paul is there, the commander is rid of his problem.

25-30. Then the commander wrote a letter. Roman law said that when a prisoner was sent up the chain of command, a letter had to go along giving the charges against him. **Claudius Lysias** is the Roman

Governor Felix: Greetings. ²⁷The Jews seized this man and were about to kill him. I learned that he is a Roman citizen, so I went with my soldiers and rescued him. ²⁸I wanted to know what they were accusing him of, so I took him down to their Council. ²⁹I found out that he had not done a thing for which he deserved to die or be put in prison; the accusation against him had to do with questions about their own law. ³⁰And when I was informed that some Jews were making a plot against him, I decided to send him to you. I told his accusers to make their charges against him before you."

³¹The soldiers carried out their orders. They got Paul and took him that night as far as Antipatris. ³²The next day the foot soldiers returned to the fort and left the horsemen to go on with him. ³³They took him to Caesarea, delivered the letter to the Governor, and turned Paul over to him. ³⁴The Governor read the letter and asked Paul what province he was from. When he found out that he was from Cilicia, ³⁵he said, "I will hear you when your accusers arrive." Then he gave orders that Paul be kept under guard in Herod's palace.

Greetings.

This man was seized by ²⁷ the Jews and they were about to kill him, but I came with my troops and rescued him, for I had learned that he is a Roman citizen. I wanted to ²⁸ know why they were accusing him, so I brought him to their Sanhedrin. I ²⁹ found that the accusation had to do with questions about their law, but there was no charge against him that deserved death or imprisonment. When I was ³⁰ informed of a plot to be carried out against the man, I sent him to you at once. I also ordered his accusers to present to you their case against him.

So the soldiers, carrying ³¹ out their orders, took Paul with them during the night and brought him as far as Antipatris. The next day ³² they let the cavalry go on with him, while they returned to the barracks. When ³³ the cavalry arrived in Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and handed Paul over to him. The governor read the letter ³⁴ and asked what province he was from. Learning that he was from Cilicia, he said, "I ³⁵ will hear your case when your accusers get here." Then he ordered that Paul be kept under guard in Herod's palace.

commander's name. I learned that he is a Roman citizen. He didn't find this out until after he had rescued Paul, but he wants to make himself look good. I found out. He had done nothing against Roman law. I decided to send him to you. If he had released Paul in Jerusalem, he would have been murdered. I told his accusers. He had not done this when he wrote the letter, but intended to do so when Paul was safely away from the city.

31-35. As far as Antipatris. They went at night to keep the Jews from finding out about it until the next day. Antipatris was about thirty-eight miles from Jerusalem, toward Caesarea. After daylight came, the foot soldiers went back to Jerusalem, and the seventy horsemen went on with Paul to Caesarea. The immediate danger was over. Asked Paul what province he was from. If he had been from another province, he would have been sent to that governor (compare Luke 23:6-7). Cilicia was a distant part of the Roman Province of Syria. Felix agrees to hear the case, and keeps Paul under guard.

Paul Accused by the Jews

24 Five days later the High Priest Ananias went to Caesarea with some elders and a lawyer named Tertullus. They appeared before Governor Felix and made their charges against Paul. ²Tertullus was called and began to accuse Paul as follows:

"Your Excellency! Your wise leadership has brought us a long period of peace, and many necessary reforms are being made for the good of our country. ³We welcome this everywhere at all times, and we are deeply grateful to you. ⁴I do not want to take up too much of your time, however, so I beg you to be kind and listen to our brief account. ⁵We found this man to be a dangerous nuisance; he starts riots among the Jews all over the world, and is a leader of the party of the Nazarenes. ⁶He also tried to defile the temple, and we arrested him. [We planned to judge him according to our own Law, ⁷but the commander Lysias came in and with great violence took him from us. ⁸Then Lysias gave

The Trial Before Felix

24 Five days later the high priest Ananias went down to Caesarea with some of the elders and a lawyer named Tertullus, and they brought their charges against Paul before the governor. When Paul was called in, Tertullus presented his case before Felix: 2

"We have enjoyed a long period of peace under you, and your foresight has brought about reforms in this nation. Everywhere and in every way, most excellent Felix, we acknowledge this with profound gratitude. But in order not to weary you further, I would request that you be kind enough to hear us briefly. 3

"We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect and even tried to desecrate the temple; so we seized him.* By examining 4

5

6

8

1-9. **Five days later.** Five days after Paul had escaped from Jerusalem. Roman justice moved swiftly. The deep hatred of the Jewish leaders is shown by the fact that the High Priest himself comes, with some elders [who were part of the Council]. **A lawyer named Tertullus.** He may not have been a Jew. He was a lawyer skilled in Roman law, and would be more able to present the case in the best way. In verses 2-4, Tertullus says flattering things about Felix to try to get an "upper hand" in the case. [He praises Felix for keeping peace and making needed reforms for the good of the country. The real truth is that Felix was so severe and cruel that he "fanned the flames of rebellion." He used the "armed terrorists" to assassinate Jonathan the high priest, and he made the occasional uprisings of the people become permanent rebellion. He helped bring on the bloody conflict which ended in Jerusalem being destroyed.] **The party of the Nazarenes.** The Jews used this name for the Christians for hundreds of years, but not in a good sense. This was the real charge against Paul. He was a Christian leader. They were trying to show that Paul preached a religion which was illegal under Roman law (see Acts 18:13 and note). But they first charge Paul with starting riots (which was not true), because Felix was proud of the way he kept the peace. **He also tried to defile the temple.** Paul is charged with: (1) starting riots; (2) preaching an illegal religion; (3) defiling the temple. The Jewish Law passed the death penalty for defiling the temple, and the Romans usually allowed them to carry it out. **And we arrested him.** Tertullus shows this as a legal action of the Council, when it was actually the action of the mob. **But the commander Lysias came in.** He did not come and take Paul with great violence (see Acts 21:32), nor did they have any intention of trying Paul by their law (see Acts 21:31). **The Jews joined in.** They said all of it was true, when they knew it wasn't.

* Some MSS add *and wanted to judge him according to our law. 'But the commander, Lysias, came and with the use of much force snatched him from our hands 'and ordered his accusers to come before you.*

orders that his accusers should come before you.] If you question this man, you yourself will be able to learn from him all the things that we are accusing him of." ⁹The Jews joined in the accusation and said that all this was true.

Paul's Defense before Felix

¹⁰The Governor then motioned to Paul to speak, and Paul said,

"I know that you have been a judge over this nation for many years, and so I am happy to defend myself before you. ¹¹As you can find out for yourself, it was not more than twelve days ago that I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹²The Jews did not find me arguing with anyone in the temple, nor did they find me stirring up the people, either in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. ¹³Nor can they give you proof of the accusations they now bring against me. ¹⁴I do admit this to you: I worship the God of our ancestors by following that Way which they say is false. But I also believe in all the things written in the Law of Moses and the books of the prophets. ¹⁵I have the same hope in God that these themselves hold, that all men, both the good and the bad, will rise from death. ¹⁶And so I do my best always to have a clear conscience before God and men.

him yourself you will be able to learn the truth about all these charges we are bringing against him."

The Jews joined in the accusation, asserting that these things were true. 9

When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied: 10

"I know that for a number of years you have been a judge over this nation; so I gladly make my defense. You can easily verify that no 11
more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. My accusers did not 12
find me arguing with anyone at the temple, or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. And they cannot prove to 13
you the charges they are now making against me. How- 14
ever, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers, as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, and I have 15
the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. So 16
I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

10-21. **Paul said.** Roman law condemned no one without allowing them to speak in their own defence. I know that you. The frequent turnover of Roman Governors makes Paul's statement accurate. Felix had been governor for from six to ten years at this time. Felix had first-hand knowledge of the people of Judea. It was no more than twelve days ago. It would be easy to find out the facts. The first day was when Paul met with James and the church elders; the second he entered the vow with the others; the seventh he was grabbed in the temple; the eighth he was tried by the Council; the eleventh he was sent to Felix; and the thirteenth he stands before this court. Nor did they find me. He had done nothing to agitate the people. In fact, he had been doing things to promote peace and harmony. I do admit this. He worships God by following the Way of Christ. Which they say is false. The language implies that Paul sees Christianity, not as a sect [false way] of Judaism, but as the fulfillment of God's promise to the ancestors (Acts 13:32). It is Judaism transformed into a Perfect Way, which supersedes Judaism. But I also believe. By becoming a Christian, he had not "turned traitor" to the faith of the fathers, as they claimed. I have the same hope in God. The common hope of Judaism (but not the Sadducees) and Christianity was that all the dead will be raised. Therefore, Paul was not preaching something new and illegal. And so I do my best always. Paul lived his life to honor God! This should free him of such suspicion that motivated these false charges. After being away from Jerusalem. His motives in coming

¹⁷“After being away from Jerusalem for several years, I went there to take some money to my own people and to offer sacrifices. ¹⁸It was while I was doing this that they found me in the temple, after I had completed the ceremony of purification. There was no crowd with me, and no disorder. ¹⁹But some Jews from the province of Asia were there; they themselves ought to come before you and make their accusations, if they have anything against me. ²⁰Or let these men here tell what crime they found me guilty of when I stood before the Council—²¹except for the one thing I called out when I stood before them: ‘I am being judged by you today for believing that the dead will rise to life.’ ”

²²Then Felix, who was well informed about the Way, brought the hearing to a close. “I will decide your case,” he told them, “when the commander Lysias arrives.” ²³He ordered the officer in charge of Paul to keep him under guard, but to give him some freedom and allow his friends to provide for his needs.

Paul before Felix and Drusilla

²⁴After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he talked about faith in Christ

“After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings. I was ceremonially clean when they found me in the temple courts doing this. There was no crowd with me, nor was I involved in any disturbance. But there are some Jews from the province of Asia, who ought to be here before you and bring charges if they have anything against me. Or these who are here should state what crime they found in me, when I stood before the Sanhedrin—unless it was this one thing I shouted as I stood in their presence: ‘It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.’ ”

Then Felix, who was well acquainted with the Way, adjourned the proceedings. “When Lysias the commander comes,” he said, “I will decide your case.” He ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard but to give him some freedom and permit his friends to take care of his needs.

Several days later Felix arrived with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in

were good. **To take some money.** Donations from the Gentile Christians (see *Rom. 15:25-31; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-9*). **To offer sacrifices.** The ordinary sacrifices of the Law. He was in the temple to do this when he was grabbed. **But some Jews.** They knew there had been no crowd and no disorder with Paul in the temple. They were the ones who accused him, yet none of them seemed to be at the court. **They themselves ought to come.** Roman custom required the accusers to face the accused. The High Priest and the members of the Council were not the ones who had accused Paul. **Or let these men here.** The Council had not really found him guilty (*Acts 23:9*). **Except for the one thing.** This was the real “crime” which the High Priest and his fellow Sadducees were accusing Paul of.

22-23. **Then Felix.** He understood both Jewish hatred and the Christian Way. He wants to hear what Lysias has to say, before he will decide. **He ordered the officer.** Two reasons caused him to keep Paul in custody: (1) He did not like to offend the Jews; (2) He hoped Paul and the Christians would pay him to release Paul.

24-27. **After some days.** Drusilla was the daughter of that Herod who died at Caesarea (*Acts 12:23*), sister of Bernice (*Acts 25:23*). She had been married at age fourteen to Azizus, king of Emeza; and because of her unhappy marriage, Felix had been able to “steal her away” and make her his own wife. Her father's strange death may have had something to do with her interest in Paul and Christianity.

Jesus. ²⁵But as Paul went on discussing about goodness, self-control, and the coming Day of Judgment, Felix was afraid and said, "You may leave now. I will call you again when I get the chance." ²⁶At the same time he was hoping that Paul would give him some money; and for this reason he would call for him often and talk with him.

²⁷After two years had passed, Porcius Festus took the place of Felix as Governor. Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul in prison.

Paul Appeals to the Emperor

25 Three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went from Caesarea to Jerusalem. ²There the chief priests and the Jewish leaders brought their charges against Paul. They begged Festus ³to do them the favor of having Paul come to Jerusalem, because they had made a plot to kill him on the way. ⁴Festus answered, "Paul is being kept a prisoner in Caesarea, and I myself will be going back there soon. ⁵Let your leaders go to Caesarea with me and accuse the man, if he has done anything wrong."

⁶Festus spent another eight or ten days with them, and then went to Caesarea. On the next day he sat down in the judgment court, and

Christ Jesus. As Paul discussed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you." At the same time he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe, so he sent for him frequently and talked with him.

When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Procius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

The Trial Before Festus

25 Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem, where the chief priests and Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul. They urgently requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way. Festus answered, "Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon. Let some of your leaders come with me and press charges against the man there, if he has done anything wrong."

After spending eight or ten days with them, he went down to Caesarea, and the next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul

But as Paul went on discussing. They may have expected him to argue doctrinal differences between the Law and the Way. Instead, he speaks of holy living and the coming Judgment. Felix made no attempt to live a holy life, or to control his passions. **Felix was afraid.** He is not resentful, but even though he is deeply stirred by all Paul is saying, he is not willing to think about it or respond to it. Many doom themselves by waiting. "Not to act, is to act!" **He was hoping.** He hoped Paul would buy his freedom. **After two years had passed.** Ramsay dates this autumn of 59 A.D. Luke's Gospel may have been written at this time with Paul's help.

1-6. **Three days after Festus arrived.** He was the new governor of Judea. He went to Jerusalem to confer with the Jewish leaders. **Brought their charges.** The Jewish leaders wanted Paul transferred to Jerusalem, so they could kill him. In fact, Paul would never have reached Jerusalem. **Festus answered.** He intends to keep Paul at Caesarea. They must come there to make their accusations. Of course, Festus knew nothing of the plot to kill Paul.

ordered Paul to be brought in. ⁷When Paul arrived, the Jews who had come from Jerusalem stood around him and started making many serious charges against him, which they were not able to prove. ⁸But Paul defended himself, "I have done nothing wrong against the Law of the Jews, or the temple, or the Roman Emperor."

⁹Festus wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he asked Paul, "Would you be willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried on these charges before me there?"

¹⁰Paul said, "I am standing before the Emperor's own judgement court, where I should be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you yourself well know. ¹¹If I have broken the law and done something for which I deserve the death penalty, I do not ask to escape it. But if there is no truth in the charges they bring against me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to the Emperor."

¹²Then Festus, after conferring with his advisers, answered, "You have appealed to the Emperor, so to the Emperor you will go."

Paul before Agrippa and Bernice

¹³Some time later King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to pay a visit of welcome to

be brought before him. ⁷When Paul appeared, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove.

Then Paul made his defense: "I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar." ⁸

Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?" ⁹

Paul answered: "I am now ¹⁰standing before Caesar's court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well. If, ¹¹however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!" ¹²

Festus Consults King Agrippa

A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their

7-12. **When Paul arrived.** The accused had to face his accusers. This was Roman law. **Many serious charges against him.** The Jewish leaders had probably come along with Festus back to Caesarea. Their accusations are about the same as those to Felix. (1) Teaching a new and illegal religion; (2) defiling the temple; (3) leading riots against the Roman authorities. We infer these from Paul's defence in verse 8. **To gain favor.** He was just beginning his rule as governor. Since Paul was a Roman, Festus could not send him to his enemies in Jerusalem unless Paul would agree to it. Festus may have thought, also, that Paul would appeal to Rome as he did, thus taking the whole matter off his hands. **Before the Emperor's own judgment court.** Paul uses his legal right to appeal as a Roman citizen. This law was to protect Romans against corrupt governors, etc. They could ask that their case be transferred to the Imperial Court in Rome. **After conferring with his advisers.** What Festus says, is probably an official legal statement. This appeal by Paul implies his mistrust of Festus.

13-22. **King Agrippa and Bernice.** This is Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice. Drusilla, the wife of Festus, was also their sister. This man became king when his father, Herod Agrippa I died (*Acts 12:23*). Bernice was beautiful, and had been married twice before Paul ever saw her. An incestuous relationship is implied between she and her brother; later she was to be the "mistress" of both

Festus. ¹⁴After they had been there several days, Festus explained Paul's situation to the king, "There is a man here who was left a prisoner by Felix; ¹⁵and when I went to Jerusalem, the Jewish chief priests and elders brought charges against him and asked me to condemn him. ¹⁶But I told them that the Romans are not in the habit of handing over any man accused of a crime before he has met his accusers face to face, and has the chance of defending himself against the accusation. ¹⁷When they came here, then, I lost no time, but on the very next day I sat in the judgment court and ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸His opponents stood up, but they did not accuse him of any of the evil crimes that I thought they would. ¹⁹All they had were some arguments with him about their own religion and about a man named Jesus, who has died; but Paul claims that he is alive. ²⁰I was undecided about how I could get information on these matters, so I asked Paul if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these charges. ²¹But Paul appealed; he asked to be kept under guard and let the Emperor decide his case. So I gave orders for him to be kept under guard until I could send him to the Emperor."

²²Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself."

"You will hear him tomorrow," Festus answered.

²³The next day Agrippa and Bernice came

respects to Festus. Since ¹⁴ they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. He said:

"There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner. When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned. ¹⁵

"I told them that it is not ¹⁶ the Roman custom to hand over any man before he has faced his accusers and has had an opportunity to defend himself against their charges. When they came ¹⁷ here with me, I did not delay the case, but convened the court the next day and ordered the man to be brought in. When his accusers got up ¹⁸ to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected. Instead, they ¹⁹ had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. I was at ²⁰ a loss how to investigate such matters; so I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial there on these charges. When Paul made his appeal ²¹ to be held over for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar."

Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself."

He replied, "Tomorrow you will hear him."

Paul Before Agrippa

The next day Agrippa and ²³

Vespasian and Titus in turn. A visit of welcome to Festus. To greet the new governor. Festus explained Paul's situation to the King. He did this for advice. He knew little of Jewish customs, and he could see no guilt in Paul. King Agrippa was himself a Jew, and would understand the real cause of the problem. About their own religion. Festus had expected them to accuse Paul of crimes punishable by Roman law. But they were not able to prove anything (verse 7). But Paul appealed. Paul used his legal rights as a Roman to protect his life from those Jews who wanted to kill him. This appeal was a "blessing in disguise" (see Acts 28:16). Agrippa said to Festus. What he says in the Greek implies he had wanted to hear Paul for some time.

23-27. The next day. Luke writes as one who saw it all take place. Note who all is there, and compare

with great pomp and ceremony, and entered the audience hall with the military chiefs and the leading men of the city. Festus gave the order and Paul was brought in. ²⁴Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all who are here with us: You see this man against whom all the Jewish people, both here and in Jerusalem, have brought complaints to me. They scream that he should not live any longer. ²⁵But I could not find that he had done anything for which he deserved the death sentence. And since he himself made an appeal to the Emperor, I have decided to send him. ²⁶But I do not have anything definite about him to write to the Emperor. So I have brought him here before you—and especially before you, King Agrippa!—so that, after investigating his case, I may have something to write. ²⁷For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without clearly indicating the charges against him."

Paul Defends Himself before Agrippa

26 Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak on your own behalf." Paul stretched out his hand and defended himself as follows:

Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience room with the high ranking officers and the leading men of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. Festus 24 said:

"King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. I found he 25 had done nothing deserving of death, but because he made his appeal to the Emperor I decided to send him to Rome. But I have nothing 26 definite to write to His Majesty about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that as a result of this investigation I may have something to write. For I think it is un- 27 reasonable to send on a prisoner without specifying the charges against him."

26 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself."

So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense:

Acts 9:15. Paul was brought in. He is the preacher, and his congregation contains some of the most powerful and influential men and women of the whole area. This shows God's *providence* at work. We read Paul's sermon in the next chapter. *Festus said.* This is a court of law. Festus gives the charges against Paul: (1) You see this man; (2) the Jewish people . . . scream that he should not live; (3) I could not find . . . he deserved the death sentence; (4) he himself made an appeal to the Emperor; (5) I do not have anything . . . to write to the Emperor; (6) So I have brought him here before you. Festus and others like him found it very difficult to decide how to deal with Christians. They could find no real reason to oppose them, and their sense of "fair play" made them nervous about it all. Yet they wanted to keep the good will of all the people, which included these Jewish leaders and such men as Demetrius (*Acts 19*).

1. **You have permission to speak.** Festus was the one who had the authority in this province, but this session of the court was arranged to permit Agrippa to investigate the case and help him write something the Emperor would accept. **Paul stretched out his hand.** Not to gain silence, but as part of his style of speaking.

²“King Agrippa! I consider myself fortunate that today I am to defend myself before you from all the things the Jews accuse me of. ³This is especially true because you know so well all the Jewish customs and questions. I ask you, then, to listen to me with patience.

⁴“All the Jews know how I have lived ever since I was young. They know from the beginning how I have spent my whole life in my own country and in Jerusalem. ⁵They have always known, if they are willing to testify, that from the very first I have lived as a member of the strictest party of our religion, the Pharisees. ⁶And now I stand here to be tried because I hope in the promise that God made to our ancestors— ⁷the very promise that all twelve tribes of our people hope to receive, as they worship God day and night. And it is because of this hope, your Majesty, that I am being accused by the Jews! ⁸Why do you Jews find it impossible to believe that God raises the dead?

“King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

“The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee. And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. Your Majesty, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

2-3. **I consider myself fortunate.** Agrippa was a Jew, one who had been brought up in the Jewish religion. He claimed to live by the Jewish Law and traditions, and he was the legal guardian of the temple. Therefore, he is competent to judge whether Paul’s preaching contradicts the Law of Moses, or is the fulfillment of it.

4-8. **All the Jews know how I have lived.** His life had been lived in agreement with the Law. They knew about his education in Jerusalem, and that he lived as a Pharisee, the strictest of the Jewish sects [the Essenes were a quasi-Jewish sect, with some pagan elements]. **Because I hope in the promise.** Note how he presents Christ as the fulfillment of the promise that God made to the ancestors. He had not “turned traitor” to the Law, but had become a “fulfilled Jew” in Christ. Compare *Rom. 3:31*. Every Christian **BECOMES** a true descendant of Abraham (*Gal. 3:29*). The promise of the Messiah was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. **The very promise.** The twelve tribes worshiped God day and night motivated by the HOPE this promise brought them. [Twelve tribes: This is sometimes used to mean all God’s people. The ten northern tribes had vanished into captivity centuries before this. Yet descendants of all the tribes were mixed among those who lived in Christ’s time. That is, Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin; John the Baptist of Levi; Joseph and Mary of Judah; Anna of Asher (*Luke 2:36*). Compare *2 Chron. 11:14*.] Paul shows the strange fact that these Jewish leaders persecute him because he is identified with what forms their deepest and strongest hope!!! **Why do you Jews?** Agrippa is a Sadducee, and does not believe man will survive death. But Paul speaks to all those present, and is emphasizing the raising of Jesus from the dead. This was the FACT that both Sadducee and Pharisee alike refused to believe. [Paul probably gave more detail than Luke records here. This is the outline of what he said.]

"I myself thought that I should do everything I could against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰That is what I did in Jerusalem. I received authority from the chief priests and put many of God's people in prison; and when they were sentenced to death, I also voted for it. ¹¹Many times I had them punished in all the synagogues, and tried to make them deny their faith. I was so furious with them that I even went to foreign cities to persecute them."

Paul Tells of His Conversion

(Also Acts 9.1-19; 22.6-16)

¹²"It was for this purpose that I went to Damascus with the authority and orders from the chief priests. ¹³It was on the road at midday, your Majesty, that I saw a light much brighter than the sun shining from the sky around me and the men traveling with me. ¹⁴All of us fell to the ground, and I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me? You hurt yourself by hitting back, like an ox kicking against its owner's stick.' ¹⁵'Who are you, Lord?' I asked. And the Lord said: 'I am Jesus, whom you persecute.

"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them.

"On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. About noon, Your Majesty, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

"Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord

9-11. **I myself thought.** He shows his motivation as it had been when he persecuted the Christians. He did it, thinking that he honored God by doing it. **I also voted for it.** This may only mean that Paul approved of what was done (compare Acts 8:1). The literal meaning is that Paul was a member of the Council. But one of the requirements for membership was to be married and have a son. Some think that Paul's wife had died before he became a Christian. If Paul had been married, it would explain some of his insights in 1 Cor. 7. **Many times I had them punished.** Compare Matt. 10:17; 23:34. **Tried to make them deny their faith.** By the use of threats and torture. With such a history as this, no one could suspect him of "selling out" to a false ideology. All there must see that some amazing change had taken place in this man!!!

12-18. **It was for this purpose.** He had gone to Damascus with the idea of trying to crush the Christian movement. This is the third time he tells about his converting to Christ. See Acts 9:1-9 and notes. Here he points out the brilliance of the light (God's glory), and tells us he heard the voice speak in the Hebrew language. This would be in the archaic Hebrew of the Bible (remember the people spoke the Aramaic dialect). Paul had been trained in the theology of the Law by Gamaliel, and understood this form of Hebrew perfectly. This shocked Paul to the very depths of his "Jewishness." **You hurt yourself by kicking back.** This translation reconstructs the rest of the proverb for us: "like an ox kicking against its owner's stick." Paul's audience would add this automatically. The meaning is

¹⁶But get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant; you are to tell others what you have seen of me today, and what I will show you in the future.

¹⁷I will save you from the people of Israel and from the Gentiles, to whom I will send you.

¹⁸You are to open their eyes and turn them from the darkness to the light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that through their faith in me they will have their sins forgiven and receive their place among God's chosen people.' "

Paul Tells of His Work

¹⁹"And so, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the vision I had from heaven. ²⁰First in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and then in the whole country of the Jews and among the Gentiles, I preached that they must repent of their sins and turn to God, and do the things that would show they had repented. ²¹It was for this reason that the Jews seized me while I was in the temple, and tried to kill me. ²²But to this very day I have been helped by God, and so I stand here giving my witness to all, to the small and great alike. What I say is the very same thing the prophets and Moses said was going to happen: ²³that the Messiah must suffer and be the first one to rise from death, to announce the light of salvation to the Jews and to the Gentiles."

replied. 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

"So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen—that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles."

that Paul was only hurting himself through his persecution of the messianic community. To appoint you as my servant. Paul was a devout man, even when he was persecuting the church of Christ. The Lord did not interfere with Paul's *free will*. Paul had already decided to serve God. All he needed was to be made aware of the facts. Paul had to see the Risen Lord to be qualified as an apostle. Paul was to be a *witness* to the Gentiles of God's act in Christ to set men free!

19-20. I did not disobey the vision. He could have disobeyed, as Judas did. But since he had already decided to serve God, this decision made him follow Jesus. First in Damascus. He had probably been a "missionary" for Judaism. Now he immediately begins to preach Jesus as the Messiah. See Acts 9:27-29; 11:30. Repent of their sins and turn to God. Compare Acts 3:19 and note. Paul preached a NEW LIFE!!!

21-23. It was for this reason. Because he both obeyed and preached Christ. But to this very day. God had helped him and showed his work to be genuine. What I say is the very same thing. The historical Christ was always the subject of Paul's preaching. The prophets and Moses had all predicted the things that did happen. They said that the Messiah would suffer and rise from death, to announce the light of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles. Compare Acts 15:15-18 and notes.

²⁴As Paul defended himself in this way, Festus shouted at him, "You are mad, Paul! Your great learning is driving you mad!"

²⁵Paul answered, "I am not mad, your Excellency! The words I speak are true and sober.

²⁶King Agrippa! I can speak to you with all boldness, because you know about these things. I am sure that you have taken notice of every one of them, for this thing has not happened hidden away in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do!"

²⁸Agrippa said to Paul, "In this short time do you think you will make me a Christian?"

²⁹"Whether a short time or a long time," Paul answered, "my prayer to God is that you and all the rest of you who are listening to me today might become what I am—except, of course, for these chains!"

³⁰Then the King, the Governor, Bernice, and all the others got up, ³¹and after leaving they said to each other, "This man has not done anything for which he should die or be put in prison."

At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted, "Your great learning is driving you insane."

"I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable. The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do."

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. They left the room, and while talking with one another, they said, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment."

24-26. **You are mad, Paul!** Notice it is Festus, a Gentile, who breaks in on Paul and shouts that only a deranged brain could imagine such things. Compare this outburst with the reaction of the Athenians (*Acts 17:32*). **Your great learning** may refer to Paul's obvious religious education, since Festus and many others like him thought all religion was a delusion. Remember also, Festus had just become governor, and did not know Paul's history. **Paul answered.** He calmly points out that he is not "mad," but speaks the truth. He had full control of himself. **King Agrippa!** All the things that Paul had been talking about were well known to Agrippa. This had been "out in the open" where everyone could see, and Christianity had started in the very city where Christ had been killed, just fifty days after he raised from death.

27-30. **Do you believe the prophets?** Agrippa did believe the prophets, as all Jews did. Therefore he would not appraise the idea of the prophecies being fulfilled as mad and irrational. **Do you think you will make me a Christian?** *McGarvey* says there is strong evidence to take this expression as ironic, teasing Paul for thinking him such an easy convert to Christianity. However he prefers to take it as a genuine expression of interest, which is at least allowable from the text. **Whether a short time or a long time.** Paul's intense desire is to see people reach out through faith to seize Christ! **Except, of course.** He would not want any of them to be chained as he was.

31-32. **They said to each other.** They agree that Paul is not guilty of any crime. **This man could have**

³²And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been released if he had not appealed to the Emperor."

Agrippa said to Festus, 32
"This man could have been
set free, if he had not
appealed to Caesar."

Paul Sails for Rome

27 When it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they handed Paul and some other prisoners over to Julius, an officer in the Roman army regiment called "The Emperor's Regiment." ²We went aboard a ship from Adramyttium, which was ready to leave for the seaports of the province of Asia, and sailed away. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. ³The next day we arrived at Sidon. Julius was kind to Paul and allowed him to go and see his friends, to be given what he needed. ⁴We went on from there, and because the winds were blowing against us we sailed on the sheltered side of the island of Cyprus. ⁵We crossed over the sea off Cilicia and Pamphylia, and came to

Paul Sails for Rome

27 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. 2

The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs. From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. 3
4
5

been released. Paul would have been a free man, if he had not appealed to the Emperor. However, the Jews still wanted to kill him, and his freedom might not have lasted very long. But it is God's will that he go to Rome as a prisoner of the Roman Government (see Acts 28:16 and note).

1. **When it was decided.** "We" is Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus. God's promise to Paul (Acts 23:11) was being fulfilled, not by a miracle, but by a combination of ordinary human actions. **Over to Julius.** We know nothing about the other prisoners. All we learn about Julius is favorable. Paul seemed to always be respected by the Roman officials he met. Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Felix, Festus, and Julius are examples of this. **The Emperor's Regiment.** This could be an honorary title, but it can be taken literally. He was one of a group of Roman soldiers who did "detached duty," transporting prisoners, etc.

2. **We went aboard a ship from Adramyttium.** A town on the seacoast of the province of Asia, northeast of Pergamum. There were no regularly scheduled boats, and Paul had to use three to reach Rome. **Aristarchus.** See note on Col. 4:10. He and Luke seem to be the only Christians on the boat with Paul.

3. **The next day we arrived at Sidon.** About sixty-seven miles north of Caesarea. Note they allowed Paul to visit his friends there. Paul would never be *alone*, because all Christians were his *brothers and sisters* - a bond closer than blood-ties!

4-5. **We sailed on the sheltered side.** These boats depended on the wind for motive power. They would normally sail west of Cyprus to Patara, about thirty miles west of Myra on the coast of Lycia. But the winds force them to sail to the east of Cyprus, taking the long way around. The wind must have been from the northwest. They are forced to keep close to the coasts of Cilicia and Pamphylia, to use the local land-breezes to bring them to Myra.

Myra, in Lycia. ⁶There the officer found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail for Italy, so he put us aboard.

⁷We sailed slowly for several days, and with great difficulty finally arrived off the town of Cnidus. The wind would not let us go any farther in that direction, so we sailed down the sheltered side of the island of Crete, passing by Cape Salmone. ⁸We kept close to the coast, and with great difficulty came to a place called Safe Harbors, not far from the town of Lasea.

⁹We spent a long time there, until it became dangerous to continue the voyage, because by now the day of Atonement was already past. So Paul gave them this advice, ¹⁰"Men, I see that our voyage from here on will be dangerous; there will be great damage to the cargo and to the ship, and loss of life as well." ¹¹But the army officer was convinced by what the captain and the owner of the ship said, and not by what Paul said. ¹²The harbor was not a good one to spend the winter in; so most of the men were in favor of putting out to sea and trying to reach Phoenix, if possible. It is a harbor in Crete that faces southwest and northwest, and they could spend the winter there.

There the centurion found ⁶
an Alexandrian ship sailing
for Italy and put us on
board. We made slow head- ⁷
way for many days and had
difficulty arriving off Cni-
dus. When the wind did not
allow us to hold our course,
we sailed to the lee of Crete,
opposite Salmone. ⁸
We moved along the coast with
difficulty and came to a
place called Fair Havens,
near the town of Lasea.

Much time had been lost, ⁹
and sailing had already be-
come dangerous because by
now it was after the Fast. So
Paul warned them, "Men, ¹⁰
I can see that our voyage is
going to be disastrous and
bring great loss to ship and
cargo, and to our own lives
also." But the centurion, ¹¹
instead of listening to what
Paul said, followed the ad-
vice of the pilot and of the
owner of the ship. Since the ¹²
harbor was unsuitable to
winter in, the majority de-
cided that we should sail on,
hoping to reach Phoenix and
winter there. This was a har-
bor in Crete, facing both
southwest and northwest.

6-8. **Found a ship from Alexandria.** Alexandria is on the northern coast of Africa. They are headed for Italy. The map shows what distances they were sailing. *Verse 38* shows they were carrying wheat. **Sail slowly.** It was 137 miles to Cnidus, on a narrow point of land sticking out from the southern corner of the Province of Asia. **Passing by Cape Salmone.** On the most eastern point of Crete. **Called Safe Harbors.** Also known as Fair Havens. **Lasea.** About four miles east of Safe Harbors. All this reads like the diary of a man who was making the trip, which of course Luke was.

9-13. **We spent a long time there.** They were weatherbound, since the wind would not take them the way they must go. **The day of Atonement.** Ramsay gives this as October 5, 59 A.D. Paul used the Jewish calendar (*1 Cor. 16:8*). It would not be strange for Luke to do this also. The storms of winter made sailing dangerous. Since they navigated by the stars, the clouds and darkness of winter would be a real problem. **So Paul gave them this advice.** What Paul says is not a revelation from God, but practical experience. **But the army officer was convinced.** He would be expected to listen to the captain and the owner of the ship. Safe Harbors was not the best place to stay, and they decide to make an attempt

The Storm at Sea

¹³A soft wind from the south began to blow, and the men thought that they could carry out their plan; so they pulled up the anchor and sailed as close as possible along the coast of Crete. ¹⁴But soon a very strong wind—the one called “Northeaster”—blew down from the island. ¹⁵It hit the ship, and since it was impossible to keep the ship headed into the wind, we gave up trying and let it be carried along by the wind. ¹⁶We got some shelter when we passed to the south of the little island of Cauda. There, with some difficulty, we managed to make the ship’s boat secure. ¹⁷They pulled it aboard, and then fastened some ropes tight around the ship. They were afraid that they might run into the sandbanks off the coast of Libya; so they lowered the sail and let the ship be carried by the wind. ¹⁸The violent storm continued, so on the next day they began to throw the ship’s cargo overboard, ¹⁹and on the following day they threw the ship’s equipment overboard with their own hands. ²⁰For many days we could not see the sun or the stars, and the wind kept on blowing very hard. We finally gave up all hope of being saved.

The Storm

When a gentle south wind ¹³ began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. Before very ¹⁴ long, a wind of hurricane force, called the “Northeaster,” swept down from the island. The ship was ¹⁵ caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along. As ¹⁶ we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure. When ¹⁷ the men had hoisted it aboard, they tied ropes around the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along. We took such a violent ¹⁸ battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. On the third ¹⁹ day, they threw the ship’s tackle overboard with their own hands. When neither ²⁰ sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

to reach Phoenix, less than forty miles along the coast to the west. **A soft wind from the south.** This makes them confident of success.

14-20. **But soon a very strong wind.** A “Northeaster,” blowing from the northeast, down from the island. It was a violent hurricane! They tried to keep the ship headed into it, to ride out the storm. But when this failed, they could do nothing to help themselves. **Cauda.** Nearly fifty miles out from Phoenix. **The ship’s boat.** They had been towing it. **And then fastened some ropes.** These were dropped under the ship and then pulled tight with levers to strengthen the wooden hull. **The sandbanks.** These were on the coast of Africa, southwest of Crete. The sailors were afraid of these. **So they lowered the sail.** The big main sail would have been lowered already. A small storm sail would still be up. If the ship were pointed north, the wind from the northeast would make it drift west. They were trying to avoid the sandbanks to the southwest of them. **So on the next day.** This shows how serious their condition is! **Lipscomb** thinks huge beams and timbers which would be used to repair the ship, were lying on the deck. These would be thrown overboard first. **The ship’s equipment.** Anything loose on the deck that could be thrown overboard, such as ropes, levers, tools, etc. **For many days.** They could not tell just where they were, because they could not see the sun or the stars, and there were no compasses. **Gave up all hope.** They know now that Paul’s prediction had been true.

²¹After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood before them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have sailed from Crete; then we would have avoided all this damage and loss. ²²But not I beg you, take courage! Not one of you will lose his life; only the ship will be lost. ²³For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship came to me ²⁴and said, 'Don't be afraid, Paul! You must stand before the Emperor; and God, in his goodness, has given you the lives of all those who are sailing with you.' ²⁵And so, men, take courage! For I trust in God that it will be just as I was told. ²⁶But we will be driven ashore on some island."

²⁷It was the fourteenth night, and we were being driven by the storm on the Mediterranean. About midnight the sailors suspected that we were getting close to land. ²⁸So they dropped a line with a weight tied to it and found that the water was one hundred and twenty feet deep; a little later they did the same and found that it was ninety feet deep. ²⁹They were afraid that our ship would go on the rocks, so they lowered four anchors from the back of the ship and prayed for

After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

The Shipwreck

On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. They took soundings and found that the water was one hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks,

21-26. **A long time without food.** The fires were out, the food watersoaked, the men too busy, and they were frightened out of their wits by the storm. **Paul stood before them.** He is calm and firm, as he finds a place where all can hear. **You should have listened to me.** He is not taunting them nor scolding them. He simply states this fact to help them believe what he is about to say. **Take courage.** He says the ship will be lost, but no lives. **An angel.** He has been given a special message direct from God. **To whom I belong.** Paul was honored to belong to God. He often spoke of himself as "God's slave." This was the key to all Paul's ministry. **Don't be afraid, Paul.** They are in a horrible storm, the ship is coming to pieces, but God has not forgotten his servant, Paul. **You must stand before the Emperor.** Paul would survive to carry out his mission. **Has given you the lives.** Paul had been praying for these people. Compare *Gen. 18:23-33*.

27-32. **It was the fourteenth night.** Since they sailed from Safe Harbors. The storm is still driving them. The area of the Mediterranean Sea to the south of Italy and Greece was once called the *Adria*. A look at the map shows that after being driven toward the coast of Africa, the wind carries them back north and west, eventually to land on Malta. **So they dropped a line.** The roar of the surf may have alerted them. They measure the depth of the water and find they are coming to land. **They were afraid.** In the light of day, they could steer through the rocks. They drop four anchors, because the ship

daylight. ³⁰The sailors tried to escape from the ship; they lowered the boat into the water and pretended that they were going to put out some anchors from the front of the ship. ³¹But Paul said to the army officer and soldiers, "If these sailors don't stay on board, you cannot be saved." ³²So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the boat and let it go.

³³Day was about to come, and Paul begged them all to eat some food, "You have been waiting for fourteen days now, and all this time you have not eaten a thing. ³⁴I beg you, then, eat some food; you need it in order to survive. Not even a hair of your heads will be lost." ³⁵After saying this, Paul took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, broke it, and began to eat. ³⁶They took courage, and every one of them also ate some food. ³⁷There was a total of two hundred and seventy-six of us on board. ³⁸After everyone had eaten enough, they lightened the ship by throwing the wheat into the sea.

The Shipwreck

³⁹When day came, the sailors did not recognize the coast, but they noticed a bay with a beach and decided that, if possible, they would run the

they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. Then ³¹ Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." ³² So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away.

Just before dawn Paul ³³ urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food—you haven't eaten anything. Now ³⁴ I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." ³⁵ After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. Altogether there ³⁷ were 276 of us on board. When they had eaten as ³⁸ much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.

When daylight came, they ³⁹ did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship

is very heavy. **The sailors tried to escape.** They were willing to allow the others to drown. But for the safety of all, they had to stay on the ship. Paul calls this to the attention of the Roman soldiers, and they take direct action.

33-38. **Paul begged them all to eat some food.** He seems to have taken charge of things in this crisis. They had eaten nothing for a long time (*verse 21*), and were weak from hunger. **Not even a hair of your heads will be lost.** The angel had assured him of this. **After saying this.** Paul puts his words into action. He takes bread, gives thanks to God so that all can hear, broke off a piece, and began to eat. **They took courage.** Paul's calm example strengthens their belief of what he has told them. **Two hundred and seventy-six of us on board.** This shows how large the ship was. [*Josephus* says there were about 600 in the ship that took him to Italy.] **They lightened the ship.** In order to go as far up on the beach as possible, the cargo of wheat is taken out of the hold and thrown into the sea. In *verse 18* it was the cargo on deck, or at least only a part of the cargo. Egypt then exported much grain to Italy.

39-44. **A bay with a beach.** This would be the safest place to run aground. These sailors may have landed on Malta many times before, but did not recognize this part of the coast. **So they cut off the**

ship aground there. ⁴⁰So they cut off the anchors and let them sink in the sea, and at the same time they untied the ropes that held the steering oars. Then they raised the sail at the front of the ship so that the wind would blow the ship forward, and headed for shore. ⁴¹But the ship hit a sandbank and went aground; the front part of the ship got stuck and could not move, while the back part was being broken to pieces by the violence of the waves.

⁴²The soldiers made a plan to kill all the prisoners, so that none of them would swim ashore and escape. ⁴³But the army officer wanted to save Paul, so he stopped them from doing this. Instead, he ordered all the men who could swim to jump overboard first and swim ashore; ⁴⁴the rest were to follow, holding on to the planks or to some broken pieces of the ship. And this was how we all got safely ashore.

In Malta

28 When we were safely ashore, we learned that the island was called Malta. ²The natives there were very friendly to us. It had started to rain and was cold, so they built a fire

aground if they could. Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety.

Ashore on Malta

28 Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and

anchors. They wanted the ship to be as light as possible. **The steering oars.** The two paddle-rudders which these ships steered by. They had to use these to steer into the bay. **Then they raised the sail.** Only the small sail at the front of the ship would help in these circumstances. **But the ship hit a sandbank.** This is a bank or ridge washed up by two seas coming together. The bay turned out to be a narrow channel not more than 300 feet wide, between the island of Salmonetta and the coast of Malta. The ship stuck on the sandbar and the violence of the waves break the ship in pieces. **To kill all the prisoners.** Roman soldiers would rather kill a prisoner than allow him to escape. But guards who lost their prisoners were killed themselves (*see note on Acts 16:27*). This shows their attitude toward human life. **But the army officer.** This man shows a different character. He had treated Paul with respect, and he may now feel some sense of awe toward the one who said his God promised their lives would not be lost. He issues orders for them to abandon ship. They all reach shore safely. This was not Paul's first shipwreck (*2 Cor. 11:25*). Scholars say Luke's description of the storm and shipwreck accurately show conditions on the ancient sea.

1-6. **The island was called Malta.** Also called Melita, but not to be confused with the Melita on the coast of Illyricum. This is the island south of Sicily. It is about sixty miles in circumference. **The natives.** BARBAROI does not mean barbarians as we use the word today, but simply means they could not speak Greek (*compare note on Acts 21:37*). "Natives" is the more accurate translation. [The modern people of Malta speak an Arabic pidgin, which has elements of Italian and English.] **So they built a fire.** This shows they were kind and considerate people. **Paul gathered up.** He did not stand

and made us all welcome. ³Paul gathered up a bundle of sticks and was putting them on the fire when a snake came out, on account of the heat, and fastened itself to his hand. ⁴The natives saw the snake hanging on Paul's hand and said to one another, "This man must be a murderer, but Fate will not let him live, even though he escaped from the sea." ⁵But Paul shook the snake off into the fire without being harmed at all. ⁶They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after waiting for a long time and not seeing anything unusual happening to him, they changed their minds and said, "He is a god!"

⁷Not far from that place were some fields that belonged to Publius, the chief of the island. He welcomed us kindly and for three days we were his guests. ⁸Publius' father was in bed, sick with fever and dysentery. Paul went into his room, prayed, placed his hands on him, and healed him. ⁹When this happened, all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. ¹⁰They gave us many gifts, and when we sailed they put on board what we needed for the voyage.

cold. Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall over dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and for three days entertained us hospitably. His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured. They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

and watch but helped. **A snake came out.** A poisonous snake, perhaps like the "stinging snakes" God sent among the Israelites (*Num. 21:6*). **This man must be a murderer.** They believed God used poisonous snakes to punish the guilty. Therefore, they believe Paul to be guilty of some horrible crime. **He is a god!** This is the opposite of what happened at Lystra (*Acts 14:18-19*). They expected Paul's hand to swell, and to see him fall dead. Paul had the special gifts from the Holy Spirit, and this showed his authority from God (*compare Mark 16:17-18*). Not every one was given the same gift (*see 1 Cor. 12:4-11*), and probably only a few had them (*Acts 8:15-18*).

7-10. **The chief of the island.** Publius is probably the Roman governor of the island. It would be his duty to take care of the Roman officer, soldiers, and their prisoners as well. He was kind and generous to them. **Publius' father was in bed.** Seriously ill. Paul uses his power to heal the man. [The apostles had the complete set of gifts from the Spirit. The power to heal the sick was one of these. Those not apostles received only one gift (*2 Tim. 1:6*).] **When this happened.** This brought all the people to Paul. He healed the sick, and certainly used this opportunity to preach Christ to them as well. They gave Paul and the others all the supplies they needed to continue on to Rome.

From Malta to Rome

¹¹After three months we sailed away on a ship from Alexandria, called "The Twin Gods," which had spent the winter in the island. ¹²We arrived in the city of Syracuse and stayed there for three days. ¹³From there we sailed on and arrived in the city of Rhegium. The next day a wind began to blow from the south, and in two days we came to the town of Puteoli. ¹⁴We found some believers there who asked us to stay with them a week. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵The brothers in Rome heard about us and came as far as Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

In Rome

¹⁶When we arrived in Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself with a soldier guarding him.

Arrival at Rome

After three months we put 11
out to sea in a ship that had
wintered in the island. It
was an Alexandrian ship
with the figurehead of the
twin gods Castor and Pol-
lux. We put in at Syracuse 12
and stayed there three days.
From there we set sail and 13
arrived at Rhegium. The
next day the south wind
came up, and on the follow-
ing day we reached Puteoli.
There we found some broth- 14
ers who invited us to spend a
week with them. And so we
went to Rome. The brothers 15
there had heard that we
were coming, and they
traveled as far as the Forum
of Appius and the Three
Taverns to meet us. At the
sight of these men Paul
thanked God and was en-
couraged. When we got to 16
Rome, Paul was allowed to
live by himself, with a sol-
dier to guard him.

11-14. **After three months.** This would be either February or March. The worst weather would be over. **The Twin Gods.** This is the literal translation. Castor and Pollux were known as "The Twin Gods," and were favorite *sea-gods* of the sailors. Their carved figures or images were mounted on the bow of the ship as figureheads. **Syracuse.** About eighty miles north, on the island of Sicily. **Three days.** Alexandrian ship usually stopped here, but they may have been waiting for a good wind. **From there we sailed on.** Some Greek manuscripts imply a wandering route to catch the shifting winds, but the best manuscripts say they simply lifted anchor and sailed on. **Rhegium.** On the point of the "toe" of Italy. They stayed one day, and then a south wind blew. **Puteoli.** On the bay, near Naples. This, and Ostia, near Rome, were where the grain ships came in. **We found some believers there.** There was a church at Rome and many believers in Italy at this time (*compare Rom. 16*). This congregation is in a busy seaport on the route from Palestine to Rome. **Who asked us to stay.** To eat the Lord's Supper. Compare note on *Acts 21:4*. Julius permits this.

15-16. **The brothers in Rome heard about us.** They already had Paul's Letter to the Romans, and probably there were some of his own converts in this group. His week in Puteoli gives them time to hear and come to meet him on the road. **Market of Appius** is forty-three miles from Rome. **Three Inns** is thirty-three miles from Rome. From Puteoli to Rome is about 135 miles. **He thanked God.** Paul is a prisoner, traveling on the crowded Appian Way. He is happy to see the brothers from Rome. **Paul was allowed to live by himself.** He was not put in prison with the others. This was God's providence!!! It is not likely Paul expected to come to Rome as a prisoner of the Roman government. But look at the results! He was permitted to live in the city, and he had an armed guard with him at all times (something he could not have bought). He was chained to the guard with a light chain, but he could and did talk freely with all who came to him. He could preach and teach, and those Jews who were his enemies could not touch him!!!

¹⁷After three days Paul called the local Jewish leaders to a meeting. When they gathered, he said to them, "My brothers! Even though I did nothing against our people or the customs that we received from our ancestors, I was made a prisoner in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. ¹⁸They questioned me and wanted to release me, because they found that I had done nothing for which I deserved to die. ¹⁹But when the Jews opposed this, I was forced to appeal to the Emperor, even though I had no accusation to make against my own people. ²⁰That is why I asked to see you and talk with you; because I have this chain on me for the sake of him for whom the people of Israel hope."

²¹They said to him, "We have not received any letters from Judea about you, nor have any of our brothers come from there with any news, or to say anything bad about you. ²²But we would like to hear your ideas, because we know that everywhere people speak against this party that you belong to."

²³So they set a date with Paul, and a larger number of them came that day to where Paul was staying. From morning till night he explained

Paul Preaches at Rome Under Guard

Three days later he called ¹⁷ together the leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, Paul said to them:

"My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. They examined me ¹⁸ and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. ¹⁹ But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—not that I had any charge to bring against my own people. For this reason ²⁰ I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain."

They replied, "We have ²¹ not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of the brothers who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. But we want ²² to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect."

They arranged to meet ²³ Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and

17-22. **After three days.** Notice he could not "sit still." Likely the first three days had been spent visiting with the believers. Now he gets down to work! **The local Jewish leaders.** About the time Christ was born, there were 8,000 Jews in Rome. Emperor Claudius had ejected them in 50 A.D. (*Acts 18:2*), but they had been allowed to return in a short time. Just now, Nero's wife Poppaea was a "Gentile converted to Judaism." The leaders would include synagogue elders, teachers of the Law, and the heads of the most important families. **My brothers!** Luke may give us a condensed version of what Paul says, or Paul may have said it just like this. He explains why he is a prisoner. **For the sake of him.** The hope if Israel was the Messiah! See note on *Acts 22:22*. **We have not received any letters.** That is, any *official word* about Paul. They certainly knew of him and the charges made against him. **But we would like to hear your ideas.** What they have heard makes them want to find out more about Paul's teaching. **People speak against.** Such people as those Jews who wanted to kill Paul. But the foundation was then being laid for the horrible things Emperor Nero would do to persecute the Christians in just a few years.

23-29. **So they set a date with Paul.** A large number came to hear what he would say. **He tried to convince them.** Paul used the Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets to preach Christ to them.

and gave them his message about the Kingdom of God. He tried to convince them about Jesus by quoting from the Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets. ²⁴Some of them were convinced by his words, but others would not believe. ²⁵So they left, disagreeing among themselves, after Paul had said this one thing, "How well the Holy Spirit spoke through the prophet Isaiah to your ancestors! ²⁶For he said,

'Go and say to this people:
You will listen and listen, but not understand;

you will look and look, but not see.

²⁷Because this people's minds are dull,
they have stopped up their ears,
and have closed their eyes.

Otherwise, their eyes would see,
their ears would hear,
their minds would understand,
and they would turn to me, says God,
and I would heal them.' "

²⁸And Paul concluded, "You are to know, then, that God's message of salvation has been sent to the Gentiles. They will listen!" [²⁹After Paul said this, the Jews left, arguing violently among themselves.]

declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. Some ²⁴were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. They disagreed ²⁵among themselves and began to leave, after Paul had made this final statement:

"The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your ancestors when he said through Isaiah the prophet:

'Go to this people and ²⁶say,

You will be ever hearing
but never understanding;

you will be ever seeing
but never perceiving.

For this people's heart ²⁷has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see
with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts

and turn and I would
heal them.'

"Therefore I want you to ²⁸know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!"*

Some of them were convinced. Faith comes through the message about Christ (*Rom. 10:17*). Each of them responded - either to believe, or to disbelieve. After Paul had said this one thing. This seems to imply that most of them disbelieved. How well! This is from *Isa. 6:9-10*. This quotation is found six times in the Gospels, here in Acts, and once in Romans. It is a horrible prediction of God's judgment on those who refuse to believe. See notes on *Matt. 13:14-17*. These words are the one final thing Paul says to them before going to the Gentiles. The Jews left, arguing violently. Even those who disbelieved, could not put Christ out of their minds.

* Some MSS add verse 29: After he said this, the Jews left, arguing vigorously among themselves.

³⁰For two years Paul lived there in a place he rented for himself, and welcomed all who came to see him. ³¹He preached about the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking with all boldness and freedom.

For two whole years Paul ³⁰ stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hin- ³¹ drance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

30-31. **For two years Paul lived there.** Christians in Rome and other places supported Paul during this time (*compare Phil. 4:18 and note*). Paul was able to do a great work here at Rome! This was God's providence in action (*see note on verse 16*). Paul's career ends here in Acts. Traditional history says he was released from his imprisonment, and made tours of missions to Spain and to the East. But Scripture tells us nothing of this. Later he was again accused by his Jewish enemies, this time to be put in the common prison, during which time he wrote 2 Timothy. Just a few months after that, he was executed at Rome in 67 or 68 A.D. *Ramsay* says Paul had been a Christian for 35 years, and was sixty-eight years of age when he was executed.