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PALMER'S DIATESSARON

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as:

“An English Diatessaron:
the Four Gospels in One”

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But with consultation of many other translations
and of the original Greek.

INTRODUCTION

Diatessaron is a Greek word which means "through the four." This book is a blending together of the four books in the Bible we call *gospels*. The four gospels are the first four sections of the "New Testament" part of the Bible. The name gospel means the same as the word evangel, which originated from the Greek word *euangellion*, which means "good news." The gospels, then, are four accounts of the good news about Jesus Christ, and in summary, that good news is this: That the nation of Israel and all the rest of mankind had failed in living up to the will of God as taught in the Old Testament, and therefore were alienated from God and became under his anger. But since He still loved the people of the world, God came to save the world in the form of a man, Jesus Christ, who lived according to the Old Testament law perfectly. Then God punished Jesus for all people's sins, transferring the penalty due each of us for our sins, onto him. That penalty is death and the shedding of our blood. Thus Jesus was crucified, but rose back to life, and now lives in heaven to give new and everlasting life to any of us who accept this substitute death as our only hope of being accepted by God. This is indeed good news!

So four different men wrote four different accounts of Jesus' activities and teachings for us. Those men were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They each targeted a different audience and so had different emphases, but their facts about Jesus are all agreeable with each other. This book, *Diatessaron*, weaves through all four and includes each word that any of the four wrote, but eliminates repetition. So in this you can get every piece of information offered by every one of the writers without having to read four times about a detail all four of them include.

PREFACE

IMPETUS

Have you ever been reading a very familiar passage of scripture and come across something that caused you to exclaim, "How come I've never noticed that before?" That happened to me in November of 1982. I was reading the account of Jesus' resurrection in the 20th chapter of the gospel of John. When I came to the part about John outrunning Peter to the tomb, I thought, "I don't remember reading that before." I must have spent more time reading one of the other gospels which didn't mention the event. Right then I decided to blend the four accounts of the resurrection so that I could read all the details of all four without having to flip pages all the time, or to read redundant words. It wasn't long before I realized that I would not be satisfied stopping there, so that week I set out to harmonize the four gospels in their entirety.

METHOD

The procedure I used was to lay out before me four copies of the New International Version Holy Bible, each open to a different gospel, along with a Greek New Testament. Then I would start copying down phrases from the gospels, all the while scanning them all to see whose phrase would best fit next in the flow of thought. If two or more gospels had a phrase that was the same except for one word, I considered three options, in this order of preference:

1. Come up with a single, different word which encompassed the meanings of both original Greek words.
2. Choose between one or the other, when I judged the difference to be inconsequential.
3. Include both words separated by a conjunction, or comma, etc. which I would have to supply. (This was not often desirable because of the awkward wordiness that resulted.)
4. Put the reading of a gospel that was in a minority in a footnote with clear implication that it is scripture in that gospel.

But an example of where I did use the third option is in the account of the Pharisees' accusation that Jesus was casting out demons by the power of Baal-zibbul. In Matthew, Jesus says, "If I cast out

demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come upon you." In Luke, however, he says, "If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God is come upon you." I rendered it, "If I cast out demons by the Spirit, the finger of God, then the kingdom of God is come upon you." Neither "Spirit" nor "finger" should be omitted, nor is there any word that encompasses the meanings of both. The result is an interesting suggestion as to the Spirit's role in the Trinity.

CHRONOLOGY

The gospels differ as to what sequence they put both discourses and events in; Matthew especially differs from Mark and Luke. Generally, I followed Mark's order, since his account was written the soonest, and Matthew and Luke drew to a great extent from Mark to write their gospels. Mark's material, it is widely agreed, was compiled from the sermons and memories of the apostle Peter, who was a mentor to Mark.

There is much "sayings" material, recited teachings of Jesus, that is found in Matthew and Luke but absent in Mark. Because of this it is thought by many scholars that Matthew and Luke drew from a written source of sayings of Jesus called the Quelle, German for "fountain" or "source," also known simply as "Q," from which Mark drew to a much lesser extent, if at all. By observing patterns in how Matthew and Luke made use of Mark and Q, scholars have extrapolated that Luke more closely follows the sequence in which Jesus' sayings were recounted in Q. But that does not mean that Jesus spoke the Q sayings in the Q sequential order. Moreover, in all likelihood Jesus repeated various teachings in various circumstances. For this reason, though Luke scatters throughout his narrative teachings which Matthew lumps together in the Sermon on the Mount, I did not conflate all of the applicable Luke passages into the Sermon on the Mount.

As for sequence of events, even when Mark changes the subject to the next event or discourse, quite often he begins simply, "One day..." or "Another time..." The gospel writers were not as concerned with chronological sequence as we are in this time and culture. In the gospel of John the date and timing is specific, however, because almost every situation he wrote about was connected to one of the feasts of the Jews, which of course had definite dates. So events in John are more likely to be chronological in relation to other events in the gospel of John.

By the time of my next edition, I will have attempted to line up the chronology with the Triennial Cycle of synagogue readings, if possible.

HEADINGS

The topical headings have underneath them references, not necessarily to scriptures about the topic named in the heading, but rather they inform the reader what the contents of that section are—what parts of the scriptures are found in the section under that heading.

FOOTNOTES

The footnotes of definition are *cumulative*. By that I mean that a defining footnote will be found only with the first occurrence of the word. For example, after the first appearance of the word *Pharisee* there is a footnote defining Pharisee, but the remaining appearances of the word Pharisee will not be footnoted. The reader is expected to start reading at the beginning of the Diatessaron and learn the definitions cumulatively, so that when a word occurs later, the reader will already know the definition.

The symbol [#] tells the reader that there is an endnote concerning that subject to be found at the end of the document, in the section called "Endnotes."

TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

Some names of the less familiar characters have been changed closer to their Hebrew form, for example, Annas to Hananiah (The father-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest); Caiaphas to Kayafa; Anna to Hannah; and Christ to Messiah. I did this because it contributes to the Jewish flavor of the context. It is very important for us to stay aware that the church is Jewish in origin, and a fulfillment

of the Old Testament. "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:21-24). We Gentiles are only grafted individually, as wild unnatural branches, into the olive tree, which is Israel (Romans 11:11-26; Ephesians 2:11-22; Hebrews 11:39-40; Revelation 21:9-14,22). God has not cast away his people. The people of God is still Israel. Peace and mercy be to the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16).

I must now address the expectations of potential readers who are not familiar with the obstacles to translation. Specifically, expectations as to one-to-one equivalence of words, and expectations as to textual variants.

The task of translating the Bible differs from translation of other literature in that both I and most of my audience believe it to be sacred ground. We come with our figurative shoes off and fear lest we put words in God's mouth he didn't say, or take away from what he did say. We believe that the books Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, in their original state as those men first wrote them, were inspired by God. Those men were being moved by the Holy Spirit of God as they wrote. For that reason, the original documents contain no errors.

But we today cannot read the original documents (called *autographs*), because they were written on papyrus (pressed reed plant) or on animal skins, with non-permanent inscription methods, and so they disintegrated soon after they were produced. Even if we had them, we speak a different language from the Greek in which they were written. Natives of Greece today also speak a language very different in pronunciation, vocabulary, and rules of grammar from the Greek of Jesus' day. Moreover, the hundreds of Greek manuscripts of the four gospels which we have available to us today all differ from one another. Consequently there is need not only for translation, but also need to decide from which of the hundreds of Greek text variants to translate.

Not one of the Greek manuscripts is perfect. Over the two thousand years of the process of copies being made from copies, the texts got longer and longer. The copyists, sometimes accidentally, sometimes intentionally, added things to the text. The accidental varieties I will not go into, since that would be long and technical. Suffice it to say that you or I, no matter how careful and prayerful we were, would not be able to hand copy a long document like the book of Matthew without making mistakes. It simply is not humanly possible.

As for the intentional varieties, words were intentionally added to the text for various reasons, among which are the following. Copyists wished to make an account in one gospel say the same thing as the parallel account in the other gospels. Copyists who were members of a cult added text to prove their beliefs; for example, many little fantasies about angels were added to various parts of the New Testament, including the gospels of Luke and John. The apostle Paul warned us about these angel worshipers in Colossians 2:18. Other intentional additions were supplied by copyists who knew of stories widely accepted by Christians as true yet which had not been written by the original authors of the gospels. One story was added almost 500 years after Christ, the story of the woman caught in adultery. Much later, in the 16th century, verse divisions were added, along with numbers. Unfortunately, verse numbers were given to passages that were not authentic parts of the Bible, so later, when translations take back out those parts, a resultant interruption in the verse numbers is very noticeable, and the uninformed pounce on this, crying, "You are taking verses out of the Bible!"

When translating from one language to another, especially unrelated languages, one finds that it is impossible to translate word for word. For example, Greek verbs have endings on them which indicate singular or plural number. Sometimes this cannot be translated without adding a word in English to let the English reader know that the Greek verb is plural.

Take for example, the pronoun "you." The woman at the well in John 4:20 says, "You say that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." Who says? The person she was talking to only? No, the word "you" in the Greek original is plural, and the verb for "say" is plural. English used to have a word form to show the inflections of 2nd person, nominative case, plural number; and that was the word "ye." But we no longer use the word except in old poetry, and even then, most readers do not realize the distinction between "ye" and "thou." (*Ye* is plural, nominative case and *thou* is singular, nominative case.) So the translators of the New International Version added the word "Jews:" "you Jews say that we must worship in Jerusalem." This added word supplies the plural meaning, in a way that probably does not say anything she did not mean. The RSV left it as "you," without even a footnote indicating the plurality; the NASB says "you *people*;" the TEV says "you Jews;" the NAB reads "you people." Another option would be not to add any words but to add a

footnote every time this occurs. But because it would be required so often, this option would be tedious to read and would visually clutter the pages, and distract from the main story.

In the same verse, John 4:20, there is no word in the Greek corresponding to the word "we"—The NIV says "you Jews claim that the place where **we** must worship is in Jerusalem." Literally, it says, "Ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where to worship must." But who must? Rules of English grammar require that every verb have a subject. The King James Version added the word "men," NIV added the word "we," RSV the word "men," NASB the word "men," TEV the word "we," NAB says "the place to worship is in Jerusalem." Note that the NAB did not translate "dei," the Greek word for "must," although the way it is said with an infinitive does leave the impression of the imperative mood, so the rendering does work.

The point is, you now see, that ALL translations "add" words or "take away" words. This must be done, often simply to make a complete English sentence. I am so tired of hearing unlearned and judgmental people pouncing on every instance of a translation "adding" a word "not in the Greek." If these same people did their own translation following such a philosophy, nobody would read it, because it would be terrible English. Then what good would they have done? These people seemingly have no fear of God, as they recklessly rail against God's servants, Christian scholars who have spent their entire adult lifetimes studying textual processes. These slanderers, though they know neither Greek nor textual history, do not fear to accuse and condemn God's servants in an area they themselves know little about. They should remember the words of Jesus: "The judgment you pronounce on others may be pronounced on you." And of his servant Paul, "Who are you to judge another man's slave?" Who are you to tell another slave what to do, especially one whose job you were not trained in?

Which brings me to the question: What, if anything, should I do in the Diatessaron to inform the reader when a word is so "added?" The King James Version and the New American Standard Bible put such words (though not even close to always) in italics. But italics generally are used to *emphasize* something, which is exactly opposite of what I want. So I decided against italics. I could have used footnotes, but I rejected that because then more than half of each page would be taken up by footnotes. There would be more words in the footnotes than in the text! I decided not to do either of the above. "Adding" words to the text is a necessary part of a readably accurate translation. However, there are some instances where I enclose words in square brackets, like this: [brackets]. This indicates that the words were supplied by me, either to clarify the chronology, or to supply a part of speech required by English, among other reasons. These instances are few and far between.

For those of you who want a translation to be word-for-word, or want to know what exact words were in the original, then look at the Greek. If you don't know Greek, then start studying Greek. If you don't have the time or desire to study Greek, then please, in the name of Jesus, either trust those who did or hold your peace.

GREEK TEXTUAL BASE

As a rule, in the case of a question of textual authenticity I followed the opinion of the Editorial Committee of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament: Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce Metzger, and Allen Wikgren as enunciated in the United Bible Societies' "A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament," corrected edition, 1975. For example, if they put a word or phrase in double brackets (which denotes inauthenticity) in the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament, Third Edition (corrected), 1983, then it will not be found in this harmony.

I do not share the curious belief of some that in the year 1611 God ceased to illumine the minds of Bible scholars and translators.

David Robert Palmer

<https://www.bibletranslation.ws/tran.html>

DIATESSARON

Chapter 1

Introduction

Mk 1:1; Lk 1:1-4

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ.¹

2 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have taken place 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 myself² 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.

The Birth of John the Baptizer Foretold

Lk 1:5-25

3 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 of Aaron.³ 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.

4 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as 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 worshipers were praying outside.

5 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 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 his mother's womb. 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."

6 Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

7 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."

8 Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. 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.

9 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."

¹ Or *Yeshua the Messiah*. "Christ" (Greek) and "Messiah" (Hebrew) both mean "Anointed One." The Israelites would coronate a king by having a prophet *anoint* his head with oil. An *Anointed One* is also one who is *anointed* by the Spirit of God; that is, is given grace and enablement by the Spirit. Both of these meanings apply to Jesus. From here on, the title Messiah is used for Christ.

² Luke speaking.

³ *Aaron*, Moses' brother, was from the tribe of Levi, the tribe of priests.

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Lk 1:26-38

10 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. Her name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

11 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 with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and his kingdom will never end."

12 "How will this happen," Mary asked the angel, "since I am not having sex with a man?"

13 The angel answered, "The 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 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 nothing is impossible with God."

14 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Lk 1:39-45

15 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

Mary's Song

Lk 1:46-56

16 And Mary said:

"My soul praises the Lord
 and my spirit rejoices in
 God my Savior
 for he has been mindful of the
 humble state of his servant.
 From now on all generations
 will call me blessed,
 for the Mighty One has done
 great things for me—
 holy is his name.
 His mercy extends to those who
 fear him,
 from generation to generation.
 He has performed mighty deeds
 with his arm;
 he has scattered those who
 are proud in their inmost
 thoughts.
 He has brought down rulers from

their thrones
 but has lifted up the humble.
 He has filled the hungry with
 good things
 but has sent the rich away
 empty.
 He has helped his servant Israel,
 remembering to be merciful
 to Abraham and his descendants
 forever,
 even as he said to our
 fathers."

17 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

The Birth of John the Baptizer

Lk 1:57-66

18 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.

19 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."

20 They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who has that name."

21 Then they signaled 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.

Zechariah's Song

Lk 1:67-80

22 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

"Praise be to the Lord, the God
 of Israel,
 because he has come and has
 redeemed his people.
 He has raised up a horn⁴ of
 salvation for us
 in the house of his servant
 David
 (as he said through his holy
 prophets of long ago),
 salvation from our enemies
 and from the hand of all who
 hate us—
 to show mercy to our fathers
 and to remember his holy
 covenant,
 the oath he swore to our

⁴ *Horn* in the Old Testament symbolizes *strength*.

father Abraham:
 to rescue us from the hand of
 our enemies,
 and to enable us to serve him
 without fear
 in holiness and righteousness
 before him all our days.
 And you, my child, will be called
 a prophet of the Most High;
 for you will go on before the
 Lord to prepare the way
 for him,
 to give his people the knowledge
 of salvation
 through the forgiveness of
 their sins,
 because of the tender mercy of
 our God,
 by which the Sunrise from on
 high will come to us
 to shine on those living in
 darkness
 and in the shadow of death,
 to guide our feet into the path of
 peace."

23 And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel.

Chapter 2

The Birth of Jesus

Mt 1:18-25a; Lk 2:1-7

1 This is how the birth of Jesus Messiah came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. But because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.⁵

2 But after he had considered 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 a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,⁶ because he will save his people from their sins."

3 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"⁷— which means, "God with us."

⁵ By God's law given to Moses, Joseph had the right to divorce Mary for not being a virgin, and to have her publicly stoned to death, as prescribed in Deuteronomy 22:13-21. Notice here that Joseph and Mary were not actually yet married, but only pledged or engaged. Yet a dissolution thereof is called divorce. Some believe that this is what Jesus meant when he said in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 (Diatess 9:15 and 23:24) that the only reason a man may divorce his wife is because of *porneia* (the Greek word translated *fornication*, or *marital unfaithfulness*, etc.) In other words, that Jesus was simply reiterating Moses, that unless it was because soon after marrying her the man finds that his wife had committed fornication while still under her father's authority, there is no other allowable reason for divorcing one's wife.

⁶ *Jesus* is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Yeshua* or *Joshua*, which mean *The LORD saves*.

⁷ Isaiah 7:14

4 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no sexual union with her until she gave birth.

5 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.

6 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped 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

Lk 2:8-20

7 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Messiah the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

8 Suddenly a great company of the army of heaven appeared along with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

9 When the angels had left 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."

10 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen this, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

Mt 1:25b; Lk 2:21-39a

11 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, Joseph named him Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

12 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 Lord⁸"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is written in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."⁹

13 Now there was a man in Jerusalem named 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 Anointed. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles¹⁰ and for glory to your people Israel."

14 The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in

⁸ Exodus 13:2,12,15

⁹ Leviticus 12:8

¹⁰ In a physical sense, as is intended here, a *Gentile* is any person or nation that is not Israelite; that is, not a blood descendant of Jacob. (God had changed Jacob's name to *Israel*.)

Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

15 There was also a prophetess, Hannah,¹¹ the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her virginity, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

16 And so Joseph and Mary had done [for Jesus] everything required by the Law of the Lord.

The Royal Genealogy of Jesus

Mt 1:1-17

17 A record of the genealogy of Jesus Messiah, son of David, the son of Abraham:

18 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 Aram,
 Aram 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.

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

Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
 Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
 Abijah 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 Jeconiah
 and his brothers at the time of
 the exile to Babylon.

20 After the exile to Babylon:

¹¹ The Greek says *Hannah*; she is traditionally known as *Anna*.

Jeconiah 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,
 Zadok the father of Akim,
 Akim 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 Messiah.

21 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 Anointed One.

Chapter 3

The Visit of the Magi

Mt 2:1-12

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi¹² from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east¹³ and have come to worship him."

2 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Anointed One was to be born.

3 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

" 'But 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.'¹⁴"

4 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."

5 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 were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they fell prostrate and worshiped him. Then they then opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of

¹² Plural of *Magus*, one trained in astrology and dream interpretation

¹³ Or *when it rose*...Also in verse 5.

¹⁴ Micah 5:2

gold and of incense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

Mt 2:13-18

6 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph. "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."

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

8 When Herod realized that 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 what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

"A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more."¹⁶

The Return to Nazareth

Mt 2:19-23; Lk 2:39b,40

9 After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."

10 So he got up, took the child and his mother and went up to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and returned to live in their town of Nazareth. Thus was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."¹⁷

11 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

The Boy Jesus at the Temple

Lk 2:41-52

12 Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.¹⁸ When he was twelve years old, they went up, according to the custom of the Feast. After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look

¹⁵ Hosea 11:1

¹⁶ Jeremiah 31:15

¹⁷ A *Nazarene* is someone from the town of *Nazareth*, just as a *Houstonian* is someone from the city of *Houston*. A Nazarene is not to be confused with a Nazirite, which is someone who took a time-limited vow not to cut his hair or to eat grapes or drink wine. We know Jesus was not a Nazirite, because he drank wine.

¹⁸ When God sent plagues on Egypt because Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go, the tenth plague (Exodus 11:1- 12:30) was that God's destroying angel would kill all the firstborn sons, of both men and animals, in all the land. However, he decreed through Moses that the angel would pass over any household that had the blood of a slaughtered lamb on its doorframe— on the top, and on the two sides, and on the doorstep (the outline of a cross). The *Feast of the Passover* celebrated that deliverance, as prescribed in Exodus 12:1-28.

for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us this way? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

13 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

14 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with men.

The Word Became Flesh

Lk 3:23b-38; Jn 1:1-18

15 He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,

the son of Eli, the son of Matthat,
 the son of Levi, the son of Melki,
 the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,
 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos,
 the son of Nahum, the son of Esli,
 the son of Naggai, the son of Maath,
 the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein,
 the son of Josech, the son of Joda,
 the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa,
 the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,
 the son of Neri, the son of Melki,
 the son of Addi, the son of Cosam,
 the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,
 the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer,
 the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat,
 the son of Levi, the son of Simeon,
 the son of Judah, the son of Joseph,
 the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,
 the son of Melea, the son of Menna,
 the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan,
 the son of David, the son of Jesse,
 the son of Obed, the son of Boaz,
 the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,
 the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram,
 the son of Hezron, the son of Perez,
 the son of Judah, the son of Jacob,
 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 son of Peleg, the son of Eber,
 the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan,
 the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem,
 the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,
 the son of Methuselah, the son of Henoch,
 the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel,
 the son of Cainan, the son of Enos,
 the son of Seth, the son of Adam,
 the son of God.

16 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

17 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. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not mastered¹⁹ it.

18 There came a man 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 rather to bear witness to the light. The true light, which gives light to every man, was coming into the world.

19 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, and his own did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, to those believing on his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children generated, not from bloods, nor from bodily desire, nor from a husband's decision, but sired by God.

20 The Word became flesh and moved his tent among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of an Only Son passed on from a Father, full of grace and truth.

21 John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This is he of whom I said, 'The one coming after me has surpassed me, because he was before me.' "

22 And out of his fullness we have all received, grace after grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus the Messiah.²⁰ No one has ever seen God; but God the Only Son, who is in the Father's embrace, has made him known.²¹

Chapter 4

John the Baptizer Prepares the Way

Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:2-8; Lk 3:1-18; Jn 1:15,19-25,28

1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar— when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch²² of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene— during the high priesthood of Hananiah²³ and Kayafa, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert.

2 It is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

"I will send my messenger ahead
of me,
who will prepare my way,"²⁴

¹⁹ Greek, *katalambano*. It is difficult to translate *katalambano* with only one English word without ambiguity. There is a double meaning to the Greek word. It conveys both the idea of to understand, and to overpower and seize. But the same duplicity is found in our English words. For example, the word *apprehend* can mean both to catch & seize, or also to understand; the word *grasp* can mean to catch and seize, or also to understand; the English verb, to *master*, can mean both to overpower, or also to understand. All these meanings apply, because the process of understanding something previously dark to you is indeed a form of conquest. The darkness has never caught up to the light or enveloped it or swallowed it up, so has never been able to comprehend it, or overcome it, or extinguish it.

²⁰ The Greek word for "grace," *karis*, and the Greek word for "Christ," *Kristos*, are akin. A *Kristos* person is one who has been given much grace.

²¹ Greek: *God the only begotten*, by which he means *unique in how generated, unique in kind of sonship*. In other words, "The only son who is God," as opposed to the rest of God's children, who, though also sired by God, are not God. Since he is both God and man, he can explain God to men. There is also an Eastern concept of the firstborn son which we Westerners do not fully appreciate. The firstborn son received the greater inheritance of all the father has and is. This glory would be compounded by being the only son from a father.

²² From the Greek *tetra*, four, and *arche*, to rule. As a *monarch* is a one and only ruler of a realm, in the same way a *tetrarch* is a ruler of one fourth of a realm. (Which implies that there must exist three other one-fourth divisions of the realm.)

²³ The Greek says *Hannas*, which is short for the Greek, *Hananos*, which in turn is the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Hananiah*.

²⁴ Malachi 3:1

"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,
 every mountain and hill made low.
 The crooked roads shall become
 straight,
 the rough ways smooth.
 And all mankind shall see
 God's salvation.'²⁵"

3 So John appeared in the desert regions of Judea and the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance²⁶ for the forgiveness of sins. His clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. He was calling out, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near!" All the people of Jerusalem, Judea, and the whole Jordan countryside went out to hear him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized²⁷ by him in the Jordan River.

4 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 fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

5 "What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

6 John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same."

7 Revenue deputies²⁸ also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

8 "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

9 Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

10 He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely— be content with your pay."

11 Then the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. When John saw many of the Pharisees²⁹ and Sadducees³⁰ coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them, "You

²⁵ Isaiah 40:3-5a

²⁶ *Repentance* means to change one's mindset. In the way John meant it here, a person who has truly repented toward God would stop sinning and start doing what pleases God.

²⁷ To *baptize* is to dip, submerge, or wash something. For example, dipping a cloth in dye to change its color was one way the Greek word translated *baptize* was used. For the person who is *baptized*, it is a ceremony of initiation and identification with the associated teaching or teacher. The total immersion of the baptizee is both a symbol of the washing away of, and the death and burial of his past ways, and a public statement of his desire to be totally overwhelmed by the new teaching or teacher. The rise of the baptized person out of the water symbolizes, and should already be accompanied by, the beginning of a changed life, in a new direction that is in accordance with the teaching or teacher.

²⁸ Greek *telonai*; The *telones* were not the holders of the 'tax farming' contracts themselves, (the actual holders were called *publicani*), but were subordinates (Latin, *portitores*) hired by the *publicani*. The higher officials, the *publicans*, were usually foreigners, but their underlings were taken, as a rule, from the native population, from the subjugated people. The prevailing system of tax collection afforded the collector many opportunities to exercise his greed and unfairness. Moreover, since the 'tax' was a tribute forced upon the conquered by the conqueror, the collectors of the tribute were personal reminders to the populace that they, the givers of the tribute, were conquered serfs. Hence the collectors of the tribute were particularly hated and despised as a class. They were pre-judged to be both embezzlers, and traitors or collaborators with the occupying foreign power.

²⁹ The word *Pharisees* comes from the Aramaic meaning *the separated ones*, or *separatists*. Their progenitors were the Hassideans, or Pious Ones. These were the organized followers of the experts in interpreting the law (scribes). It was the purpose of the Pharisees to take the pattern of the pious Israelite as established by the traditions of the scribes, and put it into practice as strictly as possible. According to Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37-100), there were three chief religious sects in Palestine— the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes (an ascetic group who lived in communes, preferably out in the wilderness). In the days of Herod the Great the number of adult male Jews who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees was slightly above 6,000. When this number is compared with the total number of Jews in Palestine, 600,000, it will be seen that, contrary to a commonly held opinion, the proportion of Pharisees to the total Jewish population was relatively small. It is probable that most of the Pharisees lived in or near Jerusalem. In describing the beliefs and practices of the Pharisees it is customary to begin with a statement of Josephus: "The Pharisees are a group of Jews who have the reputation of excelling the rest of the nation in the observance of religion, and as exact exponents of the laws" (*Jewish War*, I.V. 2). It was this accurate interpretation of the Mosaic law, and scrupulous adherence to it, that characterized the religiosity of the average Pharisee. In

brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' 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."

12 All the people were waiting expectantly, wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Anointed One. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Anointed One."

13 "Then who are you?" the delegates asked. "Are you Elijah?"

14 He said, "I am not."

15 "Are you the Prophet?"

16 He answered, "No."

17 Finally they said, "Who are you? Tell us so we will have an answer to give to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

18 He replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'³¹"

19 John lifted up his voice to the whole crowd and said, "I baptize you in water for repentance, but after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He has surpassed me because he was before me. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire: his winnowing fork is in his hand to clear out his threshing floor, gathering the wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn up in unquenchable fire."

distinguishing the Pharisees from the Sadducees, Josephus enumerates several doctrines held by the former and denied by the latter (*Jewish War*, II.viii.14; *Antiquities*, XVIII.i.3). They are the following: (a) The Pharisees held the doctrine of foreordination, and considered it consistent with the free will of man. The Sadducees denied that history was divinely controlled, insisting on the individual's freedom to direct his own life and thus history itself. (b) The Pharisees believed in the immortality of the soul as well as the resurrection of the body. They held that men are rewarded or punished in the future life, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life. The Sadducees derided these beliefs. (c) The Pharisees had highly developed views of angels and demons, but the Sadducees rejected the developed doctrine of the two kingdoms with their hierarchies of good and evil spirits (cf Acts 23:8). (d) The Pharisees recognized as the supreme authority in religion the written Hebrew scriptures and oral tradition (i.e., that accumulated body of pronouncements of Jewish teachers down through the generations). On the other hand, the Sadducees accepted only scripture and, therefore, rejected all beliefs and practices not taught in the Old Testament. Though these doctrinal differences serve to distinguish the Pharisees from the Sadducees, they do not constitute the essence of Pharisaism. Pharisaism is the final result of that conception of religion which makes religion consist in conformity to the Law, and promises God's grace only to the doers of the Law. It was the scrupulous adherence to legalistic traditions that created the Pharisaic ethos. In most religions there is an ever-present tendency to regard outward formalism as more important than inward disposition of the heart, and in Pharisaism this natural tendency became so strong as to give rise to the modern use of the name Pharisee to describe a self-righteous formalist, or a hypocrite. It must not be supposed, however, that all Pharisees were nothing but hypocrites. At first, when it was dangerous to be known as an opponent of Hellenism (conformity to Greek culture and language), the Pharisees were men of strong religious character. Subsequently Pharisaism became an inherited belief, the profession of which became popular, and men of less heroic mold joined its ranks. As in other religious movements, the proportion of sincere, earnest adherents came to be outnumbered by those who were characterized by less worthy motives. Even the Jewish Talmud itself acknowledges the existence of several kinds of Pharisees, not all of whom were good and upright. It differentiates seven varieties, and vividly characterizes five of them with descriptive adjectives which hold them up for ridicule. (For these types see Rabbi Kaufmann Kohler in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1905, IX, 665.) Additional understanding of what a Pharisee is can be gained by reading the rest of what scripture says about them. (This footnote adapted from *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; pp. 40-41)

³⁰ The word "Sadducee" probably comes from the name Zadok, which was often written Saddouk in Greek. Among prominent Jews who bore the name Zadok, it is customary to trace the Sadducees back to the high priest Zadok who officiated in David's reign and in whose family the high priesthood remained until the political confusion of the Maccabean times. During the program of hellenization (process of conformity to Greek culture and language) of Palestine imposed by the Seleucid rulers, it was the Sadducean high priests who came in touch with foreign influences. As their political authority grew, their religious devotion waned, and the author of I Maccabees regarded such leaders as renegades and traitors to the heritage of their fathers (I Macc. 1:15). In Jesus' time the Sadducees were a small group numerically, but they exercised a widespread influence in politics and religion. Judging from what Josephus tells us, they were educated men, and mostly of prominent positions (*Antiquities*, XVIII.i.4). Sociologically, the Sadducees represented the sophisticated, urban class which was centered in Jerusalem. Many of them were wealthy landholders. They had no following among the masses, whose sympathies, Josephus says (*Antiquities*, XIII. x 6), were largely on the side of the Pharisees. Doctrinally, the Sadducees differed from the Pharisees in the several respects mentioned in the footnote previous to this one. The most basic of these was the rejection by the Sadducees of the accumulated oral traditions by which Pharisees interpreted and expanded the Mosaic law. From this point of view the Sadducees were fundamentalists and orthodox theologically, while liberal politically. They viewed Israel as needing to be freed from its narrowness and needing some of the advantages of Greek culture. The Pharisees (and Zealots) were strongly opposed to any foreign influence. The High Priest in the time of Jesus was a Sadducee. (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; pp. 42-43)

³¹ Isaiah 40:3

20 With many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them. This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where he was baptizing.

The Baptism of Jesus

Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-23a

21 At that time Jesus, who was about thirty years old, came from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and you are coming to me?"

22 Jesus replied, "Permit it now; it is proper for us to complete all righteousness this way." Then John consented.

23 As soon as he was baptized, Jesus came up out of the water, praying. Just then, the heavens were torn open, and he saw the Holy Spirit of God descending on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, "You³² are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

The Temptation of Jesus

Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12,13; Lk 4:1-13

24 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and immediately was driven by the Spirit out into the desert, to be tempted by the devil.³³ He was with the wild animals, and for forty days Satan³³ tempted him.

25 Jesus ate nothing the whole forty days and forty nights, and at the end of them he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread."

26 Jesus answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'³⁴"

27 Then the devil took him to Jerusalem the holy city 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;
they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your
foot against a stone.'³⁵"

28 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to a test.'³⁶"

³² This is the reading of Mark and Luke. Matthew reads *This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.*

³³ The *devil* and *Satan* are the same being. Before God created mankind, he created the angels. Satan used to be an angel, who God created to be the "covering cherub" (a certain kind of angel) and the "star of the morning." The early church fathers and the Latin Vulgate translation named him "Lucifer," that is, "Light Bearer," although this name is not found in the original languages of the Bible. In Isaiah 14:12 he was called Morning Star, Son of the Dawn. He was an archangel, the highest rank of ruling angels. He was a very beautiful and powerful being. But he became narcissistic and self-willed and aspired to make himself equal with God. So God ordered Michael, an archangel, to throw him out of heaven. There was a great war in heaven and Michael and his angels won. And when Lucifer left heaven, he took his third of all the angels with him (Revelation 12:4) and they followed him. So Lucifer became *Satan*, which means *adversary*, and he was later also identified with a Canaanite idol named *Baalzeboul*, or Prince Baal, the prince of demons. The one third of the angels that left with him are now the lesser demons, also called evil spirits. Satan and some (the rest are in Tartarus, that is, the Abyss or bottomless shaft— Jude 6; Lk 8:31; Rev. 9:1,2,11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1-3) of his servant spirits now roam the earth, in bitter and lonely hatred of God, opposing God's pleasure in any way they can. Scripture says that they are in a constant quest for rest, in the form of the water in human beings, or even pigs— Mt 12:43; Lk 11:24 or Diatess 11:18; and Luke 8:32,33 or Diatess 12:16-17.) Satan is here with us, as "the prince of the kingdom of the air" (Eph. 2:2; 4:11,12) going around trying to lead people astray. He is the Father of Lies (John 8:44). The first person he lied to was Eve, the first woman, and because she believed him, all mankind is in a state of fallenness along with him (Genesis 3:1-24) He is the enemy of our souls (I Peter 5:8). See Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Rev. 12:1-17

³⁴ Deuteronomy 8:3

³⁵ Psalm 91:11,12

29 Again, the devil led him to a very high mountain, and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. And he said to Jesus, "All this authority and its glory I will give you, for it has been given to me, and I give it to anyone I want to. Now then, if you fall down in front of me and worship me, it will all be yours."

30 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'³⁷"

31 Then the devil left him until an opportune time. And angels came and attended him.

Chapter 5

The Pharisees Question John Further

Mk 1:7b; Jn 1:24-28

1 John was still baptizing at Bethany on the east bank of the Jordan. Some Pharisees, who had been sent to question him, asked him, "If you are not the Anointed One, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why then do you baptize?"

2 "I baptize in water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie."

Jesus the Lamb of God

Jn 1:29-34

3 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The lamb³⁸ of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'After me will come a man who has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing in water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

4 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven like a dove and remain on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize in water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize in the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."

Jesus' First Disciples

Jn 1:35-42

5 The next day John was there again with two of his disciples.³⁹ When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

6 When the two⁴⁰ disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

7 They said, "Rabbi," (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

8 "Come," he replied, "and you will see."

9 So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent the rest of that day with him, the time being about 10 a.m.

10 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 Anointed One).

³⁶ Deuteronomy 6:16

³⁷ Deuteronomy 6:13

³⁸ This refers to a practice God instituted in the Old Testament for the Israelites: When someone sinned, God's anger would be averted if the sinner killed a lamb and shed its blood. The most well known instance of this was during the ten plagues on Egypt. For the tenth plague, God's destroying angel would kill every firstborn male in the land. But, the angel was to pass over a house if it had the blood of a lamb on its doorframe. So the firstborn in that house was spared God's anger, and was passed over by the angel. To this day the Jews celebrate *the Passover*.

³⁹ A *disciple* is an adherent or follower or apprentice of a teacher.

⁴⁰ John the son of Zebedee and Andrew the brother of Peter

11 Then he brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Kephas" (which, when translated, is Rock⁴¹).

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

Jn 1:43-51

12 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

13 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."

14 "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

15 "Come and see," said Philip.

16 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false."

17 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

18 Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

19 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

20 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,⁴² you shall all see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Jesus Changes Water to Wine

Jn 2:1-11

21 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

22 "Woman,⁴³ why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

23 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

24 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from two to three measures.⁴⁴

25 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

26 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

27 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 aside and said, "Everyone brings 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."

28 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.

29 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

⁴¹ Greek, *Petros*. The writers of the gospels translated the name from the Aramaic language, which Jesus spoke, to the language of the readers— Greek, because they apparently desired that their readers know the man as *Rock*, which is the English translation of *Petros*. In that spirit of the writers, we English speakers are to know him as *Rock*. With that in mind, I have nonetheless from this point on used the Anglicised transliteration of *Petros*, which is *Peter*, since it is so familiar.

⁴² Here and wherever Jesus says "I tell you the truth," it is the Greek word *amen*. Jesus means to convey that what he is about to say is absolutely reliable and is the last word on the subject. Jesus used this expression 63 times in this harmonized version. See index.

⁴³ This form of address was polite in that time and culture.

⁴⁴ Twenty to thirty gallons, or from 75 to 115 liters. Each *measure* contained 72 *sextarii* or pints.

Jesus Clears the Temple

Jn 2:12-25

30 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of 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 those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

31 His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."⁴⁵

32 Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"

33 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

34 The Jews replied, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

35 Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people believed in his name—when they saw all the miraculous signs he was doing. Jesus did not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, because he knew what was in a man.

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus

Jn 3:1-21

36 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus by 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 unless God were with him."

37 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, No one can [even] see the kingdom of God unless he is born again, from above."

38 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

39 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter⁴⁶ the kingdom of God unless he is born from water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You⁴⁷ must be born from above.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it is coming from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born from the Spirit."

40 "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

41 "You are a Teacher of Israel," said Jesus, "and you are not familiar with these things?⁴⁸ I tell you the truth, we are saying things we know, testifying to things we have seen, and still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to 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 the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, in like manner⁴⁹ the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

42 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever 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: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the

⁴⁵ Psalm 69:9

⁴⁶ Or *participate in*

⁴⁷ The Greek is in the plural.

⁴⁸ Nicodemus should have known these concepts from I Samuel 10:6,7,9,11; Ezekiel 11:19,20; 18:31,32; and 36:26,27.

⁴⁹ That is, posted up on a pole

light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But 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."⁵⁰

John the Baptizer Testifies About Jesus

Jn 3:22-36

43 After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, baptizing. It was still before John had been thrown in prison, and John also was baptizing, at Aenon near Salim, where there was plenty of water; and people kept coming to be baptized.

44 Thus it was that the disciples of John got into an argument with a certain Jew⁵¹ on the subject of ceremonial washing. Then they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan, the one you testified about, well, he is baptizing, and now everyone is going to him."

45 To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Anointed One but am sent ahead of him.' The bride belongs to the 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 rise, and I must fade.

46 "The one who comes from 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 from heaven is above all. He testifies to things he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God; to him God gives the Spirit without limit. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Chapter 6

John the Baptizer Imprisoned

Mt 14:3-5; Mk 6:17-20; Lk 3:19,20

1 Then John rebuked Herod the tetrarch for all the evil things he had done. And Herod added this to them all: he gave orders to have John arrested, bound, and put in prison.

2 He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have her." So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was unable to, because Herod feared him and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. He was also afraid of the people, because they considered John a prophet. As for Herod himself, when he heard him, he was greatly puzzled, yet he liked to listen to him.

Jesus Begins to Preach

Mt 4:12-17; Mk 1:14; Lk 4:14a; Jn 4:1-3

3 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John. (Although in fact it was not Jesus himself who baptized, but his disciples.) When Jesus learned of this, and that John had been put in prison, he left Judea and returned to Galilee in the power of the

⁵⁰ Some interpreters end the quotation at the end of verse 41; they believe John is speaking in verse 42 and not Jesus.

⁵¹ Since this passage is in John, and John often alludes to himself in an anonymous way, there is a good possibility that such is the case here also. An argument would not be out of character for John. Jesus named John and his brother James "the sons of thunder," (Mark 3:17; Diatess. 9:2) which seems to indicate that John was hotheaded and judgmental. See also Luke 9:49 & 54 (Diatess. 17:31 & 18:2) for other examples of John's former attitude to people who differed from his own circle.

Spirit. Forsaking Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— to fulfill 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 in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the
shadow of death
a light has dawned."⁵²

4 From that time on Jesus began to preach in the power of the Spirit the good news of God: that the kingdom of heaven was near.

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

Jn 4:4-26

5 But he had to pass through Samaria.⁵³ Thus he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given 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 6 p.m.

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 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 use dishes Samaritans have used.)

8 Jesus answered her, "If you knew about the gift of God and who it is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

9 "Sir," she said to him, "you have no pail and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

10 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever 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 eternal life."

11 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

12 He told her, "Go call your husband and come back."

13 "I have no husband," she replied.

14 Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

15 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

16 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you (*pl*) will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is of the Jews. However, a time is coming— in fact has now

⁵² Isaiah 9:1,2

⁵³ *Samaria* was the district north of Judea and south of Galilee. For Jesus to get to Galilee from where he was (Judea), he had to pass through Samaria in between; either that or go all the way around the east side of the Sea of Galilee, as some Jews would actually do, wanting so much to avoid Samaria. For when the northern tribes of Israel were conquered by Assyria, many were interbred with the conquerors and other Gentiles. The descendants of these mixed-race people lived in the Samaria of Jesus' day. So because the Samaritans' ancestors had disobeyed the law of Moses which forbade them to intermarry with non-Jews, the pious Jews of Jesus' day despised Samaria and Samaritans.

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 worshipers must worship in spirit and truth."

17 The woman said, "I do know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

18 Then Jesus declared, "I, speaking to you, am he."

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

Jn 4:27-38

19 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman.⁵⁴ But no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"

20 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

21 Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

22 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

23 Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

24 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his 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 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 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to 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

Jn 4:39-42

25 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers.

26 They said to the woman, "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

Mk 1:15; Lk 4:14b,15; Jn 4:43,45-54

27 After the two days he left for Galilee. When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast, for they also had been there. Jesus taught in their synagogues,⁵⁵ and everyone praised him. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" News about him spread throughout the whole region.

28 Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official there whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

29 "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

⁵⁴ The daily prayer of all male Jews included the following: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast not made me a heathen. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast not made me a slave. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast not made me a woman." These blessings remain part of the orthodox Jewish liturgy in modern times. But in the widely used volume of Daily Prayers edited by Rabbi M. Stern (New York, Hebrew Publishing Co., 1928), the rubric after the last mentioned blessing directs women to say, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast made me according to thy will." (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; p.164)

⁵⁵ The meeting places of the Jews (see footnote on Diatess. 12:31)

30 The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

31 Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live."

32 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 7 p.m."

33 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.

34 This was now the second time Jesus performed a miraculous sign after coming out of Judea into Galilee.

Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit

Mk 1:21-28; Lk 4:31-37

35 They went to Capernaum, and when a Sabbath⁵⁶ came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, unlike their teachers of the law.

36 And right then there was a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, "Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

37 "Be quiet!" Jesus said sternly. "Come out of him!" The demon shook the man violently back and forth. Then it threw him down before them all and came out, shrieking. And the man was not injured.

38 The people were all so astonished, they conferred with each other, saying, "What is this message? A new teaching, with power and authority to it. He even gives orders to evil spirits, and they obey him!" News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many

Mt 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-34; Lk 4:38-41

39 As soon as they left the synagogue, they went, James and John included, to the home of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed suffering a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Taking her hand, he helped her up, and at once she began to wait on them.

40 That evening as the sun set⁵⁷ the whole town gathered at the door. They brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

"He took up our infirmities
and carried our diseases."⁵⁸

41 Moreover, many of those brought to him had demons, and he drove out the spirits with a word. Some came out shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But Jesus rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.

⁵⁶ A *Sabbath* is a day of rest. When God created the world, he worked for six days and then rested on the seventh day. The seventh day started at sunset of Friday evening, and ended at sunset of Saturday evening. God commanded Israel also to rest on the seventh day, and to do no work. This command is one of The Ten Commandments, the fourth one (Exodus 20:8-11). Though the seventh day was the most common Sabbath, it was by no means the only one. Leviticus chapter 23 institutes a half dozen other Sabbaths, which could fall on various days of the week. Interestingly, the fourth commandment is the only one of the ten not reinforced in the New Testament. The Epistle to the Hebrews explains that it's because now in Christ, every day is our day of rest, because we ceased from our own works when we believed in Christ, relied on Christ's works. At the same time, every day is our day of work, because the Father is always at work (Diatess. 8:9 or John 5:17). Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you by whether you work or rest on particular days of the week (Colossians 2:16,17; Romans 14:5).

⁵⁷ It was against the law of Moses for them to carry the sick on a Sabbath, so they waited until sunset, which is when the new day starts by Jewish reckoning.

⁵⁸ Isaiah 53:4

Chapter 7

The Calling of Simon, Andrew, James and John

Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:1-11

1 One day, while Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret (that is, the Sea of Galilee), with the people crowding around him listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, 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.

2 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

3 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

4 When they had done so, 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.

5 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 and John the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

6 Then Jesus said to Simon and Andrew, "Don't be afraid. Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. From now on you will catch men." They right away pulled their boat up on shore and followed him, abandoning their nets, —everything.

7 When he had gone a little farther, he caught sight of the other set of brothers, James and John, in a boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. At once he called them, and they left the boat and followed him without delay, leaving their father with the hired men.

Jesus Keeps Moving

Mt 4:23,24; Mk 1:35-39; Lk 4:42-44

8 Very early in the morning while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him. When they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"

9 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else— to the nearby villages— so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."

10 And the people, when they found him, also came up to him and tried to keep him from leaving them. But 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."

11 So he kept traveling throughout Galilee, preaching the good news of the kingdom, teaching in their synagogues, driving out demons, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him 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.

A Man With Leprosy

Mt 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-16

12 While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy.⁵⁹ When he saw Jesus, he fell on his knees with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

⁵⁹ The Greek word was used for various diseases of the skin— not necessarily leprosy.

13 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.

14 Jesus sent him away with a strong warning: "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go at once, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."

15 But he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news about Jesus all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places so he could pray. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26

16 A few days later, when Jesus again entered his own town of Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. Many people gathered, so many that there was no room left, not even outside the door. Among those sitting there were Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick, and he preached the word to them.

17 Then some men arrived, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them on a mat. But when they tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus, they couldn't get to him because of the crowd. So they went up on the roof and dug an opening in the tiles and lowered the paralyzed man on his mat through the hole, into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

18 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

19 At this, the Pharisees and teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow to talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

20 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking, and he said to them, "Why do you entertain these evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier to say to the paralytic: 'Your sins are forgiven,' or, 'Get up and walk'? Now then, so that you may 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 home." The man immediately stood up, and in full view of them all, he took his mat and walked out toward home, praising God. The entire crowd was stunned with amazement. They gave praise to the God who had given such authority to men. Filled with awe, they began to say, "We have seen remarkable things today. We have never seen anything like this before!"

The Calling of Matthew

Mt 9:9-13; Mk 2:13-17; Lk 5:27-32

21 After this Jesus went out beside the lake once again. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. As he walked along, he saw a revenue deputy by the name of Matthew (also known as Levi, son of Halphaeus) sitting at his revenue booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Matthew got up, abandoned everything and followed him.

22 Then Matthew held a great banquet for Jesus at his house. While Jesus was having dinner there, a large crowd of revenue deputies⁶⁰ and sinners came and were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the Pharisees and teachers of the law who belonged to their sect saw him eating with them, they complained to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat and drink with revenue deputies and sinners?"

⁶⁰ Greek *telonai*; The telones were not the holders of the 'tax farming' contracts themselves, (the actual holders were called publicani), but were subordinates (Latin, portitores) hired by the publicani. The higher officials, the publicans, were usually foreigners, but their underlings were taken, as a rule, from the native population, from the subjugated people. The prevailing system of tax collection afforded the collector many opportunities to exercise his greed and unfairness. Moreover, since the 'tax' was a tribute forced upon the conquered by the conqueror, the collectors of the tribute were personal reminders to the populace that they, the givers of the tribute, were conquered serfs. Hence the collectors of the tribute were particularly hated and despised as a class. They were pre-judged to be both embezzlers, and traitors or collaborators with the occupying foreign power.

23 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'⁶¹ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

Mt 9:14-17; Mk 2:18-22; Lk 5:33-39

24 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting at that time. Some of John's disciples came and asked Jesus, "How is it that we and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, and often fast and pray, but yours go on eating and drinking?"

25 Jesus answered, "How 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 from them; in those days they will fast."

26 He told them this parable: "No one tears a patch of unshrunk cloth from a new garment and sews it onto an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old but will pull away, making the tear in the old garment even worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the skins will burst, the wine will run out, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. 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.' "

Chapter 8

The Healing at the Pool

Jn 5:1-3a, 5-15

1 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate⁶² a pool, which in Aramaic⁶³ is called Bethzatha 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 now for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to get well?"

2 "Sir," the invalid replied, "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."

3 Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

4 The day on which this took place was a Sabbath. Therefore the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the Law forbids you to carry your mat."

5 But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.' "

6 So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?"

⁶¹ Hosea 6:6

⁶² A gate in the north which allowed the sheep destined to be sacrificed to access the temple.

⁶³ Aramaic was the mother tongue of the great majority of Jews at that time. Though the rabbis and learned scribes still had fluent command of the classical Hebrew of the Old Testament, it was approaching the status of a dead language for the ordinary Jewish population. During the exile in the sixth century B.C. the Jews had begun to use Aramaic, a Semitic language related to Hebrew somewhat as Spanish is related to Portuguese. At the beginning of the Christian era, in the synagogues of Palestine as well as of Babylon, the text of the Old Testament was read not only in the original Hebrew but also in an Aramaic paraphrase (called a Targum) for the benefit of those who knew little or no Hebrew. At least two dialectal forms of Aramaic were current in Palestine. The dialect used in Galilee was recognizably different in pronunciation from the southern dialect spoken in and around Jerusalem (Matt. 26:73 or Diatessaron 30:11). It is altogether probable that Jesus grew up in his home at Nazareth using Aramaic as his mother tongue. In later life he doubtless acquired some facility in speaking Greek and in reading Hebrew. His teaching and preaching to the common people would have been carried out in Aramaic; his debates with the learned teachers of the law may have been conducted in Hebrew. When he occasionally conversed with non-Jewish persons (for example, the Roman centurion and the Syro-Phoenician woman), he probably used Greek, the lingua franca of the Greco-Roman world. (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; pp.32-33)

7 The man who had been healed had no idea who it was, because Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

8 Later Jesus found him at 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 the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Life Through the Son

Jn 5:16-30

9 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work, including this day; so I, too, am working." For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own father, making himself equal with God.

10 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing of his own; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For 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 as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father does not even judge anyone, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that 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.

11 "I tell you the truth, 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, 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 has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is a son of man.

12 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out— those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. I of my own accord can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I am not seeking to please myself, but him who sent me.

Testimonies About Jesus

Jn 5:31-47

13 "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid. There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid.

14 "You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

15 "I have testimony weightier 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 who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he has sent. You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that in them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

16 "I do not accept praise from men, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, and make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?

17 "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

Lord of the Sabbath

Mt 12:1-14; Mk 2:23- 3:6; Lk 6:1-11

18 One day, a Sabbath, Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples were hungry. And they began to do a custom and pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. When some Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Why are your disciples doing what on a Sabbath is unlawful to do?"

19 Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread, which for them was not lawful to do, but only for the priests. Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests can, in the temple, desecrate the Sabbath, and yet are innocent? And I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. If you had known the meaning of these words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,'⁶⁴ you would not have condemned the innocent."

20 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was created to serve man, not man to serve the Sabbath. For this reason the Son of Man also is lord over the Sabbath."

21 Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was 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 him 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.

22 Then he said to them, "If any 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 more valuable is a man than a sheep! I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or destroy it?" But they kept silent.

23 He looked around at them all in anger, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts. Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. The Pharisees were furious, and went out and began to plot with the Herodians⁶⁵ how they might kill Jesus.

Crowds Follow Jesus

Mt 12:15-21; Mk 3:7-12

24 Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. When they heard about all the things he was doing, many people came to him from Judea and Jerusalem also, and from Idumea, from the regions across the Jordan, and from Tyre and Sidon. Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God!" But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.

25 This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

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

⁶⁴ Hosea 6:6

⁶⁵ A dozen theories have been proposed concerning the origin and views of the Herodians; according to most scholars it seems clear that they were neither a religious sect nor a political party. The term apparently denotes an attitude and an outlook, and refers to Jews of influence and standing who supported the Herodian rule, and hence also that of the Romans, by whose authority the Herodian dynasty was maintained. In such allegiance they were definitely in the minority, for most Palestinian Jews were strongly opposed to that regime. In the gospels the Herodians are mentioned as enemies of Jesus, once in Galilee (Mark 3:6; Diatess. 8:23), and again at Jerusalem (Matt. 22:16; Mark 12:13; Diatess. 26:1). On the latter occasion they combined with the Pharisees in seeking to entangle Jesus with the question of whether or not it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. In asking this question they expected that whatever answer Jesus would give, he would have to commit himself as favoring either nationalism or submission to a foreign power. In his reply, however, Jesus eluded the trap which they had set for him. (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; p. 44)

I will put my Spirit on him,
 and he will proclaim justice to
 the Gentiles.
 He will not quarrel or cry out;
 no one will hear his voice in
 the streets.
 A bruised reed he will not break,
 and a smoldering wick he will
 not snuff out,
 till he leads justice to victory.
 In his name the Gentiles will
 put their hope."⁶⁶

Chapter 9

The Twelve Apostles

Mt 4:25, 10:2-4; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:12-16

1 Jesus went up into the hills to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called to him those of his disciples he wanted, and they came to him. And out of them he selected twelve, designating them apostles,⁶⁷ that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach the kingdom of God, and to have authority to drive out evil spirits and to cure every kind of disease and sickness.

2 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon, whom he called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James and John the sons of Zebedee (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder); Philip and Nathanael, also known as Bartholomew; Matthew the revenue deputy and Thomas the Twin; James son of Alphaeus and Judas Lebbaeus son⁶⁸ of James, also known as Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot⁶⁹ and Judas of Kerioth,⁷⁰ who later betrayed him.

⁶⁶ Isaiah 42:1-4

⁶⁷ The Greek word translated apostle, *apostolos*, means *sent one* (*apostello* means *I send*). This word was used at least three ways in the New Testament. The meaning used here is limited to the Twelve, which are defined in the scripture above, and who are the twelve foundations of the bride of Christ, which is the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9-14; Eph. 2:19-22), and who will rule the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28; Diatess. 23:42). Perhaps they are half of the twenty-four elders (Rev. 4:4). The second meaning of *apostle* is a slightly widened meaning which included Paul and Barnabas (and perhaps one or two others) in addition to the Twelve. These men also were involved in laying the doctrinal foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20, 4:11). This was a very authoritative office, designated as being first on the lists of spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:28, Eph. 4:11) and was authenticated by the presence of signs and miracles (II Cor. 12:12). Because of its authoritative nature, there were no women in this office (I Timothy 2:12). The third use (e.g. II Cor 8:23; Philipians 2:25. As for Rom 16:7, it is simply saying that Andronicus and Junias "are held in high esteem by the apostles.") of the word *apostle* meant the equivalent of our Latin-based word *missionary*, which also means sent one. A missionary is anyone sent out by a church to do a task somewhere else. Today we have workers we call missionaries whose work varies greatly. Some plant churches, some translate scripture. Some missionaries fix the cars of other missionaries. Some maintain guest-houses for other missionaries who pass through. Others are foster-home parents for the other missionaries' children, etc.

⁶⁸ Or *brother*

⁶⁹ The party of the Zealots, described by Josephus as the "fourth philosophy" among the Jews (*Jewish War*, II. viii.1; *Antiquities*, XVIII.i.1 and 6; the first three being the Pharisees, Sadducees and the Essenes) was founded by Judas the Galilean, who stirred up a rebellion against the Romans in A.D. 6 (Acts 5:37). The Zealots opposed the payment of tribute by Israel to a pagan emperor on the ground that this was treason against God, Israel's true King. In religious beliefs they agreed with the Pharisees, and in spirit they revived the zeal shown by Mattathias and his sons during the Maccabean uprising. Though the rebels were defeated and Judas was killed, members of his family continued to keep alive the aspirations for liberty and independence. That Jesus had a Zealot in his apostolic band, as well as, in contrast, another who had been a former tax collector for the hated Romans, is an illuminating commentary upon the breadth of his appeal to persons of the most diverse backgrounds. (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; pp. 44-45)

⁷⁰ This man's name is usually written Judas *Iscariot*. *Iscariot* is a transliteration of the Hebrew words *ish Kerioth*, which mean *from Kerioth*. Kerioth was a town in Judea, which makes this Judas the only one in the circle of thirteen (Jesus and the twelve disciples) that was not from Galilee.

BLESSINGS AND WOES

Mt 5:1-12; Lk 6:17-26

3 Meanwhile the large crowds of people from Galilee, the Ten Cities area, from all over Judea and Jerusalem, the region across the Jordan, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. A great number of his disciples were also there. When Jesus saw the crowds, he went down with the twelve and stood on a level place on the mountainside. Those troubled by evil spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

4 Jesus sat down and began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,⁷¹
 for the kingdom of heaven is
 made up of such.
 Blessed are those who mourn,
 for they will be comforted.
 Blessed are the meek,
 for they will inherit the earth.
 Blessed are they who hunger and
 thirst for righteousness,
 for they will be filled.
 Blessed are the merciful,
 for they will be shown mercy.
 Blessed are the pure in heart,
 for they shall see God.
 Blessed are the peacemakers,
 for they will be called sons of God.
 Blessed are those who are persecuted
 because of righteousness.
 for the kingdom of heaven is
 made up of such.

5 "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."

6 Looking at his disciples, he said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
 for the kingdom of God is made up
 of such as you.
 Blessed are you who hunger now,
 for you will be satisfied.
 Blessed are you who weep now,
 for you will laugh.
 Blessed are you when men hate you,
 when they exclude you and
 insult you
 and reject your name as evil,
 because of the Son of Man.

⁷¹ The meaning of the expression *poor in spirit* is difficult to determine with certainty. Gingrich and Danker say the sense is probably *those who are poor in their inner life*, because they do not have a Pharisaic confidence in their own spiritual adequacy. (p.675)

7 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! Behold, rich is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.

"But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received
your comfort.
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
speak well of you,
for that is how their fathers treated
the false prophets.

Salt and Light

Mt 5:13-16

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

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

The Fulfillment of the Law

Mt 5:17-20

10 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth come to an end, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of the pen will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished. 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 them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

Mt 5:21-26

11 "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder,'⁷² and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,'⁷³ is answerable to the council.⁷⁴ But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of Gehenna.⁷⁵

⁷² Exodus 20:13

⁷³ An Aramaic term of contempt

⁷⁴ The council of elders at the town gate was a common scene in the life of an Israelite. This council would hear disputes and accusations like a court, including to put the accused to death if so decided, e.g., Deuteronomy 21:18-21 and 22:13-21. In later times, there were also local councils in each synagogue. This could also be referring to the Sanhedrin, the supreme council.

⁷⁵ In the New Testament *Gehenna* refers to a lake of burning sulphur, whose fire can never be put out, and in which a person never loses his being, but forever loses his well-being— that is, is forever separated from God and thus anything good. At the present time, anyone who dies while out of God's favor goes to Hades (see chapter 21:27-33), which is a temporary storage hell. But later, at the end of Christ's kingdom on earth, Hades and everyone in it will be thrown permanently into *Gehenna* (Revelation 20:5,10-15). This is called the Second Death. There is no remedy for the Second Death. Jesus refers to *Gehenna* nine times (in this harmonized version).

12 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

13 "Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still on the way with him, 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 you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Adultery

Mt 5:27-30

14 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'⁷⁶ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman⁷⁷ to lust for her⁷⁸ has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye 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 Gehenna. And if your 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 Gehenna.

Divorce

Mt 5:31,32

15 "It has been said, "Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce."⁷⁹ But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,⁸⁰ causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.⁸¹

Oaths

Mt 5:33-37

16 "Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.'⁸² But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No' be 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

An Eye For An Eye

Mt 5:38-42; Lk 6:29-31

17 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'⁸³ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. If someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. Give to the one who asks you, and if someone forcefully takes what belongs to you, do not stop him from taking more, and do not demand it back. Give to

⁷⁶ Exodus 20:13

⁷⁷ That is, a woman not one's own wife.

⁷⁸ The Greek word translated *lust* here, *epithumeo*, is the same word used in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint) for *covet* in the tenth commandment: "Thou shalt not *covet* your neighbor's wife." (Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21) See the Good News Bible's translation of Matthew 5:28.

⁷⁹ Deuteronomy 24:1; but note that in the same passage in Deuteronomy, in verse 4, it says such a divorce defiles her.

⁸⁰ See footnote on Diatess. 23:24.

⁸¹ This teaching is further illuminated by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 7:10,11 where he says, "To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife."

⁸² Numbers 30:2; Leviticus 5:4

⁸³ Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21

everyone who asks of you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Love For Enemies

Mt 5:43-48, 7:12; Lk 6:27,28,31-36

18 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor⁸⁴ and hate your enemy.' But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you, that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on both the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Are not even the revenue deputies and sinners doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even Gentiles do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

19 "And if you do good to those who are good to you, what reward will you get? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love 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, for he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

20 "In everything, then, do to others as you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Giving to the Needy

Mt 6:1-4

21 "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.

22 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites⁸⁵ do in the synagogues and on the streets, so that they may be praised by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But 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. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Fasting

Mt 6:16-18

23 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites 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 when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be revealed 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.

Prayer

Mt 6:5-15, 7:7-11; Lk 11:1-13

24 One of Jesus' disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

25 Jesus said to them, "This is how you should pray:

" Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
May your kingdom come,

⁸⁴ Leviticus 19:18

⁸⁵ See footnote on Diatess. 19:11 for what a hypocrite is.

and your will be done
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins,
 as we also have forgiven
 those who are indebted to us.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from the evil one.⁸⁶

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

26 "But 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 reward in full. When you 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 pray, do not speak empty repetition like the Gentiles do. For they think that because of the greater number of their words they will be heard. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

27 Then he said to them, "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 mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'

28 "Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are in bed with me. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

29 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

30 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for bread, will give him a snake? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give holy spirit or other good gifts to those who ask him!

Chapter 10

Treasures in Heaven

Mt 6:19-24

1 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store 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.

2 "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is open and generous,⁸⁷ your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is suspicious and stingy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

3 "No one 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.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Or from *evil*.

⁸⁷ Greek, *haplous*, which means literally, *single*. But it is a Semitic idiom, not to be translated literally. Compare Proverbs 11:25 in the Septuagint.

⁸⁸ Greek *Mammon*, a common Aramaic word for wealth and property, which meant literally, *a fortress to rely on*. The sin of serving *Mammon* involves thinking that there is security in wealth and property, and with that mentality to store up wealth for the future, as the Rich Fool did in chapter 19. Jesus taught us not to worry even about food or clothes. The apostle Paul said

Do Not Worry

Mt 6:25-34

4 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life greater than food, and the body greater than clothes? Look at 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 you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

5 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown in the fire tomorrow, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first the Father's kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be included for you.

6 "Do not worry, then, about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries of its own. Let each day's trouble be enough for one day.

The Law of Reciprocity

Mt 7:1,2; Lk 6:37,38

7 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. For with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

8 "Give, 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."

Correcting Others

Mt 7:3-6; Lk 6:39-42

9 He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher. Why do you look at the 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, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' while you fail to see the plank that is in your eye the whole time? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

10 "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not toss your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

False Prophets

Mt 7:13-20; Lk 6:43-45

11 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

12 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars? Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. And no good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

that with food and clothes we should be content. Worldly wealth is very insecure, especially the theoretical kinds such as stocks, bonds, Federal Reserve Notes, negotiable instruments. But if we store up treasure in heaven, where there are no thieves, rust, or moths, that is real security, real estate. There is a secure inheritance that is non-negotiable.

13 "Likewise, the good man brings forth good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings forth evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. In this way, by their fruit you will recognize them.

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Mt 7:21-29; Lk 6:46-49

14 "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I say? Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. For many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' And I will tell them plainly: 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

15 Therefore everyone who comes to me, hears my words and puts them into practice is like a wise man who, when building a house, dug down deep and laid a foundation on rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house, but could not shake it, because it had its foundation on the rock.

16 "But everyone who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on the ground without a foundation. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against it. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed, and its destruction was complete."

17 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

The Faith of the Centurion

Mt 8:1,5-13; Lk 7:1-10

18 When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. When he had entered Capernaum, some men came to him, asking for help. A servant of a centurion⁸⁹ there, whom his master valued very highly, was sick and about to die. The centurion had heard of Jesus and had 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, saying, "There is a centurion here whose servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering. This man deserves to have you come and help him, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue."

19 Jesus said to them, "I will go and heal him." And he 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 am not fit to have you come under my roof. So also neither did I consider myself worthy to come to you. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, having soldiers under myself. 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."

20 When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone, even an Israelite, with such great faith. I tell you, many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the natural heirs of the kingdom will be thrown outside into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

21 Then he said to the centurion's messengers, "Go! It will be done for him as he believed it would." When they returned to the house, they found that the servant had been healed at the exact time that they had left Jesus.

⁸⁹ A Roman military officer commanding from 50 to 100 men, 100 if the cohort was a complete one. A full cohort— 1,000 men, would have ten *centurions*, each commanding 100 of the men.

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

Lk 7:11-17

22 Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. As he approached the town 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 her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."

23 Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

24 They were all filled with 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 throughout Judea⁹⁰ and the surrounding country.

Jesus and John the Baptizer

Mt 11:2-19; Lk 7:18-35

25 John's disciples told him in prison about all the things that Messiah was doing. Calling two of them, he sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

26 When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptizer sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

27 On that very occasion 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 now see and hear: The blind receive their 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. And tell him, 'Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.'"

28 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 about whom it is written:

I will send my messenger ahead
of you,
who will prepare your way
before you.⁹¹

I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptizer; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God⁹² is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptizer 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."

29 (All the people, even the revenue deputies, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right; they had been baptized by John. But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves; they had not been baptized by John.)

⁹⁰ or *the land of the Jews*, as perhaps in some of the other instances of this word

⁹¹ Malachi 3:1

⁹² This is Luke's reading. Matthew says, kingdom of *heaven*. It is common for Matthew to say *kingdom of heaven* in the same parable or same context in which the other gospels say *kingdom of God*. Even Matthew uses them interchangeably within Matthew, as in Matt. 19:23,24. In Jewish use, as in Luke 15:18 for example, the word *heaven* was substituted for the word *God*, because they considered the word *God* (Yahweh) too sacred to be spoken. Therefore, in the gospels, no distinction should be made between the phrases "kingdom of heaven," and "kingdom of God."

30 "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 you,
and you didn't dance;
we sang a dirge,
and you didn't mourn.'

For John the Baptizer came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of revenue deputies and sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by all her actions and by all her children."

Woe On Unrepentant Cities

Mt 11:20-24

31 Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent: "Woe to you, Korazin! 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 in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to the skies? No, you will go down to Hades⁹³. Because if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Rest for the Weary

Mt 11:25-30

32 At that time Jesus 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.

33 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

34 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of 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."

Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman

Lk 7:36-50

35 One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined⁹⁴ at the table. Now there was a woman in that town who was living a sinful life. When she learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she took an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them.

36 When the Pharisee who 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."

37 Jesus spoke up. "Simon, I have something to tell you."

⁹³ The underworld, as the place of the dead. It is a literal place, a place of torture, where God stores the souls of those who died while out of his favor. At the end of Christ's 1,000-year kingdom on this earth, Hades and all those in it will be thrown into Gehenna (see footnote on Diatess. 9:11). Prior to the resurrection of Christ, Hades also contained the righteous dead, as in chapter 21:27-33 of this document, or Luke 16:19-31.

⁹⁴ In that time and culture, those eating a meal lay on a futon, on their sides and resting on an elbow, with their feet off the floor. That is how the woman could both stand behind him at his feet, and wipe his feet with her hair.

38 "Tell me, teacher," he said.

39 "Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii,⁹⁵ the other owed him fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

40 Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

41 "You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

42 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven, for she loved much.⁹⁶ But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

43 Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

44 The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

45 Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Chapter 11

Jesus' Support Workers

Lk 8:1-3

1 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, known as the Magdalene,⁹⁷ from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Kuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Jesus Thought To Be Out of His Mind

Mt 9:27-34; Mk 3:20-22a; Lk 11:14

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

3 When he had entered a house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

4 "Yes, Lord," they replied.

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

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

7 Once again a crowd gathered, to such an extent that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they set out to go and take custody of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind." And the teachers of the law who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Baal-zibbul."

⁹⁵ A *denarius* was a coin worth about a day's wages.

⁹⁶ I Peter 4:8

⁹⁷ A *Magdalene* is someone who is from the town of *Magdala*, just as a *Seattleite* is someone who is from the city of Seattle.

Jesus and Baalzibbul

Mt 12:22-37; Mk 3:22b-30; Lk 11:15,17-23,27,28

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

9 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Ba'al-zibbul,⁹⁸ the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.

10 Jesus knew their thoughts. So he called them and, speaking to them in parables, he said: "Any kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, and a city or house divided against itself will fall. How can Satan drive out Satan? If Satan opposes himself and is divided, his kingdom cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, when a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. No one can enter the strong man's house unless he is stronger, and can attack and overpower him. He must first tie up the strong man; then he can take away the armor in which the man trusted and divide up the spoils.

11 "I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Baal-zibbul. Now if I drive out demons by Baal-zibbul, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the Spirit, the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

12 "I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven— either in this age or in the age to come; he is guilty of an eternal sin." (He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit.")

13 "Either call a tree good and its fruit good, or call the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.

14 "You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings forth good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings forth evil out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

15 As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you."

16 But he replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

The Sign of Jonah

Mt 12:38-45; Lk 11:16,24-26,29-32

17 Meanwhile the crowds were increasing. Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law put him to a test by asking him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you."

18 Jesus answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of 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. As Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. 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 the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and now one greater than Solomon is here.

⁹⁸ Some Greek manuscripts, Beelzeboul, others, Beelzebub, Beelzebul, and even Beeldebaba. The Hebrew is Ba'al-zibbul. "Ba'al." means Lord or Prince. Baal was a Canaanite god, the son of Dagon, the god of grain. Baal was the bull prince, the bull being a symbol of fertility. Baalzebub, as in the Hebrew text of II Kings 1:2, is a derisive alteration of Baalzibbul meaning "Prince of flies." In this way the followers of Yahweh made fun of Baal. Later the name Baalzebub became associated with the Aramaic Beeldebaba, "enemy." Thus "Beelzebub" came to be a name for Satan. To avoid confusion in all the names, this author thought it best to revert to the original form of the name.

19 "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they come 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

Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35; Lk 8:19-21

20 While Jesus was still speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers arrived. But because of the crowd they were not able to get near him, so they sent word in to call him. The crowd sitting around him told him, "Your mother and brothers and sisters are standing outside, wanting to see you."

21 He replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples seated around him in a circle, he said, "Here are my mother and brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, those who hear God's word and put it into practice, they are my brothers and sisters and mothers."

The Parable of the Sower

Mt 13:1-9; Mk 4:1-9; Lk 8:4-8

22 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake and began to teach. And again, such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people stood on the shore at the water's edge.

23 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; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air 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 not root with which to get moisture. Still other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. But some seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times what was sown."

24 When he had said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The Parable of the Growing Seed

Mk 4:26-29

25 He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain— first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. And when the grain is ripe, he immediately puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

The Parable of the Weeds

Mt 13:24-30

26 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

27 "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

28 "'An enemy did this,' he replied.

29 "The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

30 "'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling up 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

Mt 13:31-35; Mk 4:30-34a; Lk 13:18-21

31 Then Jesus asked, "What else shall we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. Though it is the smallest seed planted, yet when it grows, it becomes the largest of all the garden plants, with branches so big that the birds of the air come and perch in them for its shade."

32 He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into three measures⁹⁹ of flour until it worked all through the dough."

33 Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; 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."¹⁰⁰

And with many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they were able to listen to.

The Parable of the Sower Explained

Mt 13:10-23, 36a; Mk 4:10-25,34b; Lk 8:9-18

34 Then he left the crowd and went into the house, and the Twelve and the others around him came to him. When they were alone with him, they asked him, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

35 Jesus replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Rather, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light. For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and there is nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.

36 "Therefore consider carefully what you hear," he continued. "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more: whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Therefore consider carefully how you listen. But whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him. This is why I speak to those on the outside in parables, so that:

"Though seeing, they may¹⁰¹ not
see;
though hearing, they may not hear
or understand;
otherwise they might turn
and be forgiven!"

37 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

"You will be ever hearing
but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing
but never perceiving.
For this people's heart has

⁹⁹ Greek: three *sata*, about 5 gallons, or 22 liters.

¹⁰⁰ Psalm 78:2

¹⁰¹ This is Mark's reading. Matthew reads, *This is why I speak to them in parables, because 'Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing they do not hear or understand.* So, Jesus spoke to them in parables both as punishment for not seeing and hearing, and to prolong that punishment then and into the future.

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."¹⁰²

38 But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For 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 but did not hear it."

39 Then they asked him what the parable of the sower meant. Jesus said to them, "You don't understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: The farmer sows the word, the seed is the word of God. Some people hear the message about the kingdom and do not understand it, and immediately Satan the evil one comes and snatches away the word that was sown in their hearts, so that they cannot believe and be saved. This is the seed sown along the path. Those on rocky places are the ones who hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they believe only for a short time. When the time of testing comes—trouble and persecution because of the word—they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but as they go on their way, the worries of this life; the deceitfulness¹⁰³ of abundance; pleasures; and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful, and they do not mature. But the good soil stands for others, those with a noble and good heart, who hear and understand the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop, yielding thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times what was sown."

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

Mt 13:36b-43

40 Then the disciples said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

41 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

42 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

Mt 13:44-46

43 "The kingdom of heaven is 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.

44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

¹⁰² Isaiah 6:9,10; This and other quotes of the Old Testament may differ from what your English Old Testament says, because your Old Testament was translated mainly from the Masoretic Text. When the gospels writers were recalling the words of Jesus, the differences between how they say Jesus quoted the O.T. and what our Old Testament says could be because they were quoting from the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, done a couple hundred years before Christ.

¹⁰³ The Greek word here translated *deceitfulness* in Mark means a *pleasant, seductive deceitfulness*; see BAG lexicon page 82, *apate*, meaning 2, reference to Mk 4:19. The adjective modifies only the word *abundance*; the word *pleasures* is from Luke.

The Parable of the Net

Mt 13:47-52

45 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen 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 will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

46 "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked.

47 "Yes," they replied.

48 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."

Chapter 12

The Cost of Following Jesus

Mt 8:18-22; Mk 4:35; Lk 8:22a

1 That same day, when evening had come and Jesus saw a crowd gathering around him, he said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake."

2 Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

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

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

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

Jesus Calms the Storm

Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:36-41; Lk 8:22b-25

6 Leaving the crowd behind, his disciples took him along, just as he was,¹⁰⁴ in the boat. There were also other boats with him. And as they sailed, Jesus fell asleep.

7 Without warning a furious squall came down on the lake, and the waves began to break over the boat. Soon it was being swamped, and they were in great danger.

8 Jesus, however, was still sleeping, on a cushion in the stern. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, save us! We're going to drown! Don't you care?"

9 He replied, "Why are you this afraid? Where is your faith?"

10 Jesus got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" The storm subsided; the wind died down, and all was completely calm.

11 The men were terrified. They said to each other in awe, "What kind of man is this? He gives orders even to the wind and the water, and they obey him! Who then might he possibly be?"

¹⁰⁴ This intriguing and very significant phrase, *just as he was*, comes from Mark. His day, the day they embarked across the lake, started in Diatessaron chapter 11, verse 2. He probably got up before light as usual, and his day was very full including the confrontation with his family, the accusation of his being used by Beelzeboul, caring for the poor and sick, and the session of teaching in the boat. Now, at sunset, he was going to cross, *just as he was*, to the other side of the lake. The night would be taken up sailing, then dealing with the two demon-possessed men, and all the people of that area, then he'd sail back to the west side again later in the night or the next morning. Then he'd have a day raising a dead person. So when it says he set sail for the other side of the lake *just as he was*, I suggest it means that he did it without first eating, sleeping, or bathing, or getting a change of clothes. (I'm not suggesting he never did those things, but that quite often he did not take time to, because of the urgency of carrying out his Father's will.) This lifestyle is exactly why his family came to take custody of him, this "irresponsibility," this "not taking care of himself." And it prompted the Pharisees to say he was demon-possessed. This was a man truly possessed by the Spirit and his cause.

The Legion of Demons Near Gadara

Mt 8:28- 9:1a; Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-39

12 They sailed to the region of the Gadarenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. When Jesus stepped ashore, he encountered two demon-possessed men coming out of the tombs. They were from the town, but for a long time they had not worn clothes or lived in houses, but had lived in the tombs. They were so extremely wild that no one could pass that way. No one was strong enough to subdue them, nor could anyone bind them anymore, even with chains. For many times the evil spirits had seized them, and though they were chained hand and foot and kept under guard, they had torn their chains apart and broken the irons on their feet and were driven by the demons into solitary places. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills they would cry out and cut themselves with stones.

13 When one of them saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him, and shouted at the top of his voice: "What do you want with us, Jesus, son of the most high god? Have you come to torture us before the appointed time?" For Jesus was saying to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!"

14 "I beg of you," he cried, "swear to God that you won't torture us!"

15 Jesus questioned him: "What is your name?"

16 He replied, "My name is Legion,¹⁰⁵ for we are many." (For many demons had gone into him.) And they begged him again and again not to order them to go into the Abyss, nor to send them out of the area.

17 On a hillside some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us among the pigs; allow us to enter them."

18 He said to them, "Alright. Go!" So they came out of the men and went into the pigs; and behold, the whole herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake, and drowned.

19 Those tending the pigs fled when they saw this. They ran and reported all this in the town and in the farms, including what had happened with the demon-possessed men. All the people of the whole region of Gadara went out to see what had happened. When they came and saw the men who had been possessed by the legion of demons sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed, and in their right minds, they were afraid. And the ones who had witnessed it rehearsed to everyone how the demon-possessed men had been cured, and about the pigs as well. Then all the Gadarenes went to have a meeting with Jesus. When they met with him they asked him to leave their area, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and proceeded to leave.

20 As Jesus was stepping into the boat, the men from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him. But he sent them away, saying, "Go home to your families and tell them how much God has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." So they went away and told all over the Ten Cities how much Jesus had done for them. And all the people were amazed.

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:21-43; Lk 8:40-56

21 When Jesus had gone back across the lake to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him and welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Just then, while he was still by the lake, one of the synagogue rulers¹⁰⁶ named Jairus came and fell at Jesus' feet and pleaded earnestly with him,

¹⁰⁵ Among the Romans a *legion* was a select body of soldiers— a complete army of cavalry and infantry, numbering from 4,200 to 6,000 men, usually with approximately an equal number of auxiliary troops, thus totaling about 10,000. The *legion* was divided into ten cohorts of 1,000 each. In this case, a more general meaning of the word *legion* probably applies: a very large number.

¹⁰⁶ The supervision of a local synagogue was in the hands of a body of elders. In order to qualify as a congregation, a minimum of ten "men of leisure" were required. There was no resident priest or rabbi who had charge of conducting the services. Instead, one of the men of the congregation was appointed to serve as "the ruler of the synagogue" (Diatess. 12:21; Luke 8:41; Acts 18:8,17). Besides having under his care the general oversight of the building, the ruler was responsible for maintaining order during the services (hence the indignation of the ruler mentioned in Diatess. 19:34,35 or Luke 13:14). It also was the ruler's duty to select each week the persons who would read the scripture lessons and otherwise participate in the service. (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; p. 57)

saying, "My little only-born daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

22 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. She had suffered many things under the care of many doctors and had spent all the money she had on them, but none could heal her. Instead of getting better, she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she said to herself, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." So she came up behind him in the crowd and touched the tassel¹⁰⁷ of his cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped and she knew by the feeling in her body that she was free from her suffering.

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

24 When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, you see the people crowding and pressing against you, and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

25 But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it, saying, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

26 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came and fell at his feet, trembling with fear. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then Jesus said to her, "Take heart, daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

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

28 Ignoring what they said, Jesus told Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."

29 When they came to the synagogue ruler's home, Jesus did not let anyone follow him inside except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. When he entered the house and saw the flute players, and people crying and loudly wailing, Jesus said, "Go away. Stop all this commotion and wailing! The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead.

30 After he had put them all out, Jesus took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in to where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!") Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old.) At this they were completely astonished. Then he told them to give her something to eat, and gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this. But news of this spread throughout that region.

A Prophet Without Honor #

Mt 13:53-58; Mk 6:1-6; Lk 4:16-30; Jn 4:44

31 He moved on from there, accompanied by his disciples, and came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. When the Sabbath day came, he went into the synagogue,¹⁰⁸ as was his custom.

¹⁰⁷ See Numbers 15:38, Deut. 22:12

¹⁰⁸ The *synagogues* were the meeting places of the Jews, found in almost all Palestinian cities and towns, as well as in many centers throughout the Mediterranean world. In the larger cities there were many synagogues, and people could gravitate to one or another according to their preference in location, language spoken or cultural or philosophical orientation (cf. Acts 6:9). Preferably, they were built on a high point of the town, often oriented with the front doors facing Jerusalem. They were of no fixed shape, but generally rectangular in groundplan, having two rows of columns which divided the interior into a central nave and two side aisles. Of the furnishings in the synagogue the most important was the chest or closet, called the "ark," in which were kept the sacred scrolls of the Old Testament law and prophets. Near the location of the ark was a raised platform, on which the reader of the scriptures and the prayer-leader stood. In excavated synagogues, running along two or three of the walls were one or two rows of stone benches. People who could not be thus accommodated apparently stood during the service or sat either on wooden chairs or on mats spread out on the floor in the center. Note also James 2:3, "If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, 'Here's a good seat for you,' but say to the poor man, 'You stand there' or 'Sit on the floor by my feet,'..." The "best seats in the synagogues," which the teachers of the law and Pharisees sought to occupy (Diatess. 19:4; 26:19; Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke 11:43; 20:46), were those in front of the platform and facing the congregation. A special chair, called "Moses' seat" (Diatess. 26:18 or Matt. 23:2) was allotted to one of the teachers of the law, who was presumably the most distinguished scholar of the community. The supervision of the local synagogue was in the hands of a body of elders. In order to qualify as a congregation, a minimum of ten "men of leisure" were required. There was no resident priest or rabbi who had charge of conducting the services. Instead, one of the men of the congregation was

And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach the 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,
to proclaim the year
of the Lord's favor..."¹⁰⁹

32 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to speak to them: "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

33 All were speaking well of him and amazed at the gracious words coming from his lips. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. "Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Joseph the carpenter? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters here with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" And they took offense at him.

34 Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote to me this proverb: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your home town what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.' "

35 "I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his home town. I 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 in the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel who had leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed, only Naaman the Syrian. Only in his home town, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor. "

36 All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up and drove him outside the town, intending to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. Because of their unbelief, he had not been able to do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

The Workers Are Few

Mt 9:35-38; Mk 6:6b

37 Jesus went through all the 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 had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

appointed to serve as "the ruler of the synagogue" (Diatess. 12:21; 19:35; Luke 8:41; 13:14; Acts 18:8,17). Besides having under his care the general oversight of the building, the ruler was responsible for maintaining order during the services. It was also the ruler's duty to select each week the persons who would read the scripture lessons and otherwise participate in the service. The main meeting was held Saturday morning, and had four parts: a) The opening with an invitation to congregational responsive prayer, b) prayer said by a single individual, called the "lifting up of hands" c) the next reading lesson from the Mosaic law, which was divided so that the whole Pentateuch was read in three and a half years d) the closing by a priestly blessing, to which the congregation said "Amen." (From *THE NEW TESTAMENT, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, by Bruce M. Metzger; Abingdon Press, 1987; pp. 56-59)

¹⁰⁹ Isaiah 61:1,2 When Jesus read this passage, he did not read to the end of the sentence. The next phrase was about the Lord's vengeance.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

Mt 10:1,5- 11:1; Mk 6:7-13; Lk 9:1-6

38 And calling the Twelve together, Jesus gave them power and authority over all evil spirits and demons, to drive them out, and power and authority to cure every disease and sickness. And these Twelve he sent out two by two to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick, with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Take nothing for your journey— no gold or silver or copper in your belts, no bag, no bread, no extra tunic, sandals or staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

39 "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. As soon as you enter the home, give 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 anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town, as a testimony against them. I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

40 "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.

41 "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 holds out to the end will be rescued unharmed. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another; for I tell you the truth, the Son of Man will certainly have come before you have finished going through all the towns of Israel.

42 "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Baal-zibbul, how much more the members of his household.

43 "So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. Do not 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 Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. As for you, even the very hairs of your head are numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

44 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

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

" 'a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her
mother-in-law—
a man's enemies will be members
of his own household.¹¹⁰

46 "Anyone who loves his 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 anyone who does not take up his cross and

¹¹⁰ Micah 7:6

follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

47 "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. Anyone who 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 even just a cup of 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."

48 So the Twelve set out and went from village to village, preaching that people should repent. And they preached the good news, healing people everywhere, driving out many demons and anointing many sick people with oil. But Jesus went on from there to teach and preach in their towns.

Chapter 13

Herod Hears of Jesus

Mt 14:1,2, 6-12; Mk 6:14-16,21-29; Lk 9:7-9

1 Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on, for Jesus' name had become well known. And some were saying, "John the Baptizer has been raised from the dead. That is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

2 Others said, "He is Elijah."

3 Still others claimed, "He is a prophet, one of the prophets of long ago, come back to life."

4 But when Herod heard this, he said to his attendants, "This is John the Baptizer, the man I beheaded! He is risen from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him!" But he was perplexed, and said, "I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?" And he tried to see him.

5 For the opportunity had finally come that Herodias had been waiting for. On his birthday Herod had given a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. And when the daughter of Herodias¹¹¹ came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

6 The king was so pleased that he said to the girl, "Ask me anything you want, and I'll give it to you, up to half my kingdom."

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

8 "The head of John the Baptizer," she answered.

9 At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "Give me here right now the head of John the Baptizer on a platter."

¹¹¹ The oldest Greek manuscripts of Mark, codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, dating from the 4th century, read, *And when his (Herod's) daughter Herodias...* There at first appears to be some disagreement between Josephus, Mark, Matthew and Luke (or the copyists thereof) about Herod's family tree (Little wonder, the way they fornicated, adulterated, and married relatives). For example, who was Herodias' first husband? Some mss of Matthew follow the early mss of Mark on that question, while others are changed to agree with Josephus. Compounding all this is how broadly words such as father, son, brother, and daughter were used (for example, "daughter" could also mean niece or granddaughter). But the following is what can be distilled from all accounts. Herodias' first husband, named Philip in the Bible and Herod in Josephus, was also known as Herod Philip. That's all. They were the same man. Herodias then divorced Herod Philip and married Herod Antipas, who was Herod Philip's half brother (the father of both was Herod I, king of Judea, 4 B.C., who had eight wives in his lifetime. Herod Philip's mother was Mariamne II, the third wife, and Herod Antipas' mother was Malthake, the fourth wife). Josephus says that Herodias already had a daughter named Salome before she married Herod Antipas (p 485 of *The Works of Josephus*, trans. William Whiston, Hendrickson, 1988; or *Antiquities* book 18, chapter 5, secs. 136,137). So if it was Salome that danced for Herod Antipas, she was both his half-niece and step-daughter. Either niece or step-daughter would be a not-unheard-of use of the word daughter. But, the earliest manuscripts of Mark say, "his daughter Herodias." If Herod Antipas had another daughter, whether by Herodias or otherwise, such a daughter is not mentioned anywhere else. In summary, then, though the earliest Greek manuscripts say "Herod's daughter Herodias," some translations dated just as early (Sinaitic and Curetonian Syriac, Bohairic Coptic, and Gothic, all 4th century) or earlier (Sahidic Coptic, 3rd century) than those Greek manuscripts, read, "Herodias' daughter," as does also Tatian's Diatessaron. Because of the combined testimony of these witnesses along with Josephus, I am confident that the dancer in question was Salome, the daughter of Herod's wife Herodias. (FYI: Salome later married another Philip, who was yet another half-brother of Herod Antipas, this time by Herod I's fifth wife, Cleopatra. So Salome lived with her father for a while, then lived with her half-uncle, then married a different half-uncle.)

10 The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. On hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb. Then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Mt 14:13-23a; Mk 6:30-46; Lk 9:10-17; Jn 6:1-15

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

12 So they went away in a boat, crossing over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and tried to withdraw by themselves to a lonely spot near the town of Bethsaida.¹¹² But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got to the other side ahead of them. A great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick.

13 When Jesus landed and saw the large crowd, he had compassion on them and welcomed them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he went up on the hillside with his disciples and sat down to teach. He taught them many things about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

14 Now the Jewish Passover Feast was near. As evening approached, Jesus 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.

15 The disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the surrounding villages and farms to find lodging and buy food for themselves."

16 Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

17 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii¹¹³ would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

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

19 When they had found out, another of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, spoke up, "Here is a youth [of our party] with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

20 "Bring them here to me," he said. "Have the people sit down in groups of about fifty each." There was plenty of green grass in that place, and the disciples got everyone to sit down in groups of hundreds and fifties. The number of the men was a little above five thousand, not counting the women and children. Jesus then took the loaves, and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks, broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. He did the same with the fish. And they distributed to everyone who was seated as much as each needed.

21 When all had eaten and were satisfied, Jesus said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve large baskets¹¹⁴ with the pieces of the five barley loaves and two fish that were left over by those who had eaten.

22 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 knew that they intended to come and make him king by force, so he immediately told his disciples to go on ahead of him to the other side of the lake to

¹¹² There were at least two towns called *Bethsaida*. Jesus and company here crossed the lake toward the one east of the Jordan River, *Bethsaida-Julias*.

¹¹³ About 8 months of a man's wages

¹¹⁴ Greek, *kopinos*, a large, heavy basket for carrying things. Interestingly, the baskets used in the feeding of the 4,000 later on were a smaller basket. In the accounts of the feeding of the 5,000, all four gospels use the Greek word *kopinos*, but in the account of the feeding of the 4,000 they used the Greek word *spuris*. A *kopinos* was used for many things, including carrying manure, while a *spuris* was a smaller basket used for carrying edibles.

Bethsaida,¹¹⁵ while he dismissed the crowd. And after he had dismissed the crowd, he withdrew again into the hills by himself to pray.

Jesus Walks on the Water

Mt 14:23b-36; Mk 6:47-56; Jn 6:16-21

23 His disciples went down to the water, where they got into the boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By the time evening had come, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and Jesus was still alone in the hills. After it was dark, during about the fourth watch¹¹⁶ of the night, Jesus saw¹¹⁷ that the disciples were straining at the oars, and buffeted by the waves, because the wind was against them. So he went out toward them, walking on the lake. When they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty stadia,¹¹⁸ he caught up with them and was intending to pass them. But when they saw him walking on the water, they were all terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

24 Jesus immediately spoke to them and said: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

25 Peter answered and said, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water."

26 "Come," he said.

27 Peter got down out of the boat and walked on the water, going toward Jesus. But when he saw the violent wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

28 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

29 Then the disciples were willing to take him into the boat. And when the two climbed into the boat, the wind died down, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading. Then those who were in it worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." They were completely amazed, for they had not learned from the incident of the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

30 They anchored at Gennesaret. As soon as they got out of the boat, the men of that place recognized Jesus. They ran and sent word to all the surrounding country, and people carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. Everywhere he went, into villages, towns or countryside, they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let him touch even the tassel of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

Jesus the Bread of Life

Jn 6:22-59

31 The next day the crowd 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 boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

32 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

33 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God has placed his seal of approval."

¹¹⁵ This is the *Bethsaida* west of the Jordan River, in the province of Galilee. We know there was a Bethsaida west of the Jordan river because of Diatessaron 28:3 or John 12:21 (the province of Galilee ended at the Jordan river and did not extend east of the river). Since *Bethsaida* means *Town of Fishermen*, it is very possible that it was an alternate name for Capernaum. And since the Lord told the disciples to go to *Bethsaida*, and they headed for Capernaum (verse 23), and Capernaum is where they ultimately did go (verses 31,32,43), they apparently are the same town, or else are situated very close to each other. But note that the storm blew them off course to the south, and they at first landed at Gennesaret (verse 30).

¹¹⁶ Between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m.

¹¹⁷ It being in the early part of the month of Nisan, a clear, moonlit night was common. Even so, human eyes could not naturally have seen them three and a half miles away at night.

¹¹⁸ This is about halfway across the lake. (Or three or three and a half miles, or five or six kilometers.)

34 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

35 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

36 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'¹¹⁹"

37 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

38 "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread."

39 Then Jesus declared, "I am 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 seen me and still you do not believe. All [flesh] that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come 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 who sent me: that of all [flesh] he has given me, I should not lose any of it, but raise it up at the last day. For my Father'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."

40 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven?'"

41 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. "No one can come 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 Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.'¹²⁰ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, and they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

42 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

43 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live through the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live through me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. It is not like the bread the fathers ate and then died. He who eats this bread will live forever." He said this while teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

Many Disciples Desert Jesus

Jn 6:60-71

44 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"

45 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this shock you? Then what if you were seeing the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! Spirit is what makes alive; flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet some of you are not believing." 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 that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him."

46 From this time on many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

47 "You don't want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.

48 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God."

¹¹⁹ Exodus 16:4; Psalm 78:24

¹²⁰ Isaiah 54:13

49 Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, son of Simon of Kerieth, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

Chapter 14

Clean and Unclean

Mt 15:1-20; Mk 7:1-23; Jn 7:1

1 Some Pharisees and teachers of the law who had come down 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.)

2 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!"

3 Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said through Moses, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise receive from me is Korban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), then he is not to 'honor his father and mother' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that. You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to set up your own traditions.

4 "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

"This people honor me with
their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.
They worship me in vain;
their teachings are but rules
taught by men."¹²¹

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

5 Calling the crowd to him again, he said, "Listen to me everyone, and understand this: There is nothing outside a man that can make him unclean by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him unclean."

6 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, the disciples came to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?"

7 He replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them; they are blind guides leading the blind. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

8 Peter said, "Explain the parable to us."

9 "Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man's mouth from the outside can make him unclean? For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out into the sewer." (In saying this, Jesus rendered all foods clean.¹²²)

10 He went on: "But what comes out of a man is what makes him unclean. For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, murder, adultery,¹²³ sexual immorality,¹²⁴ theft, false testimony,

¹²¹ Isaiah 29:13

¹²² That is, kosher.

¹²³ Greek *moicheia*

¹²⁴ Greek *porneia*

slander, covetousness,¹²⁵ malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, arrogance, and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man unclean; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him unclean."

The Faith of the Syro-Phoenician Woman

Mt 15:21-28; Mk 7:24-30

11 After this, the Jews were seeking to take his life. Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and didn't want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a Gentile woman from Syria, a Phoenician by race, came to him crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My little daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession." And she begged Jesus to drive the demon out.

12 Jesus answered not a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, because she keeps crying out behind us."

13 Jesus said to her, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

14 But she came and pleaded at his feet, "Lord, help me."

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

16 "Yes, Lord," she replied, "but even the dogs eat the children's crumbs that fall under their master's table."

17 Then he said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! For such a reply, your request is granted. You may go; the demon has left your daughter." Her daughter was healed from that very hour. The woman went home and found her child lying in bed, and the demon gone.

The Healing of the Deaf and Mute Man

Mk 7:31-37

18 Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee, and into the region of the Ten Cities. 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.

19 After he took him aside, 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 normally.

20 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 makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

Mt 15:29-39; Mk 8:1-10

21 Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up into the hills and sat down. During those days great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

22 Since the people had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have stayed with me now three days and have nothing to eat. I do

¹²⁵ *Covetousness* is to want something too much. Anything. The Greek word for covetousness literally means *to want more*. The antonym of covetousness is *contentment*. Covetousness is usually used of material objects in the sense of desiring to make them your possessions. See the commandment: "Thou shalt not covet your neighbor's wife, or land, house, or ox,— anything." The apostle Paul teaches that a covetous person is an idolater, that is, he makes a goal and a god of material objects or whatever it is that is desired. Covetousness might also be defined as in Mark 4:19 or Diatessaron 11:36 as "the desires for other things," that is, things other than the kingdom of God.

not want to send them home hungry, or they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance."

23 His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place could we get enough bread to feed such a crowd?"

24 "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked.

25 "Seven," they replied, "and a few small fish."

26 He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples, and they in turn distributed them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was four thousand, besides women and children. After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the vicinity of Magdala, in the region of Dalmanutha.

The Demand For a Sign

Mt 16:1,4; Mk 8:11-13a

27 The Pharisees and Sadducees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven.

28 He sighed deeply and said, "Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but I tell you the truth, none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them, got back into the boat and crossed to the other side.

The Yeast of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herod

Mt 16:5-12; Mk 8:13b-21

29 When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. Now Jesus warned them, "Take heed, be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and that of Herod."

30 They discussed this among themselves, and said, "It is because we didn't bring any bread."

31 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Do you have completely hardened hearts? You have eyes— can't you see? You have ears— can't you hear? And don't you remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?"

32 "Twelve," they replied.

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

34 They answered, "Seven."

35 He said to them, "How is it that you still 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 he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching¹²⁶ of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

The Healing of a Blind Man at Bethsaida

Mk 8:22-26

36 They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the 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?"

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

38 Once more Jesus put his 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, "Don't go into the village."

¹²⁶ Compare with Diatessaron 19:11.

The Advice of Jesus' Brothers

Jn 7:2-9

39 During those days, Jesus was still going around in Galilee and purposely staying away from Judea, because the Jews there were waiting to take his life. But when the Jewish Feast of Booths¹²⁷ was near, Jesus' brothers said to him, "You ought to leave this place and go to Judea, so that your disciples there also may see the miracles you are doing. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. If you really are doing these things, show yourself to the world." For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

40 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 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.

Peter's Confession of Messiah

Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-21

41 Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way, when Jesus was praying in private and the disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say the Son of Man is?"

42 They replied, "Some say John the Baptizer; others say Elijah; and still others, that Jeremiah or one of the other prophets of long ago has come back to life."

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

44 Simon Peter answered, "You are God's Messiah, the Son of the living God."

45 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of John, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock¹²⁸ I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven." Then he strictly warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Jesus Predicts His Death

Mt 16:21-28; Mk 8:31- 9:1; Lk 9:22-27

46 From that time on Jesus began to explain to them about what would happen to him. He told them plainly: "The Son of Man must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law and be rejected by them, and he must be killed, and on the third day be raised to life."

47 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him: "Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you!"

48 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get away from me, Satan!" he said. "You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

49 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and he said to them all, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever

¹²⁷ *Kag Kamuboh*, a festival instituted in memory of the forty years' wandering of the Israelites in the desert, and as a season of gratitude for the ingathering of harvest, celebrated for eight days, starting on the 15th of Tishri (roughly October). It was celebrated out of doors, if possible, in booths made from branches of trees. Josephus declares that it was the most important Jewish festival. Demetrius of Skepsis in Athenaeus 4, 141, says they would put up something like a tent, and at times nine men would eat together in one of them.

¹²⁸ Peter's name means "rock" in Greek. Yes, Jesus did build his church upon Peter, and also upon the other eleven apostles. See Revelation 22:14 "with the wall of the city having twelve foundations, and on them twelve names, of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Rev. 21:9 says this is talking about "the bride, the wife of the Lamb." So we see that the church is built on Peter indeed, but Peter's foundation is no wider or higher than the other eleven foundations. And was he the only apostle allowed to bind and loose? No, we see that all the apostles practised that.

wants to save his own life¹²⁹ will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the Good News will save it. What good will it be for a man to gain the whole world, but be penalized his soul or lose his very self? what can a man give to buy back his soul? For if anyone is 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 glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his holy angels, and then he will return to each person what he deserves, according to what he has done."

50 Then he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will certainly not taste death before they have seen the Son of Man come as king, and the kingdom of God having come with power."

Chapter 15

Jesus Goes to the Feast of Booths

Jn 7:10-24

1 After his brothers had gone to the Feast, Jesus went also; not publicly, but in secret. Now at the Feast the Jews were watching for him and asking, "Where is that man?"

2 Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man."

3 Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the Jews.

4 The Feast was already half over when Jesus went up to the temple and began to teach. The Jews were amazed and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?"

5 Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If any one chooses to do God's will, he will find out 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?"

6 "You are demon-possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?"

7 Jesus said to them, "I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. Yet, because Moses 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 be 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 mere appearances, and make a right judgment."

Is Jesus the Anointed One?

Jn 7:25-44

8 At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities actually concluded that he is the Messiah? But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from."

9 Then Jesus, still teaching at the temple, 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 am from him and he sent me."

10 At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his time had not yet come. Still, many in the crowd put their faith in him. They said, "When the Messiah comes, will he do more miraculous signs than this man?"

11 The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

¹²⁹ The Greek word means either *life* or *soul*, as throughout this verse.

12 Jesus said, "I am with you for only a short time, and then I go to the one who sent me. You will look for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."

13 The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we cannot find him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? What did he mean when he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not find me,' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?"

14 On the last and greatest 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 the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow out of his belly."¹³⁰ By this he meant the 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.

15 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet."

16 Others said, "He is the Messiah."

17 Still others asked, "How can the Messiah come from Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David's seed 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

Jn 7:45-52

18 Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?"

19 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

20 "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—a curse is on them."

21 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?"

22 They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Look into it, and you will find that the prophet does not come out of Galilee."¹³¹

The Validity of Jesus' Testimony

Jn 8:12-30

23 When Jesus spoke again 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."

24 The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

25 Jesus answered, "Even if I 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 standards; I pass judgment on no one. But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father who sent me. In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the one who sent me—the Father."

26 Then they asked him, "Where is your Father?"

27 "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." He spoke these words while teaching at the temple near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his time had not yet come.

28 Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."

29 This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?"

¹³⁰ Isaiah 58:11?

¹³¹ The reading, *the prophet*, is from p⁶⁶ (papyrus 66). A prophet had in fact come out of Galilee before. According to II Kings 14:25, the prophet Jonah was from Gath Hopher, in Galilee. This is yet another way in which Jonah was a sign of Christ.

30 But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am who I am, you will indeed die in your sins."

31 So they said to him, "Who are you?"

32 "Just what I have been saying all along," Jesus replied. "About you I have much to say, and that in judgment. But the one who sent me is reliable, and the things I heard from him, those things I declare to the world."

33 They did not understand that he was talking to them about his Father. So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am 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 with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." Even as he spoke, many transferred their believing to him.

The Children of Abraham

Jn 8:31-41

34 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."

35 They answered him, "We are seed of Abraham and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we will be set free?"

36 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it for ever. 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. Therefore do what you have heard from the Father."

37 "Abraham is our father," they answered.

38 "If you were Abraham's seed," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you 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 things your own father does."

39 "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

The Children of the Devil

Jn 8:42-47

40 Jesus said to them, "If 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 language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not standing by the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks of his own inventions, for he is a liar and the father of the lie. And because I am speaking the truth, you are not believing 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 hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."

The Claims of Jesus About Himself

Jn 8:48-59

41 The Jews answered him, "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?"

42 "I am not possessed by a 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 man keeps my word, he will never see death."

43 At this the Jews exclaimed, "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 our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?"

44 Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. 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 father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

45 "You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"

46 "I tell you the solemn truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I AM!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Chapter 16

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

Jn 9:1-12

1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

2 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but 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."

3 Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and spread 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.

4 His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was.

5 Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

6 But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

7 "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded.

8 He replied, "The man they 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."

9 "Where is this man?" they asked him.

10 "I don't know," he said.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

Jn 9:13-34

11 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore 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."

12 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

13 But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided.

14 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

15 The man replied, "He is a prophet."

16 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?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

17 "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

18 A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God,¹³²" they said. "We know this man is a sinner."

19 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

20 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

21 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

22 Then they hurled insults 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."

23 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

24 To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

Spiritual Blindness

Jn 9:35-41

25 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

26 "Who is he sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may transfer my believing to him."

27 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking to you."

28 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

29 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

30 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

31 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

The Shepherd and His Flock

Jn 10:1-21

32 "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.

33 Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

34 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the 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 man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

35 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock

¹³² A solemn charge to tell the truth (see Joshua 7:19).

and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life— only to take it up again. No one 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."

36 At these words the Jews were again divided. Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why do you listen to him?"

37 But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon; a demon is not able to open the eyes of the blind."

Chapter 17

The Transfiguration

Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-13; Lk 9:28-36

1 [Jesus had said to his disciples, "Some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."] ¹³³ About eight days after he had said this, Jesus took Peter, James, and John the brother of James with him and went up to pray on a high mountain, where they were all alone. And as he was praying, he was transfigured in front of them— the appearance of his face changed, and shone like the sun; his clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them, and as bright as a flash of lightning. Just then there appeared before them in glorious splendor two men, Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. They talked about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

2 As the men were leaving, Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, 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 saying, they were so frightened.)

3 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud appeared and enveloped them, and the disciples were afraid as they entered the cloud. A voice coming from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love and whom I have chosen; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him."

4 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." Suddenly, when they looked up and around, they found that Jesus was alone.

5 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." They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what "rising from the dead" meant.

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

7 Jesus replied, "Elijah indeed comes first and restores all things. So why is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? But I tell you: Not only has Elijah already come, and they did not recognize him, but they also did to him everything they wished, just as it has been written about him. Likewise the Son of Man also is about to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptizer. And they told no one at that time what they had seen.

The Healing of a Boy With an Evil Spirit

Mt 17:14-16,18-23; Mk 9:14-32; Lk 9:37-45

8 The next day, when they had come down the mountain to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

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

¹³³ Diatess. 14:50. Matthew and Mark say "after six days," and Luke says "about eight days after." Neither expression is exact, so I felt a little leeway in looking at a map of the area they had to travel. It appears likely that they would have needed 8 days to walk the distance.

10 A man in the crowd approached Jesus and knelt before him. "Teacher, I beg you," he answered, "have mercy and look at my son whom I have brought to you, for he is my only child. He is epileptic, possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech and makes him suffer greatly. Whenever it seizes him, he suddenly screams, and it throws him to the ground in convulsions. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I brought him to your disciples and begged them to drive the spirit out, but they were not able to."

11 In answer to them, Jesus said, "O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I stay with you? how long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me."

12 So they brought him. Even as they were bringing the boy, the demon when it saw Jesus immediately threw the boy to the ground in a convulsion. And the boy kept on rolling around, foaming at the mouth.

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

14 "From childhood," he answered. "The spirit has often thrown him into fire or water trying to kill him. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

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

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

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

18 The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much 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 and was healed from that time on. Then Jesus gave him back to his father. They were all amazed at the greatness of God.

19 While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did, he went indoors. Then the disciples came to him and asked him privately: "Why weren't we able to drive it out?"

20 He replied, "Because you 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. But this kind cannot be made to go out except by prayer."

21 They left that place, and they kept moving, going on through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life." The disciples were filled with grief. But 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.

The Two Drachma Tax

Mt 17:24-27; Mk 9:33a

22 After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachmas¹³⁴ came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the two drachmas?"

23 "Yes, he does," he replied.

24 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 tribute— from their own Citizens or from aliens?"

25 "From aliens," Peter answered.

26 "Then the Citizens are independent," 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 stater.¹³⁵ Take it and give it to them for me and you."^{136#}

¹³⁴ A *drachma* was worth about a day's wage.

¹³⁵ A silver coin worth four drachmas.

¹³⁶ Note that Jesus did not tell the other eleven disciples to pay. For a full discussion of the tax issue, see Endnote #4. Here is an axiom of law: you cannot be both a citizen and a resident of the same jurisdiction. A resident is citizen of one jurisdiction residing in another jurisdiction who has not yet obtained citizenship in the second jurisdiction, but his legal residency entitles him to some of the civil benefits, and consequently also the civil duties, of the new jurisdiction. Jesus and the disciples were aliens to Roman citizenship, so may have had to pay tribute to the Roman kaiser. If they "resided as subjects" (= residents) in

Who Is the Greatest?

Mt 18:1-5; Mk 9:33b-37; Lk 9:46-48

27 When he was in the house, Jesus asked the disciples, "What were you arguing about on the road?" But they kept quiet, because on the way to Capernaum they had argued over which of them would be the greatest.

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

29 At that time they asked him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

30 He took a little child and had him stand among them. And he said, "I tell you the truth: Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. For he who is least among you all— he is the greatest." Then he took the child in his arms, and 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

Mk 9:38-41; Lk 9:49,50

31 John spoke up. "Master, we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not following along with us."

32 "Do not stop him," Jesus said. "No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us. Anyone who gives you a cup of water because you are of Messiah, I tell you the truth: he will certainly not lose his reward."

More About Little Ones

Mt 18:6-10,12-14; Mk 9:42-50

33 He continued, "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the depths of the sea with a large millstone hung around his neck.

34 "Woe to the world because of things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to that person through whom they come! If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and go into Gehenna, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot 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 the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than to have two eyes and be thrown into Gehenna, where

" 'their worm does not die,
and the fire is not quenched.'¹³⁷

Everyone will be salted with fire.

35 "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.

36 "See that you do not look 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.

37 "What do you think? If a 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 finds it,

Roman territory, and used Roman coinage, but were not Roman Citizens, their status with respect to the Roman capita tax and customs duties therefore was that of resident alien. But the tax at issue in this passage was a Jewish temple tax. Jesus and the disciples were Sons or Citizens of the kingdom of God, so were not subject to the temple tax. Remember, the Levites did not pay the temple tax. All those who become Citizens of the kingdom of God have the same status in regard to the temple tax as the Levites had. "God has made us kings and priests, and we will reign on the earth." Rev. 5:10

¹³⁷ Isaiah 66:24

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 in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost."

Chapter 18

Samaritan Opposition

Lk 9:51-56

1 As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus set his face resolutely toward Jerusalem, and he sent messengers on ahead.

2 They went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him, but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for 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 went to another village.

The Cost of Following Jesus

Lk 9:57-62

3 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

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

5 He said to another man, "Follow me."

6 But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

7 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

8 Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family."

9 Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

Lk 10:1-24

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 about 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.

11 "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.

12 "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 kingdom of God is near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

13 "Woe to you, Korazin! 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 will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to the skies? No, you will go down to Hades.

14 "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

15 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

16 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions, and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

17 At that time Jesus, full of 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 children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

18 "All things have been 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."

19 Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell 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

Lk 10:25-37

20 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

21 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

22 He answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"¹³⁸; and, "Love your neighbor as yourself."¹³⁹

23 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

24 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

25 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, 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 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. The next day he took out two denarii 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.'

26 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

27 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

28 Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

The Lamp of the Body

Lk 11:33-36

29 "No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are open and generous, your whole body is full of light. But when they are suspicious and stingy, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. Therefore, 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."

¹³⁸ Deuteronomy 6:5

¹³⁹ Leviticus 19:18

Chapter 19

Six Woes

Lk 11:37-54

1 When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised.

2 Then the Lord said to him, "As it is now, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But give what is inside to the poor, then everything will be clean for you.

3 "Woe to you Pharisees, 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.

4 "Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.

5 "Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it."

6 One of the experts in the law answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you are insulting us also."

7 Jesus replied, "And you 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.

8 "Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them. So you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.' Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to 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.

9 "Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering."

10 When Jesus left there, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law became very hostile toward him. They tried to draw him out on a great number of subjects, waiting for an opportunity to trap him, to pounce on something he might say.

Warnings and Encouragements

Lk 12:1-12

11 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.¹⁴⁰ There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden

¹⁴⁰ The root meaning of *hypocrisy* is the art of acting. Hypocrisy in its various forms includes many kinds of deception and hiding, such as what the Pharisees and Herodians did in Diatessaron 26:1-6 when they acted like ordinary people in the crowd and as if they had a sincere question from their own lives about whether it was right for a Jew to pay taxes to Caesar. In reality, they were putting Jesus to a test in order to trap him. They were acting. God says, "You shall not put the Lord your God to a test." (Deuteronomy 6:16) We have no right to put our brother or sister to a test either. We will progress together only if we "speak the truth, in love." (Ephesians 4:15) Another form of hypocrisy is showing off. "Everything they do is done for men to see." (Matt. 23:5; Diatess. 26:19) An example of this is in Diatessaron 26:19 where Jesus denounces the Pharisees for making lengthy prayers, in order to impress people while at the same time cover up the fact of what cruel and merciless people they are, in foreclosing on poor widows' houses. Any kind of concealing or covering up is hypocrisy; and what is desired to be covered is often replaced by something else as a show. The antonym of hypocrisy is *congruity* of our inner reality and our outer showing. This is part of what Jesus intended when he said, "Unless you change and become like little children, you shall certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." Little children show exactly what they feel, say what they think, and have no pretensions. They are terribly unskilled at lying. By adulthood, hypocrisy is so widespread and accepted in our lives, that we are not even aware of how it has pervaded our ways. That is why it is like yeast. A little hypocrisy insidiously leads to more. Beware! Jesus denounced hypocrisy more than any other thing. He used the word hypocrisy or hypocrite 18 times in this

that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.

12 "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 Gehenna. 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 numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

13 "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.

14 "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."

The Parable of the Rich Fool

Lk 12:13-21

15 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

16 Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of covetousness; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

17 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

18 "Then he said, 'This is what 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 have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink, and be merry."'

19 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

20 "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

Do Not Worry

Lk 12:22-34

21 Then Jesus said to his 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 greater than food, and the body greater than clothes. Consider the 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 of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"

22 "Consider how the lilies 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 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 seek what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be included for you.

23 "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 your heart will be also.

Diatessaron. (It would be more if you counted them in the four gospels.) How shall hypocrites escape the sentence of Gehenna? Unless you change and become like little children, you shall never enter the kingdom of God. And let us be like Nathanael. Jesus said of Nathanael, "Here is a true Israelite—a person in whom there is nothing false." John 1:47; Diatess. 5:16

Watchfulness

Lk 12:35-48

24 "Be dressed and 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 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."

25 Peter asked, "Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?"

26 The Lord answered, "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 servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose the servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to beat the menservants and womenservants and to eat 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."

27 "That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But 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."

Not Peace But Division

Lk 12:49-53

28 "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather 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

Lk 12:54-59

29 He said to the crowd: "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 how to judge the meaning of the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it you don't know how to judge the meaning of this present time?"

30 And why don't you even 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 very last penny."

Repent or Perish

Lk 13:1-9

31 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the 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 that way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower of 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 perish."

32 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?'"

33 " 'Sir,' the man replied, 'put up with it 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.' "

A Crippled Woman Healed on the Sabbath

Lk 13:10-17

34 On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, 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.

35 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."

36 The Lord answered him, "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 not 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?"

37 When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, and the people cheered for all the glorious things he was doing.

Chapter 20

The Narrow Door

Lk 13:22-30

1 Then Jesus went through the cities and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

2 He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because I tell you, many will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.'"

3 "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'"

4 "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'"

5 "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'"

6 "There will be weeping there, and gnashing 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 and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

Jesus' Sorrow for Jerusalem

Lk 13:31-35

7 That same hour some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you."

8 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!"

9 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 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, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'¹⁴¹"

At the Home of Mary and Martha

Lk 10:38-42

10 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 named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was getting sidetracked 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."

11 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen the most beneficial part, and it will not be taken away from her."

The Unbelief of the Jews

Mt 19:1,2; Mk 10:1; Jn 10:22-42

12 Then came the Feast of Dedication¹⁴² at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews gathered around him saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

13 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, and you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

14 Once again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

15 "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, make yourself out to be God."

16 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'¹⁴³? If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came— and the scripture cannot be broken— then what about the 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 does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

17 Then Jesus went back to the territory of Judea on the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed and many people came to him. Large crowds followed him, and as was his custom, he healed them and taught them. They said, "Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man is true." And in that place many believed in Jesus.

¹⁴¹ Psalm 118:26

¹⁴² Hanukkah. During the Seleucid Dynasty, (That is, either the reign of one of the four generals of Alexander the Great, the one who came to rule Syria, or one of his descendants. He and his descendants are called the Seleucid kings.) one of the rulers, Antiochus Epiphanes, ransacked Jerusalem, and made observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, and possession of Hebrew scriptures capital offenses. He abolished Jewish worship, and pagan altars were erected in many cities of Judea. His edicts were enforced by the utmost cruelty, and the climax of his sacrilege was when in December of 167 B.C. a female pig was sacrificed on the great altar of burnt offering in the temple area. After Antiochus died, his successor made an agreement with Judas Maccabaeus that included the purification and proper use of the temple. The rededication of the temple took place in December, 164 B.C., exactly three years after it was defiled by the swine's flesh. A feast to celebrate this restoration was instituted, and was kept annually from then on. This was the Feast of Dedication, today called the festival of Hanukkah.

¹⁴³ Psalm 82:6

Jesus at a Pharisee's House

Lk 14:1-14

18 One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy.¹⁴⁴ 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.

19 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 could make no reply to this.

20 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."

21 Then Jesus said to his 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 blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The Parable of the Great Banquet

Lk 14:15-24

22 When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

23 Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

24 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.'

25 "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.'

26 "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

27 "The servant came back 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.'

28 " 'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.'

29 "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will taste of my banquet.'"

The Cost of Being a Disciple

Lk 14:25-35

30 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate¹⁴⁵ his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters— yes, and

¹⁴⁴ A condition often visually characterized by swollen arms and legs, resulting from the abnormal accumulation of serous fluid in the cellular tissue or in a body cavity. Serous fluid is the clear liquid which separates in the blood clotting process from the clot and the corpuscles.

¹⁴⁵ That is, hate them in comparison to Christ and his cause. The actions and value judgments that a disciple of Christ makes will often appear to a non-disciple to show hate for parents, wife, etc.

even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

31 "Suppose one of you 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 foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'

32 "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.

33 "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.

34 "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Chapter 21

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Lk 15:1-7

1 Now the revenue deputies 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."

2 Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a 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 when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and 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 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

Lk 15:8-10

3 "Or suppose a woman has ten drachmas¹⁴⁶ 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 drachma.' 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

Lk 15:11-32

4 Jesus continued: "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.

5 "Not long after that, the 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 everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the carob pods¹⁴⁷ that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him any.

¹⁴⁶ A *drachma* was worth about a day's wage.

¹⁴⁷ Greek, *keration*, meaning "little horn," so named because of the shape of the pods of the species *Ceratonia siliqua*, Arabic "kharrubah," meaning bean pod; aka. Cods of Syria, aka. St. John's Bread, alluding to an erroneous notion, based on folk etymological comparisons of the Greek for "husk" and "locust", that the locusts John the Baptizer lived on were rather carob pods; a leguminous tree having pods 9 inches long and 1 inch broad, once common in the forests of Galilee (Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Sinai & Palestine in connection with their history*, ii 146, **1858**), and considered a food grain of lower grade; definitely the pods that the Prodigal Son eyed longingly in the pig pens, Luke 15:16; cf. Lychophon, from 675 to 678, **III BC**. For

6 "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father.

7 "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

8 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

9 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

10 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

11 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But 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 celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

12 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate 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

Lk 16:1-18

13 Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'

14 "The manager said to himself, '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 what I'll do, so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'

15 "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

16 "'A hundred baths of olive oil,' he replied.

17 "The manager told him, 'Here, take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.'

18 "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?'

19 "'A hundred kors of wheat,' he replied.

20 "He told him, 'Here, take your bill and make it eighty.'

21 "The master commended the worldly manager because he had acted prudently. For the children of this age are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth¹⁴⁸ to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into lasting homes.

22 "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 entrust to you true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?"

further examples showing that "carob pod" was the meaning of the Greek word *keration*, see Aristotle, *Polybius*, 26, 1, 4, **II BC**; Dioscurides 1, 114, **I AD**; Aëtius, *Treatment of Diseases of the Eye*, 160, 3, **VI AD**; F. G. Kenyon & H. I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum I-V*, 131, 7, 1893-1917.

¹⁴⁸ Literally, *unrighteous Mammon*; also in verse 22

23 "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.¹⁴⁹"

24 The Pharisees, who were moneylovers, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, "You are ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly regarded among men is detestable to God.

25 "The Law and the Prophets 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. But it is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of the pen to drop out of the Law.

26 "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Lk 16:19-31

27 "A certain man was rich, and used to put on a purple robe and fine linen and live it up splendidly every day. But at his gate was laid a beggar, Lazarus by name, who was covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs would come and lick his sores.

28 "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades, he looked up, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in this fire.'

29 "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your share of good things, while Lazarus received his bad; now he is comforted here, and you are suffering. Besides all this, 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.'

30 "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

31 "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

32 " 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

33 "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

Chapter 22

The Death of Lazarus

Jn 11:1-16

1 Now a man named Lazarus¹⁵⁰ was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose 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 to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

2 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 through it." Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days.

3 Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

4 "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and you are going back there again?"

¹⁴⁹ Greek *Mammon*; See footnote on Diatessaron 10:3.

¹⁵⁰ This is not the same Lazarus as in the previous story about THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

5 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light."

6 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

7 His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he was talking about the resting kind of sleep.

8 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sakes I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

9 Then Thomas, called "the Twin," said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Jesus Comforts the Sisters

Jn 11:17-37

10 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was close to Jerusalem, about fifteen stadia¹⁵¹ away, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

11 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

12 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

13 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

14 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, even if he dies, shall live; and all who believe in me while still living shall never die. Do you believe this?"

15 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

16 And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had 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.

17 When Mary reached the 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."

18 When Jesus saw her weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

19 "Come and see, Lord," they replied.

20 Jesus wept.

21 Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him."

22 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

Jn 11:38-44

23 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said.

24 "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."

25 Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

¹⁵¹ Less than two miles; about three kilometers

26 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

27 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet restricted, for he had been wrapped up tightly in strips of linen, and his face bound up in a handkerchief.

28 Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

A Plot to Kill Jesus

Jn 11:45-54

29 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, put their faith in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.¹⁵²

30 "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place of worship and our nation."

31 Then one of them, named Kayafa, 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 die for the people than that the whole nation perish."

32 He did not say this from himself, 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 day on they plotted to take his life.

33 Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, and there he remained with his disciples.

A Brother Who Sins

Mt 18:15-20; Lk 17:1-4

34 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 little ones to sin. So guard yourselves.

35 "If your brother sins, go show him his fault and rebuke him, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother back. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'¹⁵³ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church;¹⁵⁴ and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a Gentile or a revenue deputy. But, 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.

36 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.

37 "I tell you again that if two of you on earth agree, on whatever they ask, it will happen for them¹⁵⁵ from my Father in heaven. For when two or three meet in my name, I am right there with them."

¹⁵² In Roman times the *Sanhedrin* was the highest indigenous governing body in Judea, composed of high priests, elders, and scholars (scribes), and meeting under the presidency of the ruling high priest. This body was the ultimate authority not only in religious matters, but in legal and governmental affairs as well, as long as it did not encroach on the authority of the Roman procurator. For example, the Roman procurator (Pontius Pilate in those days) had to confirm any death sentences passed by the council.

¹⁵³ Deuteronomy 19:15

¹⁵⁴ The meaning here being the church or congregation as the totality of Christians living in one place.

¹⁵⁵ Greek: *γενήσεται*. What will happen? The agreement or what they ask for? It looks like a conditional construction, i.e., *If you do this, then this will happen*. But there is the possibility, especially considering the context, that Jesus is saying that the *agreement* will happen because he is right there in the midst of them. And because when they agree, they have the mind of heaven, as said in the preceding verse. When two disciples agree, they agree with the help of the Father; thus what they agree

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

Mt 18:21-35

38 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times can it be that my brother sins against me and I have to forgive him? Just up to seven times?"

39 Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven."¹⁵⁶

40 "Therefore, the kingdom 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 talents¹⁵⁷ was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

41 "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt, and let him go.

42 "And when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii¹⁵⁸. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

43 "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

44 "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were absolutely outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

45 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers until he should pay back all he owed.

46 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Faith and Duty

Lk 17:5-10

47 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

48 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.

49 "Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant as soon as he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? Instead wouldn't he say, 'Fix something so I can eat, and when you have gotten yourself outfitted, wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? And does he thank the servant because he did what he was told? No. So you also, when you have done all the things you were commanded to do, should say, 'We are unremarkable servants. We have done what we were supposed to have done.' "

to is already the mind of heaven, and the agreement came about because of their unity with the near and present Christ and with each other. Christ and the Father and the disciples are one. See John chapter 17.

¹⁵⁶ cf. Genesis 4:24: "If Cain is *avenged* seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times." But Gentiles do not need to know this reference in order to understand that Matthew means to indicate a number that is large out of proportion. In a story taken from older accounts, Plutarch, Mor. 245d uses the number 7,777 for the same purpose (cf. Polyaeus 8, 33).

¹⁵⁷ That is, *several million dollars*.

¹⁵⁸ That is, *a few dollars*.

Chapter 23

Ten Healed of Leprosy

Lk 17:11-19; Jn 11:55-57

1 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.

2 Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. In the process he 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!"

3 When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

4 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.

5 Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give thanks 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

Lk 17:20-35,37

6 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, 'Look, here it is,' or 'Look, there it is,' for lo, the kingdom of God exists inside you."

7 Then he said to his disciples, "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, 'Look, there he is!' or 'He's over here!' Do not leave; do not follow them. For the Son of Man will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the entire sky, from one end to the other. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

8 "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

9 "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But on the day Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all.

10 "It will be just like that on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day no one 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! Whoever tries to preserve his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, on that night two men will be on one couch; one will be carried off and the other kind will be left. Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be carried off and the other kind will be left."

11 "Where to, Lord?" they asked.

12 He replied, "Where the body is, there also the eagles will be gathered."

The Parable of the Persistent Widow

Lk 18:1-8

13 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "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 repeatedly kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'"

14 "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'True, 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!' "

15 And the Lord said, "You have heard what an unjust kind of judge says. So God, will he not bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will HE keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see to it that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find on the earth any faith at all?"¹⁵⁹

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Lk 18:9-14

16 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a revenue deputy. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like all other men— robbers, evildoers, adulterers— or even like this revenue deputy. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

17 "But the revenue deputy stood at a distance. He would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

18 "I tell you that this man, rather than the former, went home justified by God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Jesus Tested on Divorce

Mt 19:3-12; Mk 10:2-12

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

20 "What did Moses command you?" he replied.

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

22 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'¹⁶⁰ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'¹⁶¹? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, man shall not separate."

23 "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man may give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?"

24 Jesus replied, "Moses, in view of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but it has not been this way from the beginning. As for me, I tell you that, if it is not on the basis of sexual immorality,¹⁶² anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery."

¹⁵⁹ "any at all" is from the Greek *ara*, (with circumflex), a particle not directly translatable, but which indicates anxiousness or impatience or displeasure.

¹⁶⁰ Genesis 1:27

¹⁶¹ Genesis 2:24

¹⁶² Greek, *porneia* This word was used for generally any sexual intercourse that is not between a married person and his or her spouse of the opposite sex. There was a different, more specific word for marital unfaithfulness in particular: *moicheia*, and Jesus did not use it here. We know by the disciples' reaction in verse 26 that Jesus was saying something more narrow and strict than what they had held before. Some say that perhaps Jesus was limiting divorce to that situation described in Deuteronomy 22:13-21, the situation Jesus' stepfather Joseph found himself in when he realized (or so it appeared to him) that Mary was not a virgin, but had "fornicated while still under her father's authority." Or, others suggest that Jesus didn't say this clause "if it is not on the basis of sexual unfaithfulness" at all. This exception phrase is not found in Mark and Luke, or any of Paul's rules for the church (cf 1 Cor. 7:10,11); but only in Matthew, the last of the three gospels written (I now quote Bruce Metzger) "thus representing Jesus as siding with the view of Shammai. The addition of this 'excepting clause,' as it is called, reflects an attempt in the early church [of which Matthew was a part] to adjust the high ideal of Jesus' interpretation of the indissolubility of marriage to suit the exigencies of those whose hearts, like men's hearts in the days of Moses, were still hard! Such an adjustment of Jesus' teaching fell within the power to *bind* and *loose* given to the apostles (of which Matthew was one)— that is, power to adapt laws and make exceptions (Matt. 16:19 and 18:18; Diatess. 14:45, 22:36) Two reasons, among others, why the Matthean form of Jesus' saying on divorce must be regarded as a modification of this teaching are: (1) If it is original, then the report without the excepting clause in Mark and Luke represents an advance made by the early church upon

25 When they were in the house again, the disciples questioned him about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against his wife. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

26 The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation of a man with a wife, it is not advisable to marry!"

27 Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept what you just said, but those to whom it has been given can. For there are some who are celibates; some were born so from the womb, some were made so by men, and some have made themselves celibates for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The person who is able to accept this should accept it."

The Little Children and Jesus

Mt 19:13-15; Mk 10:13-16; Lk 18:15-17

28 Then people were bringing babies and little children to Jesus to have him place his hands on them and pray for them. But when the disciples saw this, they rebuked those who brought them.

29 When Jesus realized this, he was indignant. He called the children to him and said to the disciples, "Let the little children come to me; do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven is made up of such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child can never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them.

The Rich Young Ruler

Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-31; Lk 18:18-30

30 As Jesus started on his way, a certain ruler ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what good thing must I do to obtain eternal life?"

31 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus replied. "No one is good— except God alone. And why do you ask me about what is good? You know the commandments. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

32 "Which ones?" the man inquired.

33 Jesus told him, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother,"¹⁶³ and "love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁶⁴

34 The young man declared, "Teacher, all these I have kept since I was a boy. What do I still lack?"

35 When he heard this, Jesus looked at him, loving him. "One thing you still lack," he said. "If you want to be perfect, go, sell everything you own and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come back, and follow me."

36 At this the young man's face fell, for he was a man of great wealth. He became very sad and walked away.

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

38 The disciples were greatly astonished at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! I tell you the truth, 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."

39 The disciples and those who heard this became even more astonished, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?"

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

the standards set by Jesus— and this is not likely to have happened; and (2) the excepting clause does not harmonize with the context in Matthew. If Jesus sided with the Shammmites, why should the disciples be amazed at the strictness of his teaching and exclaim, "If this is the situation...it is not advisable to marry" [Matt. 19:10 and above]? And in the context of Matt. 5:32 Jesus is replacing the standard recognized by the Jews of his day with the perfect standard of God [Matt. 5:17-48; Diatess. 9:10-20]; but if the exceptive clause is retained, his teaching is no higher than Shammai's." From *The New Testament, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, Abingdon Press, p. 163, footnote

¹⁶³ Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20

¹⁶⁴ Leviticus 19:18

41 Peter answered him, "We have left everything of our own to follow you. So what will we have?"

42 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And no one who has left houses or wives or brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers or children or fields for my sake and for the cause of the good news will fail to receive a hundred times as much now in this life (along with persecutions), and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first now will be last then, and many who are last now will be first then.

The Parable of the Workers In the Vineyard

Mt 20:1-16

43 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He contracted with them to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

44 "About the third hour¹⁶⁵ he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

45 "He went out again about noon and about the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

46 " 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

47 "He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

48 "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.'

49 "The workers who were hired at 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.'

50 "But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not damaging you. Didn't you contract with me to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. But 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 property? Or does my being generous arouse your stinginess?'

51 "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Chapter 24

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

Mt 20:17-19; Mk 10:32-34; Lk 18:31-34

1 They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way. The disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve disciples aside and told them what was going to happen to him. "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He 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 will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him, and crucify him. On the third day he will rise to life again."

¹⁶⁵ That is, about 9 a.m. Then again at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. The Jewish clock began at sunrise and sunset; thus the third hour was about 3 hours after sunrise, hence 9 a.m. The 11th hour was only one hour before dark.

A Mother's Request

Mt 20:20-28; Mk 10:35-45

2 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons James and John. Kneeling down, she said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

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

4 She replied, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom and glory."

5 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am about to drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

6 "We can," they answered.

7 Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from 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 by my Father."

8 When the other ten heard about this, they became indignant with the two brothers James and John. 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 the servant of all— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Two Blind Beggars Receive Their Sight

Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:35-43

9 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were approaching the city, two blind men were sitting by the roadside begging. The one called Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), when he heard the crowd passing by, asked what was happening. "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," they told him.

10 When the blind men heard this, they began to cry out, "Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

11 Those who led the way rebuked them and told them to be quiet; but they kept shouting all the louder: "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

12 Jesus stopped and said, "Call them over here."

13 So they called to the blind men, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling for you!" Throwing his cloak aside, Bartimaeus jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

14 When they had come near, Jesus asked them, "What do you want me to do for you?"

15 "Lord," they answered, "we want to see again."

16 Jesus was filled with tenderness toward them, and touched their eyes. "Receive your sight and go," he said to them. "Your faith has healed you." Immediately they received their sight and followed Jesus along the road, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Lk 19:1-10

17 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was chief revenue deputy and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

18 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because today I have to stay at your house." He came down at once and entertained him gladly.

19 Everyone who saw this began to mutter, "He has gone in to be the guest of a sinner."

20 But Zacchaeus stood up 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."

21 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

The Parable of the Ten Servants

Lk 19:11-27

22 While they were listening 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: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them each a mina.¹⁶⁶ 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I return.'

23 "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

24 He was made king, however, 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.

25 "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.'

26 " 'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

27 "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.'

28 "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.'

29 "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a handkerchief. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.'

30 "His master replied, 'I 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? Then why didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could collect it with interest?'

31 "Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.'

32 " 'Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!'

33 "He replied, '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 enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them— bring them here and kill them in front of me.' "

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9; Jn 12:1-11

34 Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom he had raised from the dead. So in that town a dinner was given in Jesus' honor, at the home of a man known as Simon the Leper. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

35 Then Mary came with a one litera¹⁶⁷ of very expensive perfumed ointment, pure oil of nardroot. She approached Jesus, and breaking the alabaster bottle, anointed his head and feet as he lay there at the table. Then she wiped his feet dry with her hair. And the whole house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

36 But one of his disciples objected, Judas of Kerioth, who was later to betray him. "Why this waste?" he asked. "This perfume could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." (He did not say this 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.) But some of those present became indignant and said to one another, "It should have been given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

37 Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Leave her alone. It was intended that she should save it for the day of my burial. Why are you bothering the woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For

¹⁶⁶ A *mina* was about three months' wages.

¹⁶⁷ A Roman pound (12 ounces), about a pint, or about half of a modern litre.

the poor you will always have with you,¹⁶⁸ and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. When this woman put the ointment on my body, she did it to anoint my body ahead of time for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever this good news is preached throughout the whole world, what she has done will also be told, as an honorable remembrance of her."

38 Meanwhile a large crowd of 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 chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

Chapter 25

The Triumphal Entry

Mt 21:1-11,17; Mk 11:1-11;
Lk 19:28-44; Jn 12:12-19

1 The next day Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage¹⁶⁹ on the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt beside her, which no one has ever ridden. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone asks you, 'What are you doing?' tell him 'The Lord needs them and will send them back here shortly.'"

2 Those disciples who were sent went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They found a donkey and her colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway, just as he had told them. As they were untying them, the owners were standing there and asked them, "What are you doing, untying those donkeys?"

3 They did as Jesus told them and answered, "The Lord needs them and will bring them back here shortly." The people let them go. They then brought the donkey and the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks on them, and sat him on them.

4 Now the huge crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They went out to meet him, and as he went along some were spreading their cloaks on the road. Others cut branches from the palm trees in the fields and spread them on the road.

5 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted:

"Hosanna!"¹⁷⁰

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord!"¹⁷¹

"Blessed is the coming kingdom
of our father David!"

"Peace in heaven and glory
in the highest!"

"Hosanna in the highest!"

6 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

¹⁶⁸ Deuteronomy 15:11

¹⁶⁹ The town of *Bethphage* was about half way from Bethany to Jerusalem, less than a mile from Jerusalem, right where the road began to descend the hill into the valley. Here was an excellent view of the city. Since Bethany was a legal Sabbath day's walk (Acts 1:12) from *Bethphage*, the Triumphal Entry could have taken place on the Sabbath. For the same reason, his walk from Jericho to Bethany could not have taken place on the Sabbath.

¹⁷⁰ A Hebrew expression meaning *Save!* which became an exclamation of praise.

¹⁷¹ Psalm 118:26

7 "I tell you," he replied, "if they stop shouting, the stones will shout."

8 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, yes you,¹⁷² 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 upon another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

9 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

10 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

11 Now the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead was still spreading the word. As a result, many more people, because they heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that we are not accomplishing anything. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

12 Jesus went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

13 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

"Do not be afraid, O Daughter
of Zion;
See, your king comes to you,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey."¹⁷³

14 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they themselves had done them to him.

Jesus Clears the Temple

Mt 21:12-16,18,19a; Mk 11:12-19; Lk 19:45-48

15 Early the next day, as they were on their way from Bethany back to the city, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance by the road a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. But when he reached it he found nothing on it but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

16 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began to drive out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And he taught them and said, "Is it not written:

" 'My house will be called
a house of prayer for all nations'?¹⁷⁴

But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'¹⁷⁵

17 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

18 "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him.

19 "Yes," replied Jesus. "Have you never read,

" 'Out of the mouths of children and nursing babes

¹⁷² Jesus is pointing out an irony here: You, yes you Jerusalem (which means City of Peace) don't recognize the Prince of Peace.

¹⁷³ Zechariah 9:9

¹⁷⁴ Isaiah 56:7

¹⁷⁵ Jeremiah 7:11

you have arranged for yourself praise¹⁷⁶?"

20 After they heard this, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders among the people began to look for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was being held in awe by his teaching.

21 When it got late, Jesus would go out of the city, and every day he would teach at the temple, yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

The Withered Fig Tree

Mt 21:19b-22; Mk 11:20-25

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

23 The disciples were amazed. "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" they asked.

24 "If you have faith in God," Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will happen, it will be done for you.

25 "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, if you believe that you have received it, it will be yours. But when you stand praying, forgive, if you are holding anything against anyone, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

Mt 21:23-27; Mk 11:27-33; Lk 20:1-8

26 They arrived again in Jerusalem, and Jesus entered the temple courts. While he was walking and teaching the people and preaching the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders of the people, came up to him. "Tell us," they said, "By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?"

27 Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. Answer me, then 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?"

28 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,' all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John really was a prophet."

29 So they answered Jesus, "We don't know where it was from."

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

The Parable of the Two Sons

Mt 21:28-32; Mk 12:1a

31 He then began to speak to them in parables: "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

32 " 'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

33 "Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but did not go.

34 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

35 "The first," they answered.

36 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the revenue deputies and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the revenue deputies and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you still did not change your mind and believe him.

¹⁷⁶ Psalm 8:2

The Parable of the Tenants

Mt 21:33-46; Mk 12:1b-12; Lk 20:9-19

37 "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them, but that one they stoned and treated shamefully, and threw out empty-handed. He sent still a third, and that one they killed. Again he sent many others, more than before; some they beat, others they killed.

38 "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do?' He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

39 "But when the tenants saw the son, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they took him and killed him, and threw him outside the vineyard.

40 "What then will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants?"

41 "He will come and 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."

42 "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."

43 When the people heard this, they said, "May this never be!"

44 Jesus looked directly at them and said, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written, or have you never read this scripture:

"The stone the builders rejected
has become the capstone;
the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous
in our eyes"¹⁷⁷?

"Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed to powder."

45 Then the teachers of the law, the chief priests and the Pharisees looked for a way to immediately arrest him, because they knew that it was they he had spoken these parables against. But they were afraid of the crowd, because the people held that he was a prophet. So they left him and went away.

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Mt 22:1-14

46 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

47 "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.'

48 "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.

49 "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

¹⁷⁷ Psalm 118:22,23

went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

50 "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.

51 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

52 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

Chapter 26

Yielding Tribute to Caesar

Mt 22:15-22; Mk 12:13-17; Lk 20:20-26

1 The chief priests, teachers of the law and the elders, keeping a close watch on him, laid plans to catch Jesus in something he might say so they could hand him over to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. They sent some of the Pharisees to him as spies, along with the Herodians, hoping to trap him in his words.

2 So the spies came to Jesus and, pretending to be sincere, they said to him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, out of your integrity: in your teaching, you are not swayed by men or defer any more to some than to others because of who they are, but you teach the way of God according to truth. Tell us, then, what is your opinion: Is it right for us to yield tribute¹⁷⁸ to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?"

3 But Jesus recognized their hypocrisy and cunning and knew their evil intent. "You hypocrites," he said to them, "why are you putting me to a test? Show me the coin used for paying the tribute, and let me look at it." They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this on it, and whose inscription?"

4 "Caesar's," they replied.

5 Then he said to them, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

6 When the spies heard this, they were amazed at him and got quiet. They were not able to trap him in what he said there in public, so they left him and went away.

Marriage at the Resurrection

Mt 22:23-33; Mk 12:18-27; Lk 20:27-40

7 That same day some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question. "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote telling us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and produce descendants for his brother. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married a woman and died childless, leaving his wife to his brother. The second one married the widow, but he also died childless. It was the same with the third. In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. Now then, at the

¹⁷⁸ The Greek word for tribute used in Matthew and Mark is *kensos*, and in Luke it is *phoros*. The Greek word *kensos* was a loan word from the Latin word *census*, which means just what you would think it means— a head tax (capita tax) based on a census. (Remember, a census was forbidden by God, and King David incurred God's wrath when he numbered the people.) The Greek word *phoros* means the tribute that a conquered or enslaved people must cough up to its conqueror whenever the whim of the conqueror so dictated. The giving of the tribute had nothing to do with percentages, or ability to pay, since by law of war, every single item in the possession of the subjugated people was spoil of war and therefore already owned by the conqueror. The conqueror could demand everything they had at any time. Now as for coinage, Jesus obviously knew some principles of law. When he said in verse 5, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's," he recognized that every single coin circulated that bore Caesar's portrait and inscription, already belonged to Caesar. The people of Palestine were given a mere privilege to use Caesar's coins, solely for the purpose of moving Caesar's goods around from one serf to another. Serfs have no right of property ownership. They cannot even own coins. For a full discussion of the relevance of this passage to America, see Endnote # 4.

resurrection, when men rise from the dead, whose wife shall she be, since all seven were married to her?"

8 Jesus replied, "You are in error, and it is because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God. The children of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they are like the angels, for they can no longer die. And being children of the resurrection, they are children of God. Now about the dead rising— have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how even Moses showed that the dead rise? For God said to him and to you, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'¹⁷⁹ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living— for to him all are alive. You are badly mistaken!"

9 When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching. Some of the teachers of the law responded, "Well said, teacher!"

The Greatest Commandment

Mt 22:34-40; Mk 12:28-34

10 Having heard them debating and seeing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees with his answer, the Pharisees got together. One of them, who was an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, of all the commandments in the law, which is the most important?"

11 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one'¹⁸⁰ Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'¹⁸¹ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'¹⁸² There is no commandment greater than these. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

12 "Well said, teacher," the man 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 more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

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

Whose Son is the Messiah?

Mt 22:41-46; Mk 12:35-37; Lk 20:41-44

14 While the Pharisees were still gathered in the temple courts, Jesus asked them, "What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?"

15 "The son of David," they replied.

16 He said to them, "How is it then that David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Psalms, calls him 'Lord'? For he says,

" The Lord said to my Lord:
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet." ¹⁸³

Since David himself calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"

17 The large crowd listened to him with delight. No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Exodus 3:6

¹⁸⁰ That is, he is *exclusively* Lord. The expert in the law understood it correctly when he said in verse 12 that "there is no other but him." "The Lord our God is alone Lord."

¹⁸¹ Deuteronomy 6:5

¹⁸² Leviticus 19:18

¹⁸³ Psalm 110:1

Jesus Denounces the Rabbis

Mt 23; Mk 12:38-40; Lk 20:45-47

18 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 watch out. 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.

19 "Everything they do is done for men to see. They make their phylacteries¹⁸⁵ wide and the tassels of their prayer shawls long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.' Such men devour the houses of widows, and then to look good, make lengthy prayers. They will be punished all the more severely.

20 "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'Father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'Teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

21 But woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

22 "Woe to you, teachers of 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 Gehenna as you are.

23 "Woe to you, blind 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! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? You also say, '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 greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven swears by God's throne and by the one who sits on it.

24 "Woe to you, teachers of 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 should have practiced the latter without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

25 "Woe to you, teachers of 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 the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

26 "Woe to you, teachers of 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 way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

27 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, 'If we 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 against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers!

28 "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape the sentence of Gehenna? Therefore I am sending 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 upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the

¹⁸⁴ This might seem redundant after verse 13, but I left them both in, to show that Mark considered the answer about the Greatest Commandment remarkable enough to silence all while Matthew considered the discourse of "Whose son is the Christ" remarkable enough to silence all. In any case, both statements are true, for in fact no one did dare test him with a question after the earliest of the two statements, the one in verse 13.

¹⁸⁵ That is, boxes containing scripture verses, worn on forehead and arm. They contained four specific passages of scripture. Those passages were: Ex. 13:1-10; 13:11-16; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21.

blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation.

29 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 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, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'¹⁸⁶"

The Widow's Offering

Mk 12:41-44; Lk 21:1-4

30 Jesus sat down opposite 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 widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.

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

Chapter 27

Signs of the Times

Mt 24:1-35; Mk 13:1-31; Lk 21:5-36

1 As he was leaving the temple, some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. One of them came up to him and said, "Look, teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!"

2 But Jesus said, "Do you see all these things? I tell you the truth, a time will come when not one stone here will be left upon another; every one of them will be thrown down."

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

4 In answer Jesus said to them, "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and, 'The time is near,' and will deceive many. Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and revolutions and rumors of wars, see to it that you are not alarmed. For such things must happen first, but the end does not come soon after them. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and there will be fearful events and great signs from heaven. All these are but the beginning of birth pains.

5 "But before all these things, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. You must be on your guard. They will deliver you over to the local councils to be flogged in the synagogues and put to death in prisons. On account of my name you will be brought to stand before kings and governors, and this will result in your being witnesses to them. The gospel must first be preached to all nations.

6 "But whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, make up 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. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. You will be betrayed by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me. Yet not a hair of your head will perish; by enduring you will gain deliverance of your lives.

7 "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who 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. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will

¹⁸⁶ Psalm 118:26

be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They 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."

8 Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of birth pains.

9 "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 each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 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. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be rescued. And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

10 "So when you see standing in the holy place where it¹⁸⁷ does not belong, the 'abomination that causes desolation' spoken of through the prophet Daniel¹⁸⁸— let the reader understand— then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For those will be days of great distress, unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now, and never to be equaled again. If the Lord had not 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 says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect— if that were possible. But be watchful; see, I have told you everything ahead of time.

11 "So if anyone tells you, '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 that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather. There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars in those days immediately following that distress. On earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for

" 'the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give
its light;
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies
will be shaken.'¹⁸⁹

When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

12 "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with great power and great glory. He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and from one end of the heavens to the other they will gather his elect out of the four winds, from the ends of the earth.

13 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will by no means pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

14 "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all

¹⁸⁷ Or *he*

¹⁸⁸ Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11

¹⁸⁹ Isaiah 13:10; 34:4; Joel 2:31

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 the things about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.

The Day and Hour Unknown

Mt 24:36-51; Mk 13:32-37

15 "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 also how the coming of the Son of Man will be. At that time two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other kind will be left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other kind will be left.

16 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had 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. Be on guard! Be alert!

17 "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!'

18 "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,' and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. 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 hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

Mt 25:1-13

19 "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 and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

20 "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

21 "Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

22 " 'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

23 "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

24 "Later the others also came. 'Lord! Lord!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'

25 "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'

26 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

The Parable of the Talants

Mt 25:14-30

27 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talants,¹⁹⁰ to another two talants, and to another one talant, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talants went at once and worked with them, and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talants gained two more. But the man who received the one talant went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's silver.

28 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who received the five talants brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talants. See, I have gained five more.'

29 "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 celebration!'

30 "The man who received the two talants also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talants; see, I have gained two more.'

31 "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 in your master's celebration!'

32 "Then the man who had received the one talant 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 talant in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

33 "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.'

34 "Take the talant from him and give it to the one who has the ten talants. 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. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The Sheep and the Goats

Mt 25:31- 26:2; Lk 21:37,38

35 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered 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 on his right and the goats on his left.

36 "Then the King will say to those 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 hungry 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 clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

37 "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?'

38 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

39 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you 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.'

40 "They also will answer, '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?'

¹⁹⁰ A *talant* was a measurement of weight for gold, silver, or copper. There came to be a coin called a *talant*, whose worth varied depending on the metal, time, and place used. The silver coin here was probably worth almost two thousand dollars.

41 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

42 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

Chapter 28

Jesus Ponders Crucifixion

Jn 12:20-36

1 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."

2 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.

3 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

4 Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground 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.

5 "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!"

6 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.

7 Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was going to die.

8 The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain for ever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

9 Then Jesus told them, "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. Believe in the light while you have the light, 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

Jn 12:37-50

10 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him, so that the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled:

"Lord, who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord
been revealed?"¹⁹¹

11 For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah said elsewhere:

"He has blinded their eyes
and deadened their hearts,
so they can neither see with their eyes,

¹⁹¹ Isaiah 53:1

nor understand with their hearts,
nor turn— and I would
heal them."¹⁹²

Isaiah said these things because he saw [Jesus'] glory and spoke about him.

12 Yet at the same time many even from the leaders believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not admit it, for fear they would be put out of the synagogue. For they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

13 Then Jesus cried out, "He who believes in me, does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me. And he who looks at me sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that everyone who believes in me may not abide in darkness.

14 "As for someone who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I came, not to judge the world, but to save the world. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will judge him at the last day. For I have not spoken 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 is eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

The Plot Against Jesus

Mt 26:3-5,14-16; Mk 14:1,2,10,11; Lk 22:1-6

15 Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was only two days away and the chief priests and the teachers of the law and the elders of the people were still looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. Then they assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Kayafa, and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. "But not during the Feast," they said, "or the people may riot."

16 Then Satan entered Judas, one of the Twelve, the one from Kerioth. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" They were delighted, and counted out for him thirty silver coins. He consented, and from then on he watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

The Passover Supper

Mt 26:17-29; Mk 14:12-25; Lk 22:7-30; Jn 13:1-30

17 Then came the first 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."

18 "Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked.

19 He replied, "Go into the city, and as you enter, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house that he enters, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover at your house. Where is my guestroom, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room all furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."

20 They left and went into the city, and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

21 When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. 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.

22 When the hour came, Jesus and his twelve apostles reclined at the table. The supper was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas of Kerioth, Son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and

¹⁹² Isaiah 6:10

was returning to God; and he said to them, "I have eagerly desired¹⁹³ to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

23 Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. 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, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? Yet I am among you as one who serves."

24 Then he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

25 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

26 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

27 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

28 Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no place with me."

29 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

30 Jesus answered, "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 knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

31 When he had finished 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 call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. And now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I set you an example so that you also would do what I did for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

32 "You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on 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."

33 After taking the cup, Jesus 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 that day when I drink it anew in my Father's kingdom."

34 While they were reclining¹⁹⁴ at the table eating, Jesus took some bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it and eat. This is my body, which is being given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

35 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." And they all drank from it.

36 "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is being poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. I am not referring to all 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.'¹⁹⁵

37 "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I AM. I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

38 After saying these things Jesus was deeply disturbed, and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me. One who is eating with me."

39 His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. They became very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?" Then they began to discuss among themselves which of them it might be who would do this. One of them, the disciple whom

¹⁹³ Literally, "*With lust I have lusted to eat this Passover with you...*" We are to get the meaning that Jesus had been wanting extremely much to do this. (The Greek word for lust, *epithumia*, was used for the strong desire for many kinds of things, not only sexual.)

¹⁹⁴ In that time and culture, those eating a meal lay on a futon of sorts, on their sides and resting on an elbow, with their feet also up on the futon.

¹⁹⁵ Psalm 41:9

Jesus loved,¹⁹⁶ was reclining close beside Jesus. Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him which one he means."

40 So he, leaning back on Jesus' breast, said to him, "Lord, who is it?"

41 "It is one of the Twelve," Jesus replied, "the one dipping his hand into the bowl with me. The Son of Man is going just as it has been written about him in the scriptures. Even so, woe to that man through whom he is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born! He is the 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 of Kerioth, son of Simon.

42 Judas said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?"

43 "Yes, it is you," Jesus answered.

44 When Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. "What you are about to do, do quickly," Jesus told him, but no one at the table understood why he 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 soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

Where Is Jesus Going?

Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31;

Lk 22:31-38; Jn 13:31- 14:4

45 When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and in him God is glorified; God will also glorify the Son in himself, and he will do so at once.

46 "My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. You will look for me, and just as I told¹⁹⁷ the Jews, I now tell you also: Where I am going, you cannot come.

47 "A new commandment I give to you: love one another; so that in the way I have loved you, you also will love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples— when you have love for one another."

48 Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?"

49 Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

50 "Why can't I follow you now?" Peter asked.

51 Then Jesus told them, "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."¹⁹⁸

But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

52 Peter declared, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I will never fall away."

53 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to have you all [and has received permission to test you all]. But I have prayed for you Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brothers."

54 But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison or to death. I will lay down my life for you."

55 Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, Peter: this very night, before the rooster crows today, you yourself will deny three times that you know me!"

56 But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

57 Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"

¹⁹⁶ John the son of Zebedee, the author of the fourth gospel is speaking anonymously about himself. This was not out of egotism, but rather he referred to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" in order to remind his readers that he was very close to Jesus, and that because of this, he knows what he is talking about when it he talks about Jesus, and his testimony is reliable. For other instances of John emphasizing the reliability of his own testimony, see Diatess. 31:23 and 32:60.

¹⁹⁷ Diatessaron 15:12,28 or John 7:34, 8:21

¹⁹⁸ Zechariah 13:7

58 "Nothing," they answered.

59 He said to them, "But 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. It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'¹⁹⁹; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."

60 The disciples said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords."

61 "That is enough," he replied.

62 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Keep trusting in God. Trust also in me. In my Father's house there are plenty of abodes. If this were not the case, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?²⁰⁰ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you in with myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. Besides, where I am going, you know the way."

Jesus the Way to the Father

Jn 14:5-14

63 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going— how could we know the way?"

64 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you have come to know me, you will know my Father as well; and from now on you know him and have seen him."

65 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and that will satisfy us."

66 Jesus answered, "Don't you know me yet, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father; how is it you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The statements I make to you I do not make on my own, but the Father who is living in me is doing his works. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. But if you don't believe me, believe the evidence of the works themselves. As for the person who believes in me, I tell you the truth: the works that I do that person also shall do, and even greater things, because I am going to the Father. Indeed, whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Chapter 29

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26; Lk 22:39; Jn 14:15-31

1 "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and will show myself to him."

2 Then Judas (not the Keriothite) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

3 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

¹⁹⁹ Isaiah 53:12

²⁰⁰ See verse 49 of this chapter.

4 "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the 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 you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

5 "You heard me say, 'I am 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 it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now, let us leave."

6 When they had sung the hymn, Jesus headed out as usual toward the Mount of Olives, and his disciples accompanied him.

The Vine and the Branches

Jn 15:1-17

7 "I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch 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 clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must abide in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

8 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man abides in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide 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 abide in me and my words abide 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.

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now abide in my love. If you obey my commands, you will abide in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and abide in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay 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. You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit— fruit that will abide. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other.

The World Hates the Disciples

Jn 15:18- 16:4

10 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to 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 the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me. If I had not come 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 my Father as well. If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'²⁰¹

11 "When the Counselor 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 also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

²⁰¹ Psalm 35:19; 69:4

12 "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of 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 because they have not known the Father or me. I have told 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

Jn 16:5-16

13 "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. For unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

14 "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.

15 "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

Jn 16:17-33

16 Some of his disciples said 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 asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

17 Jesus saw that they 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 truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A 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 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 day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

18 "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."

19 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."

20 "Now you believe,"²⁰² 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.

21 "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."

²⁰² Or *Do you now believe? Or You believe at last!*

Jesus Prays for Himself

Jn 17:1-5

22 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

23 "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Messiah, 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

Jn 17:6-19

24 "I have revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know 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 sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have 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 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— those you have given to me— so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe, those you gave to me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

25 "I am coming to you now, 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 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 is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify²⁰³ them by the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Jesus Prays for All Believers

Jn 17:20-26

26 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word, that 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 them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be made completely as one, so that the world may know that you sent me and have loved them even as you loved me.

27 "Father, I want those whom you 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 foundation of the world.

28 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them, and will continue to make it known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

Gethsemane

Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:40-46; Jn 18:1,2

29 When he had finished praying, Jesus proceeded with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to the other side, to a certain olive grove called Gethsemane. (Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the

²⁰³ Greek, *hagiazō*, which means to *set apart for sacred use; make holy*.

place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.) On reaching the place, they went into the olive grove, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

30 He took Peter, and James and John, the sons of Zebedee with him, and then he began to be sorrowful. For he was deeply distressed and troubled. He told them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me. And pray that you will not fall into temptation."

31 Withdrawing about a stone's throw beyond them, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "Abba,²⁰⁴ my Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. If you are willing, take this cup from me. Yet not my will, but yours be done."

32 Then he rose from prayer and returned to the disciples. He found them sleeping, exhausted from sorrow. "Simon," he said to Peter, "why are you sleeping? Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour? Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing but the body is weak."

33 He went away a second 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."

34 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They didn't know what to say to him. So he went away from them once more and prayed a third time, saying the same thing.

35 Returning to the disciples the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! See, here comes my betrayer!"

Jesus Arrested

Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Lk 22:47-53; Jn 18:3-11

36 Just then, while he was still speaking, a large crowd came up to the grove, carrying torches and lanterns, and armed with swords and clubs. They were sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders of the people, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was guiding them. With him were a detachment of armed soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. The betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." So going at once to Jesus to kiss him, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!"

37 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come? Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss? Do what you came for." Jesus therefore, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

38 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied.

39 Jesus said to them, "I Am." Now Judas the traitor was also standing there with them. When Jesus said, "I Am," they recoiled and fell on the ground.

40 Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?"

41 And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

42 "I told you, I Am," Jesus answered. "If it is me you are looking for, let these go their way." This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

43 When Jesus' companions saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

44 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword back in its sheath, 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 the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way? Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

45 In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and

²⁰⁴ Aramaic for *Father*.

clubs to capture me? Every day I was with you sitting in the temple courts teaching, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—and the hour of the jurisdiction of the darkness. This has all happened that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

46 There was also a certain young man who had followed Jesus,²⁰⁵ wearing nothing but a linen evening wrap. They seized him, and he fled naked, leaving the garment behind.

Chapter 30

Jesus Taken to Hananiah

Mt 26:57; Mk 14:53; Lk 22:54a; Jn 18:12-14,24

1 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials seized Jesus and bound him. They brought him first to Hananiah, who was the father-in-law of Kayafa, the high priest that year. (Kayafa was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be better if one man died for the people.)²⁰⁶ Then Hananiah sent him, still bound, to Kayafa. Those who had arrested Jesus led him away and took him into the house of the high priest, and there all the chief priests, elders and teachers of the law assembled.

Peter's First Denial

Mt 26:58,69-71a; Mk 14:54,66-68; Lk 22:54b,56,57; Jn 18:15-18

2 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, to see the outcome. Because this other disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus right into the courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside the door. Then the other disciple who was known to the high priest came back, spoke to the high priest's servant girl who was on duty there, and brought Peter in.

3 "Surely you are not another of that Nazarene's disciples?" the girl at the door asked Peter.

4 But he denied it. "I don't know or understand what you are talking about," he said, and went on into the middle of the courtyard. There he joined the officials, guards and servants who were sitting around a fire they had made to keep warm, for it was cold.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

Jn 18:19-23

5 Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples, and about his teaching.

6 Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, in places where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. Why question me? Question those who heard me as to what I said to them. Think about it, they know what I said."

7 When Jesus said this, one of the officials standing by struck him in the face. "Is that the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

8 Jesus answered him, "If I spoke wrongly, speak up about what was wrong. But if I spoke rightly, why do you beat me?"

²⁰⁵ For this young man to have followed Jesus to the garden, he must have been with Jesus and the Twelve in the upper room for the Passover. He must have been at least in the house. Because of this it is reasonable to conclude that the young man lived in the house in which Jesus and the disciples held their Passover. And because the gospel of Mark is the only account to record this incident of the anonymous young man, it is reasonable that that young man was John Mark, and that the house the Passover was held in belonged to John Mark's mother, Mary, a resident of Jerusalem and sister of Barnabas, (Acts 12:12; Col. 4:10).

²⁰⁶ Diatess. 22:31

Peter's Second and Third Denials

Mt 26:71b-75; Mk 14:69-72; Lk 22:55,58-62; Jn 18:25-27

9 As Simon Peter sat warming himself, the servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight, came up to him, and studied him closely. She said to the other people around him, "This fellow is one of those who were with Jesus of Galilee."

10 But he denied it again before them all, with an oath. "Woman, I am not! I don't know this man you are talking about." Then he went out into the entryway at the gate.

11 About an hour later one of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, went up to him and challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" And he asserted to the others standing around: "This fellow definitely was one of them; his Galilean accent gives him away."

12 Again Peter denied it, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Then he began to call down curses on himself and swore to them, "I tell you, I don't know the man!" At that moment a rooster began to crow. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." He went outside and threw himself down, weeping bitterly.

Before the Sanhedrin

Mt 26:59-68; Mk 14:55-65; Lk 22:63-71

13 Then Jesus was led before the council of the elders of the people. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many false witnesses came forward and testified against him, but their statements did not agree.

14 Finally, two came forward and gave this false testimony against him: "We heard this fellow say, 'I will destroy this temple of God made with hands and in three days I will build another one without hands.'" And even then their statements were not identical.

15 Then the high priest stood up before them and questioned Jesus, saying, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

16 Again the high priest questioned him, and said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One."

17 Jesus answered, "If I told you, you would certainly not believe, and if I asked questions, you would certainly not answer. Nevertheless, this I say to you all: I am, and from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the Mighty One. In the future you shall see him sitting at the right hand of the Power, coming on the clouds of heaven."

18 They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?"

19 He replied, "I am as you say."

20 Then the high priest tore his clothes. "He has spoken blasphemy! What more need do we have for witnesses?" he asked. "See, now you have heard the blasphemy from his own lips. What do you think?"

21 In answer they all condemned him and said, "He is guilty enough for the death penalty."

22 Then some of them began to spit in his face and slap him. Others blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy to us, Anointed One! Who hit you?" Then the officers who had custody of him took him and slapped him in the face, and beat him. They too mocked him and said many other insulting things to him.

Judas Hangs Himself

Mt 27:1-10; Mk 15:1; Lk 23:1; Jn 18:28a; Acts 1:18,19

23 Very early in the morning, all the chief priests, along with the elders of the people, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached the decision to put Jesus to death. They bound him, and the whole assembly rose and led him away from Kayafa to hand him over to Pilate, the Roman governor.

24 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."

25 "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility."

26 So Judas threw the money into the temple, and then he went out to the potter's field and hanged himself. There he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out.

27 The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money." So they decided to use the money on Judas' behalf to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. This became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so they called that field in their language Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood, as it is called to this day. Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price at which the sons of Israel valued him, and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."²⁰⁷

Jesus Before Pilate and Herod

Mt 27:11-31a; Mk 15:2-20a; Lk 23:2-25; Jn 18:28b- 19:16a

28 Meanwhile the Jews had led Jesus to the palace of the Roman governor. It was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.²⁰⁸ So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What do you accuse this man of?"

29 "If this man were not committing crimes," they replied, "we would not hand him over to you."

30 Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

31 "But for us it is not lawful 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. Then they began to accuse him of many things: "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes yielding of tribute to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king."

32 While he was being accused by the chief priests and elders, Jesus made no response. Pilate was saying to him, "Aren't you going to answer? Look how many things they are accusing you of!"

33 But Jesus still gave him no answer, not to even a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

34 Pilate then went back inside the palace. He summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

35 "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

36 "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

37 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would have fought to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But at the present time my kingship is not from this place."

38 Pilate said to him, "You *are* a king, then."

39 Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. But the reason I was born, and the reason I came into the world is this: to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

40 Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" and with that he went out again to the Jews. He announced to the chief priests and to the crowds, "I find no basis for a charge against this man."

41 But they insisted all the more, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching all over the land of the Jews. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here."

²⁰⁷ Zechariah 11:12,13; Jeremiah 32:6-9

²⁰⁸ Note that Jesus and his disciples had already eaten the Passover the previous day. This is because there existed at that time two different systems of timing the Passover. The Galileans and Pharisees followed one schedule, and the Judeans and Sadducees followed another. The Sadducees held the High Priesthood, and thus the presidency of the Sanhedrin, that year, so that is why the Sanhedrin was following the Judean and Sadducean method. But they did not force the Pharisees and others to celebrate the same time as they, probably because they knew that the Pharisees were more popular with the ordinary majority of the people. Thus Jesus both ate the Passover one day according to the Galilean schedule, and the next day he, the Passover lamb, was killed at the same time that all the Passover lambs of the land were being officially killed. (For a full discussion of this, see *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* by Harold W. Hoehner, pp. 76-90.)

42 On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. When he learned that Jesus was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who also was in Jerusalem during those days.

43 When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because he had been wanting to see him for a long time. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle. He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. Then Herod and his soldiers, after treating him with contempt and mocking him, dressed him in sumptuous clothes and sent him back to Pilate. That day Herod and Pilate became friends— before this they had been enemies.

44 Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast to release a prisoner of the people's choice. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did. Pilate came out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as The Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha), and he called the chief priests, the rulers, and the people to come together.

45 While he was sitting there on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Have nothing to do with that righteous man; I have suffered a great deal today because of a dream about him."

46 When the chief priests, the rulers and the crowd had gathered, Pilate said to them, "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. And neither has Herod, for he has sent him back to us. See, he has done nothing to deserve death. Therefore I will scourge him and release him, for you have a custom that I should release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover." For he knew it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed him over to him.

47 Then Pilate led Jesus away into the courtyard, that is, of the Praetorium, and had him flogged. The governor's soldiers called together the whole cohort²⁰⁹ and they gathered around him and stripped him. They threw a purple cloak around him, and twisted some thorns into a crown and set it on his head. Then, after putting a staff in his right hand, they went up to him again and again, falling on their knees before him worshipping him, and saying, "Hail, O king of the Jews!" They spit on him, and they took the staff and beat him on the head with it again and again.

48 Meanwhile the chief priests and the elders stirred up the crowd and persuaded them to ask Pilate to have a notorious prisoner named Barabbas released instead, and to have Jesus executed. (Barabbas had been thrown into prison with the other insurrectionists for the uprising in the city, in which they had committed murder.)

49 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. Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?"

50 As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" And they and the whole crowd shouted out with one voice, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!"

51 "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Messiah, the king of the Jews?"

52 They all shouted, "Let him be crucified!"

53 Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting all the louder: "Crucify! Crucify!"

54 "Why? What crime has he committed?" Pilate asked. "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

55 The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he made himself out to be the Son of God."

56 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 even to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have the authority to release you or to crucify you?"

57 Jesus responded, "You would have no authority over me if it had not been given to you from above. Therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

58 As a result of this, Pilate tried the more to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

²⁰⁹ A *cohort*, if a complete one, was a thousand soldiers, commanded by ten centurions, who commanded a hundred men each. The number here would have been from 600 to 1,000 soldiers.

59 Pilate said to them a third time: "Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore, having scourged him, I will release him."

60 But the Jews cried out, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar! Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar!"

61 When Pilate heard those words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at the Pavement. It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about 6:00 in the morning.[#] He said to the Jews, "Look, your king."

62 But they shouted, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!"

63 "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

64 "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. And the whole multitude kept shouting all the louder and insistently demanding that Jesus be crucified. Ultimately their shouts prevailed. When Pilate saw that he was 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!"

65 All the people responded, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!"

66 And so it was that, because he wanted to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas, the one they asked for, the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, and Jesus he surrendered over to their will, to be crucified.

Chapter 31

The Crucifixion

Mt 27:31b-44; Mk 15:20b-27,29-32; Lk 23:26-33,34b,35,38-43; Jn 19:16b-27

1 The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the palace, where they took off the purple cloak and put his clothes back on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. Carrying his own cross, Jesus proceeded out toward The Place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). As they led Jesus out, a certain Cyrenian²¹⁰ man by the name of Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by, on his way in from the country. Him they seized. They put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. Following behind was a large number of people, including women mourning and wailing for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For I tell you, days are coming in which they 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.'²¹¹

For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

2 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the Skull, they offered Jesus some wine to drink, mixed with gall and myrrh; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. It was 9 a.m. And they crucified him, and with him the two others, one on his right and one on his left, with Jesus in the middle.

3 Pilate wrote a notice of the charges against him and fastened it to the cross above his head. It read: THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was close to 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."

²¹⁰ *Cyrene* was in north Africa.

²¹¹ Hosea 10:8

4 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

5 When the soldiers had crucified him, 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.

6 "Let's not tear it," they said 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 them
and they cast lots for my clothing."²¹²

So this is what the soldiers did. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there.

7 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

8 The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. 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— save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

9 In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, so that we may see, and we will believe him that he is the one chosen of God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' "

10 In the same way one of the robbers who hung there with him hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

11 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

12 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

13 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus' Death

Mt 27:45-56; Mk 15:33-41; Lk 23:36,37,44-49; Jn 19:28-37

14 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until about 3 p.m., for the sun had stopped shining. At about 3:00 Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"— which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"²¹³

15 When some of those standing nearby heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

16 Knowing that all was now completed, and so that the scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

17 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so immediately one of the soldiers ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stalk of the hyssop plant and lifted it up to Jesus' lips. And he mocked him, saying, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."

18 But the rest said, "Leave him alone now. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him and take him down."

19 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." Then he called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." After he said this, Jesus bowed his head, breathed his last, and gave up his spirit.

20 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and into the holy city, and appeared to many people.

21 When the centurion and those who were guarding Jesus with him saw the earthquake and all that happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"

²¹² Psalm 22:18

²¹³ Aramaic for Psalm 22:1

22 The centurion had stood there in front of Jesus, so he had seen how he died. He praised God, and said, "Surely this was a righteous man." 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 knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee to care for his needs, stood at a distance watching these things. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joseph, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's sons. In Galilee also these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Also present were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

23 It was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers 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 came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it²¹⁴ has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may continue to believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken."²¹⁵ And, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."²¹⁶

Jesus' Burial

Mt 27:57-61; Mk 15:42-47; Lk 23:50-56; Jn 19:38-42

24 Now there was a man named Joseph, a prominent member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He was a rich²¹⁷ man from the Judean town of Arimathea, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God. He had himself become a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, because he feared the Jews.

25 But since it was Preparation Day (that is, the day before a Sabbath) and evening was approaching,²¹⁸ Joseph took courage and went to Pilate and asked him permission to take Jesus' body. But Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. When he learned from the centurion that it was so, Pilate ordered that the body be given to Joseph.

26 So Joseph bought some linen cloth and came to take the body. And Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night, came also, bringing about a hundred litras²¹⁹ of a mixture of myrrh and aloes. Taking down Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of clean linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

27 At the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden was Joseph's own new tomb, which he had cut out of the rock, one in which no one had ever yet been laid. But because the Sabbath was about to begin, and the tomb was handy, they laid the body of Jesus there.²²⁰ Then they rolled a big stone in front of the entrance and left.

²¹⁴ John son of Zebedee, speaking about himself

²¹⁵ Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20

²¹⁶ Zechariah 12:10

²¹⁷ His being a rich man fulfilled Isaiah 53:9: "They assigned him a grave with the wicked; and with the rich in his death, even though he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth."

²¹⁸ A Hebrew day starts at sunset. Therefore the Sabbath was about to begin in the evening at sunset, and it was against the Law of Moses to work on the Sabbath. Also, they couldn't leave the body on the cross overnight, because it would desecrate the land (Deuteronomy 21:22,23). See also verse 23 of this chapter. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were members of the Sanhedrin, and as the religious leaders of Israel, that body would feel the responsibility to make sure that the body was taken care of according to the Law of Moses in order not to desecrate the land. Neither Pilate nor the other members of the Sanhedrin would think it that remarkable, therefore, that these men would be concerned about the disposition of the body. As it says, Joseph was a disciple of Jesus', only secretly. Neither Pilate nor those in the Sanhedrin knew that Joseph was a disciple of Jesus. This action of Joseph's would not reveal that discipleship.

²¹⁹ About 75 pounds or 34 kilograms.

²²⁰ Apparently, burying Jesus in Joseph's tomb was not their original plan. But they had to, because the Sabbath was beginning and they were not allowed to work. This had to happen so that Isaiah 53:9 would be fulfilled.

28 Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joseph, along with the other women who had come with Jesus from Galilee, saw the tomb and how Jesus' body was laid in it, for they had followed Joseph and were sitting there across from the tomb. They returned to buy spices and perfumes, intending to come and anoint him; but when the Sabbath had come, they rested, in obedience to the commandment.

The Guard at the Tomb

Mt 27:62-66; Lk 24:1a; Jn 20:1a

29 The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that imposter said, 'After three days I will rise again.' So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until 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."

30 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard. Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Chapter 32

The Empty Tomb

Mt 28:1-4; Mk 16:1-4; Lk 24:1,2,10; Jn 20:1-9

1 When the Sabbath was over,²²¹ Mary and the women went and bought spices and perfumes so that they might go and anoint Jesus' body.

2 Very early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, there was a violent earthquake, for two angels of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. Their faces were like lightning, and their clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of them that they shook and became like dead men.

3 Later in the morning, while it was still dark, Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, Salome, and the others with them took the spices they had prepared and set out for the tomb. Just after sunrise, as they were on their way, they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. So Mary of Magdala went 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!"

5 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 didn't 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.²²² (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

Jesus Appears to the Women

Mt 28:5-11; Mk 16:5-8; Lk 24:3-8; Jn 20:10,11a

6 Then the disciples went back to their homes, but Mary the Magdalene stood outside the tomb, crying. The other women entered the tomb, but they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While

²²¹ The Sabbath is over at sunset, so it is likely that the women bought and prepared the spices the previous evening, and it was the next morning when they took them to the tomb.

²²² Believed what? I suggest this is saying that John believed the woman Mary's report about Jesus' body being missing. It is John speaking about himself. He makes no comment about whether Peter believed or not.

they were wondering about this, suddenly two young men were standing beside them, dressed in white robes that gleamed like lightning. The women were alarmed and in their fright they bowed down with their faces to the ground.

7 But the men said to them, "Do not be afraid, for we know that you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. Why do you look for the living among the dead? He has risen! He is not here! See the place where they laid him. 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.

8 "But go quickly, and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' Now we have told you."

9 Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to [those still outside],²²³ because they were afraid; afraid, yet filled with joy; and they hurried off to tell his disciples.

10 Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They approached him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

11 While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.

JESUS APPEARS TO MARY OF MAGDALA

Lk 24:9-12; Jn 20:11b-18

12 As Mary 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 of where the body of Jesus had been lying.

13 They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

14 "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

15 "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

16 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."

17 Jesus said to her, "Mary."

18 She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "My Teacher!").

19 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.' "

20 When the women came back from the tomb to the Eleven and all the rest, they told how they had seen the Lord and what he had told them. It was Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, Salome, 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.[#] Bending over, he saw only the strips of linen, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

THE OFFICIAL COVERUP

Mt 28:12-15

21 When the chief priests heard the guards' report, they met with the elders and devised a plan. They gave the soldiers a significant sum of money, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' And if news of this gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble."

22 So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

²²³ The soldiers and Mary of Magdala were still outside.

ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Lk 24:13-35; Jn 20:19a; I Cor 15:5a

23 That same day two of those who were with the Eleven were going to a village called Emmaus, sixty stadia²²⁴ 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 along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.

24 He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

25 They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one living in Jerusalem who doesn't know what things have happened there in these days?"

26 "What things," he asked.

27 "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he 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 women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

28 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

29 As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning while he talked to us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

31 They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them assembled together, who were saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

JESUS APPEARS TO TEN OF THE APOSTLES

Lk 24:36-43; Jn 20:19b-23

32 While they were telling these things, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus himself came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

33 They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my 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." After he said this, he showed them his hands and feet and side, and the disciples were overjoyed.

34 And as they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have something here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in front of them.

35 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

²²⁴ About seven miles, or eleven kilometers.

JESUS APPEARS TO THOMAS

Jn 20:24-31

36 Now Thomas the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. When the other disciples told him that they had seen the Lord, he declared, "Unless I see the 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."

37 After eight days his disciples 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, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving; be believing."

38 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

39 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who believe without seeing."

40 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

JESUS AND THE MIRACULOUS CATCH OF FISH

Jn 21:1-14

41 Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples were together. "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We're going with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

42 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

43 He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?"

44 "No," they answered.

45 He said, "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.

46 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "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 was just in his underwear) and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about two hundred cubits²²⁵ When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

47 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."

48 Simon Peter climbed aboard 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, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

JESUS REINSTATES PETER

Jn 21:15-25

49 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

50 "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

51 Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

52 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

53 He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

54 Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

²²⁵ The cubit was about 18 inches, thus the distance here was about a hundred yards, or ninety meters.

55 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

56 Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love²²⁶ me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

57 Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, 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 which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me."

58 Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and said, 'Lord, who is going to betray you?') When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?"

59 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?"

60 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

61 Jesus did many other things 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.

Chapter 33

THE ASSEMBLY ON THE MOUNTAIN
IN GALILEE
Mt 28:16-20; I Cor 15:6

1 Then the eleven disciples and over five hundred brothers went to the mountain in Galilee which Jesus had designated, and there he appeared to them all at one time. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

2 Jesus came to them and spoke to them, and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you all the days of this age, right up to its final consummation."

The ASCENSION
Lk 24:44-53; Acts 1:2b-12a; I Cor 15:7

3 Jesus next appeared to James. He appeared to his disciples over a period of forty days after his suffering, giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen, and speaking to them about the kingdom of God.

4 On one occasion when he had gathered his disciples together, he led them out to the Mount of Olives, in the vicinity of Bethany. He said to them, "This is 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."

5 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And I am going to send you the gift my Father has promised, and which you have heard me speak about. Do not leave Jerusalem, but stay in the city and wait until you have

²²⁶ The first two times Jesus asked "Do you love me," the Greek word is *agapao*, but the third time it is *phileo*. In all three of Peter's answers the word is *phileo*.

been clothed with power from on high. For John baptized in water, but in a few days you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit."

6 Then those who had gathered together asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 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, not only in Jerusalem, but also in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

8 After he said this, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And while he was blessing them, he parted from them and was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

9 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."

10 Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

ENDNOTES

ENDNOTE #1

HOW MANY TIMES WAS JESUS REJECTED AT NAZARETH?

Diatess. 12:31-36; Mt 13:53-58; Mk 6:1-6; Lk 4:16-30; Jn 4:44

PROBLEM: In the chronology of the gospel of Luke Jesus was rejected at Nazareth the first thing, as soon as he began his ministry in Galilee, while Matthew and Mark place the event much later.

1. In Luke's own account of the rejection, Jesus tells the people of Nazareth that they might say to him, "Physician, *heal* yourself; do here in your home town what we have heard that you did in Capernaum." However, at the point in time where Luke has the rejection, Jesus had not yet healed anyone in Capernaum, or performed any other kind of miracle there. This is made evident in that John specifically numbers Jesus' early miracles: in John 2:11 or Diatess. 5:28 (water to wine in Cana) and in John 4:54 or Diatess. 6:34 (healing of the official's son in Cana). But Luke has Jesus being rejected at Nazareth first thing, before he did anything else in Galilee. Two things should be kept in mind, however: 1), that the synoptic gospel writers were apparently not as concerned with chronological sequence of events as they were with other considerations (see author's note in Preface, paragraph 4), and 2), John was physically present during the rejection at Nazareth, even if it occurred as early as Luke says, whereas Luke was not an eyewitness. Furthermore, John appears to be the one of the four gospel writers who was most concerned with chronological sequence of events.

2. If the rejections at Nazareth recorded by all three synoptic gospels are referring to the same instance, it is more reasonable to conclude that it occurred later where Matthew and Mark have it, because in the account of the rejection it says that the Twelve were present with him. At the point in time where Luke put it, the Twelve had not yet all met Jesus.

ENDNOTE #2

SHOULD "THE PERICOPE²²⁷ OF THE ADULTERESS" BE INCLUDED IN THE DIATESSARON?

John 7:53- 8:11

[Note: Author now believes this is originally by [John](#).]

PROBLEM: Did the apostle John, the author of the gospel of John, write this section? Did the apostles who laid the scriptural foundation for the church intend that this story of the woman caught in adultery be part of it? Does the passage have weight and authority equal to that of scripture? This passage is not found in any of the good Greek manuscripts or in any of the earliest translations of the Bible into other languages. No Greek church father prior to the 12th century comments on the passage. It probably was not in the gospel of John when the decision was made to include John in the canon of scripture.

Since I did not include it in the Diatessaron, the following is the text of the story in question:

⁵³Then each went to his own home.

8 ¹But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group ⁴and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵In the Law Moses commanded us to stone

²²⁷ "Pericope" simply means section or passage.

such women. Now what do you say?" ⁶They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

⁹At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

¹¹"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Probably the foremost authority on questions of authenticity of passages in the Greek text is the book "A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament," by Bruce M. Metzger on behalf of and in cooperation with the Editorial Committee of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament: Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, and Allen Wikgren. The following is a quote from it²²⁸ concerning this passage:

"The evidence for the non-Johannine origin of the pericope of the adulteress is overwhelming. It is absent from such early and diverse manuscripts as \mathfrak{P}^{66} , \mathfrak{P}^{75} \aleph B L N T W X Y Δ Θ Ψ 0141 0211 22 33 124 157 209 788 828 1230 1241 1242 1253 2193 *al.* Codices A and C are defective in this part of John, but it is highly probable that neither contained the pericope, for careful measurement discloses that there would not have been space enough on the missing leaves to include the section along with the rest of the text. In the East the passage is absent from the oldest form of the Syriac version (*syr^{c,s}* and the best manuscripts of *syr^p*), as well as from the Sahidic and the sub-Achmimic versions and the older Bohairic manuscripts. Some Armenian manuscripts and the Old Georgian version omit it. In the West the passage is absent from the Gothic version and from several Old Latin manuscripts (*it^{a,1,q}*). No Greek Church Father prior to Euthymius Zigabenus (twelfth century) comments on the passage, and Euthymius declares that the accurate copies of the Gospel do not contain it.

When one adds to this impressive and diversified list of external evidence the consideration that the style and vocabulary of the pericope differ noticeably from the rest of the Fourth Gospel (see any critical commentary), and that it interrupts the sequence of 7:52 and 8:12 ff., the case against its being of Johannine authorship appears to be conclusive.

At the same time the account has all the earmarks of historical veracity. It is obviously a piece of oral tradition which circulated in certain parts of the Western church and which was subsequently incorporated into various manuscripts at various places. Most copyists apparently thought that it would interrupt John's narrative least if it were inserted after 7:52 (D E (F) G H K M U Γ Π 28 700 892 *al.*). Others placed it after 7:36 (ms. 225) or after 7:44 (several Georgian mss.) or after 21:25 (1 565 1076 1570 1582 *arm^{mss}*) or after Luke 21:38 (family 13). Significantly enough, in many of the witnesses which contain the passage it is marked with asterisks or obeli, indicating that, though the scribes included the account, they were aware that it lacked satisfactory credentials.

Sometimes it is stated that the pericope was deliberately expunged from the Fourth Gospel because it was liable to be understood in a sense too indulgent to adultery. But, apart from the absence of any instance elsewhere of scribal excision of an extensive passage because of moral prudence, this theory fails "to explain why the three preliminary verses (vii 53; viii 1-2), so important as apparently descriptive

²²⁸ pp. 219-221 of the commentary on the corrected edition of the Greek New Testament of 1975, printed 1983?

of the time and place at which all the discourses of c. viii were spoken, should have been omitted with the rest" (Hort, "Notes on Select Readings," pp. 86 f.).

Although the Committee was unanimous that the pericope was originally no part of the Fourth Gospel, in deference to the evident antiquity of the passage a majority decided to print it, enclosed within double square brackets, at its traditional place following Jn 7:52."

The Committee included it in its traditional place "in deference to its antiquity." But they omitted scores of other passages that are even older than the pericope. So why did they choose to include this particular passage? Probably because of its relatively large size, and because it is so well known and loved. They are unanimous that the passage is not original holy writ, but include it because it probably is truth. As for my purpose in the Diatessaron, however, my criterion for inclusion of a passage was not whether or not it is true but whether or not the apostles intended it to have the authority of scripture. Truth and authority are not the same. "2+2=4" is truth, but it is not scripture. God did not inspire one of his apostles or prophets to put it among the foundational truths that are authoritative original holy writ. So it is with the Pericope of the Adulteress. I wanted the Diatessaron to be 100% pure scripture, all the real thing.

What about including the passage in the text of the Diatessaron but putting it in double square brackets with a footnote indicating that it is not original scripture? I could have done that, but I remember that I myself read the NASB and NIV Bibles for years without really taking note of what their footnotes said about this story's textual status. Similarly, suppose I left this story in the Diatessaron in double brackets and footnoted. I know that a great percentage of readers would either not read the footnote or not fully appreciate what I wanted to communicate in the footnote about its lack of authority. In that situation, I feel that if I included the Pericope in the text even in brackets and footnoted, I still would have misled them into thinking that this story has apostolic authority equal to the scripture that comprises the rest of the Diatessaron. Therefore I omitted the Pericope and consider it New Testament pseudepigrapha.²²⁹

ENDNOTE #3

IN DIATESSARON 15:32 WAS JESUS SAYING, "I AM WHAT I HAVE BEEN TELLING YOU ALL ALONG," OR WAS HE SAYING, "WHY DO I SPEAK TO YOU AT ALL!"?

Diatessaron 15:32 or John 8:25

PROBLEM: In most of the early manuscripts of the New Testament, only capital letters were used, and there were no spaces between words and sentences. Nor was there much punctuation. This makes it difficult at times to tell where one word ends and the next begins, thus difficult to know which words the author meant. To illustrate this, suppose we had the same practice in English, and you were confronted with the letters: ANDTHENHEISNOWHEREWHATAMYSTEROUS. Take the words in the letters, HEISNOWHERE. Did the author mean "He is nowhere" or "He is now here"? There is exactly this kind of problem in interpreting John 8:25. The Greek words translated "Just what" in the sentence "Just what I have been saying along" in Diatessaron 15:32 are the words *ho ti*, which mean "that which." Or are they one word, *hoti*, a Greek word which can mean "why" or "because" or "that"?

Consequently, the sentence could be variously translated as follows:

1. As a question, with *hoti* = "why?" ("Why do I speak to you at all?")
2. As an exclamation, with *ho ti* as a Hebraism²³⁰ ("That I speak to you at all!")

²²⁹ Writings attributed to an author falsely, and regarded as not inspired by God and not authoritative

²³⁰ A Hebrew idiom transferred to the Greek language by Greek-speaking Jews.

3. As an affirmation, with *ho ti* and implying *I am* ("[I am] from the beginning what I am telling you" or "Primarily [I am] what I am telling you" or "[I am] what I have told you from the beginning").

The Bodmer Papyrus II (p⁶⁶) reads, according to a marginal correction which may be by the original scribe, "Jesus said to them, 'I told you in the beginning that which also I am telling you.'" For full discussions of the difficulties of the passage, see R.W. Funk, *Harvard Theological Review*, LI (1958), pp. 95-100, and E.R. Smothers, S.J. *ibid.*, pp. 111-122, who independently prefer the reading of the papyrus 66 corrector.

I think the third alternative mentioned above is most likely, considering that a few verses later, John says "many of his hearers put their faith in Him." They are conversation partners with which he is sympathetic. Still, it would not be out of character for Jesus to refuse to speak with someone. For remember, Jesus knew what was in people's hearts and minds. It could be that the particular people who were questioning him in the verse in question were hypocrites, and Jesus knew that they wouldn't believe what he said anyway, and that they wouldn't ask sincere, God-seeking questions. And that only the nonvocal bystanders were coming to believe in him in this setting. With these conditions in view, he could say to the actual questioners only: "Why do I even bother speaking to you?"

Either way, it would not be out of character for Jesus to verbally express frustration or dislike about the insincerity (Diatess. 26:3; Mk 12:13-15) or hypocrisy (Diatess. 14:2,4; 19:35,36; 26:3; Mk 7:5,6; Lk 13:14-17) or lack of cooperative intent (Diatess. 30:16,17; Luke 22:67-69) or lack of intelligence (Diatess. 14:8,9,31; Matt. 15:15-16; Mk 7:7-19; 8:14-21) of his conversation partners.

ENDNOTE #4

THOUGHTS ON YIELDING TRIBUTE TO CAESAR

Diatessaron 26:1-6, or Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26

PROBLEM: Scripture can easily be misinterpreted as a result of not understanding it in light of its textual, historical and political contexts. In this passage the enemies of Jesus tried to trap him by asking, "Is it lawful for us to yield tribute to Caesar?" In response Jesus asked to see the coin used for paying the tribute, and showed that it was Caesar's coin, and therefore told his questioners to "give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar."

There are three distinctions that must be made about this tax:

PROBLEM 1. Most modern translations of the Bible translate "yielding tribute" as "paying taxes." Such a rendering is inadequate and misleading, in that it is not as specific as the Greek is about the nature of the tax, as will be shown.

PROBLEM 2. Today in America, we are not supposed to have a Caesar or Czar or Kaiser, and in fact our form of government is structured with the very purpose of disallowing "Caesars." How then are we to apply this passage in harmony with our American constitution and legal system?

PROBLEM 3. We Americans today do not use coins owned by Caesar. So we do not have any of Caesar's coins to give back to him. Or do we?

DISCUSSION:

PROBLEM 1. The Greek word for tribute used in Matthew and Mark is *κενσος* (*kensos*), and in Luke it is *φορος* (*phoros*)

Kensos. The Greek word *kensos* was a loan word from the Latin word *census*, which means just what you would think it means— a head count. The Roman Caesar would then charge a head tax (capita tax) based on a head count or census. The Latin root word for head is *cap*. Thus, this tax was a *per capita* tax, or a *capitation*. It was a flat tax, having no relation to graduated percentages, or ability to pay. It was not an *income* tax. Every head had to cough up the same amount. Black's Law Dictionary, Sixth Ed., defines a Capitation tax thusly (underlining by author):

A poll tax. A tax or imposition upon the person. It is a very ancient kind of tribute, and answers to what the Latins called "*tributum*," by which taxes on persons are distinguished from taxes on merchandise, called "*vectigalia*."

Black's Law Dictionary defines Tribute in turn as (underlining by author):

A contribution which is raised by a prince or sovereign from his subjects to sustain the expenses of the state.

A sum of money paid by an inferior sovereign or state to a superior potentate, to secure the friendship or protection of the latter.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines Tribute as (underlining by author):

fr. L. *tributum*, from *tribus* tribe, a political division of the Roman people originally representing one of the three primitive tribes of ancient Rome

a payment by one ruler or nation to another in acknowledgement of submission or as the price of protection; also: the tax levied for such a payment

an exorbitant charge levied by a person or group having the power of coercion

Phoros. The Analytical Greek Lexicon defines it as follows: it comes from the verb φέρω (phero), to bear or carry a burden; it is a

"tribute, tax, strictly such as is laid on dependent and subject people."

An examination of how the word φόρος was used in the Septuagint regarding the history of Israel is very illuminating. The English words translated from φόρος will be in italics.

Joshua 19:47/48 Speaking of Israel's conquest of Palestine, "...and the Amorite continued to dwell in Edom and in Salamin; and the hand of Ephraim prevailed against them, and they [Amorites] became *tributaries* to them."

Judges 1:28-35: "When Israel became strong, they pressed the Canaanites into *forced labor* but never drove them out completely. Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to live there among them. Neither did Zebulun drive out the Canaanites living in Kitron or Nahalol, who remained among them; but they did subject them to *forced labor*. Nor did Asher drive out those living in Acco or Sidon or Ahlab or Aczib or Helbah or Aphek or Rehob, and because of this the people of Asher lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land. Neither did Naphtali drive out those living in Beth Shemesh or Beth Anath; but the Naphtalites too lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land, and those living in Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath became *forced laborers* for them. The Amorites confined the Danites to the hill country, not allowing them to come down into the plain. And the Amorites were determined also to hold out in Mount Heres, Aijalon and Shaalbim, but when the power of the house of Joseph increased, they too were pressed into *forced labor*."

II Sam. 20:24 & I Kings 4:6 "Adoniram son of Abda was in charge of *forced labor*;"

I Kings 5:13,14 "King Solomon conscripted forced labor out of all Israel; the *levy* numbered thirty thousand men. He sent them to the Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts; they would be a month in the Lebanon and two months at home; Adoniram was in charge of the *forced labor*."

I Kings 10:14,15 "The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly [through Hiram king of Tyre] was **666** talants, not including the *revenues* from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian Kings and the governors of the land."

I Kings 12:18 & II Chron. 10:18 "King Rehoboam sent out Adoniram, who was in charge of *forced labor*, but all Israel stoned him to death."

II Chron. 8:7,8 "All the [Canaanite] people...whom the Israelites had not destroyed, these Solomon conscripted for his *slave labor* force, as it is to this day."

II Chron. 36:3 "The king of Egypt dethroned him in Jerusalem and imposed on Judah a *levy* of a hundred talants of silver and a talant of gold."

Ezra 4:13 [The enemies of Israel said to Artaxerxes,] "Furthermore, the king should know that if this city [Jerusalem] is built and its walls are restored, no more taxes, *tribute* or duty will be paid, and the royal revenues will suffer."

Ezra 4:20 [So Artaxerxes sent orders to have the rebuilding of Jerusalem stopped, saying,] Jerusalem has had powerful kings ruling over the whole of Trans-Euphrates, and taxes, *tribute* and duty were paid to them."

Ezra 6:8 [Later king Darius sent the order,] "Moreover, I hereby decree what you are to do for these elders of the Jews in the construction of this house of God: The expenses of these men are to be fully paid out of the royal treasury, from *revenues* of Trans-Euphrates, so that the work will not stop."

Ezra 7:21-24 "Now I, King Artaxerxes, order all the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates...You are also to know that you have no authority to impose taxes, *tribute* or duty on any of the priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, temple servants or other workers at this house of God."

But those same priests turned around and lent money to the other Israelites living outside Jerusalem, lent them money with interest, and made their brother Israelites pledge their farms, houses and even sons and daughters as collateral for the loans. When those brothers of theirs couldn't repay, they foreclosed on the farms and houses and sons and daughters, and sold them to foreigners! This was the context of the next passage:

Nehemiah 5:1-8 "Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their Jewish brothers. ...Still others were saying, 'We have had to borrow money to pay the king's *tax* on our fields and vineyards. Although we are of the same flesh and blood as our countrymen and though our sons are as good as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others. ..."

Lamentations 1:1 "ALEPH. How does the city that was filled with people sit solitary! she is become as a widow: she that was magnified among the nations, and princess among the provinces, has become *tributary*."

So it can be seen that tribute is not a beautiful picture. And I am sure that I have proven my point that the English word "tax" is an inadequate translation of the Greek word *φορος*. "Tribute" is really the only choice of English words. By the way, the Greek word for "tax" used in Romans chapter 13 verse 7 is *phoros* also.

Romans 13:7 should be translated, "Yield tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom..."

PROBLEM 2.

How then are you to know who it is to whom you owe tribute? It is important to know who your sovereign is, because the answer to that question determines what your rights and duties are in law. There are many sovereignties in the universe. Obviously, you are not required to obey any and all Sovereigns unless they have jurisdiction of you. How can one determine which entity is subject to which entity? By a universal axiom of law: You owe your allegiance to that sovereign which gave to you your rights and duties. Another axiom of law goes: What is created is the servant of what created it.

The next point I want to make is that Tribute is about as foreign a concept to our American constitutional republics as any. There is no place at all for Tribute in our **republican** system of government. I will show from our organic documents—i.e., the Declaration of Independence and the state and federal constitutions—and from American court decisions, what the **heirarchy** of our republic is. You will see that there are four sovereign powers in descending levels of authority. The chain of command is simple and obvious: What is created must serve its creator.

What is created cannot be greater than its creator. God created the People. The People created the State governments. The State governments in turn created the federal government. This heirarchy is not some fringe group fantasy. IT IS THE LAW, as will be shown. When the Founding Fathers said "Republican Form of Government" in the Constitution, they were referring to the Hierarchy of a Republic, as follows:

Sovereign #1: **God**.

...all men...are endowed by their **creator** with certain unalienable Rights, ...That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men,...and that whenever (they) become destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish (them).

The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen united States of America (1776)

You have rights antecedent to all earthly governments; rights that cannot be repealed or restrained by human laws; rights derived from **the Great Legislator of the Universe**.

John Adams, the second President of the united States of America

We the People of the State of Washington, grateful to **the Supreme Ruler of the Universe** for all our liberties, do ordain this Constitution.

Preamble to the statutory Washington State Constitution of 1889

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the united states of America, and to the republic for which it stands; one nation under **God**..."

Sovereign #2: **We the People, the Citizens of the states**

Each of The People obtained by means of the Revolutionary War and the Treaty of Peace all the rights and prerogatives of the King of England. Each individual American is an individual Sovereign. Every American is King of his own affairs, and every power not specifically delegated by the People to the state and federal governments is their own power and personal jurisdiction. In the words of the Supreme Court,

The people of a state are entitled to all rights which formerly belonged to the king by his prerogative.

Lansing v. Smith, 21 D. 89, 9 Wendel 4 (U.S. Supreme Court)

...our national scene opens with the most magnificent object which the nation could present: 'The *People*...' Who were those people? They were the Sovereign inhabitants living in the Thirteen States...

Chisolm v. Georgia, Wilson, J., 2 Dall. 463 (U.S. Supreme Court)

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the People.

Article X in Amendment to the Constitution for the U.S. A.

In our country the people are sovereign and the government cannot sever its relationship to the people by taking away their citizenship.

Richards v. Secretary of State, 752 F.2d at 1418 (1985), quoting the U.S. Supreme Court from Afroyim, 387 U.S. at 257

It is not the function of our Government to keep the citizen from falling into error; it is the function of the citizen to keep the government from falling into error.

American Communications Association v. Douds, 339 U.S. 382, 442

"The people are the masters of both Congress and courts, not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow the men who pervert it!"

President Abraham Lincoln

Since we Americans are each sovereign, we can nullify laws passed by legislatures, and nullify interpretations of the laws by the courts, including the Supreme Court.

"...the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the fact."

Article V, Sec. 7 of the Constitution for Washington state (1878)

"The jury has a right to judge both the law as well as the fact in controversy."

John Jay, 1st Chief Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, 1789

"The jury has the right to determine both the law and the facts."

Samuel Chase, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, 1796,
a Signer of the Unanimous Declaration of independence

"The jury has the power to bring a verdict in the teeth of both law and fact."

Oliver Wendell Holmes, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, 1902

"The law itself is on trial quite as much as the cause which is to be decided."

Harlan F. Stone, 12th Chief Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, 1941

"The pages of history shine on instances of the jury's exercise of its prerogative to disregard instructions of the judge..."

U.S. v. Dougherty, 473 F.2d 1113, 1139 (1972)

Sovereign #3: **The several states**

The thirteen colonies when they broke from Britain became 13 sovereign, independent countries. As they said in the Declaration of Independence,

"...these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States;...and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War,

conclude Peace, contract Alliance, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do."

Note that they declared them to be States, plural, not singular. Each individual state is a sovereign country by itself. The "United States" as referring to the federal government, is constitutionally not allowed to own land, except for Washington D.C. and military bases. The federal government is only allowed to own land that the states give them or sell them, and then only for specific uses:

"...such district (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased...Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings; "

Article I, Sec. 8, Paragraph 17, United States Constitution

"...therefore, there could be no acquisition of territory made by the United States distinct from or independent of some one of the states. Each [state] declared itself sovereign and independent, according to the limits of its territory."

Harcourt v. Gaillard, 25 U.S. (12 Wheat) 523 (1827); see also
McIlvaine v. Coxe's Lessee, 8 U.S. (4 Cranch) 209 (1808)

This is in contrast to a feudal system such as was found in most of the world before England and America:

In arbitrary governments, the title is held by and springs from the supreme head— be he the emperor, king, potentate, or by whatever name he is known. The King of England was the outright owner of all land, and had power to take it from one person who fell out of his favor, and grant it to another.

see McConnell v. Wilcox, 1 Scam (Ill.) 344, 367 (1837)

The king's gifts of land were called fiefs.

A fief is the same as a fee, feod, or feud. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 6th Ed.

A feud is an estate in land held from a superior on condition of rendering him services.

2 *Blackstone's Commentaries*, p. 105

A feud is an inheritable right to the use and occupation of lands, held on condition of rendering services to the lord or proprietor, who himself retains the property in the lands.

Black's Law Dictionary, 6th Ed.

Note that the sovereign retains the "property" in the land, while the vassal holds an "estate" in the land. It is thought by some that the highest title to land you can get is "fee simple real estate." Not so. The word "fee" is the same as a fief or feud, as shown above, and the word "estate" necessarily implies an interest in property that is less than ownership. Most Americans do not own land, or "real property," but only own an estate in land. That is, they own a limited interest in the land, they own "real estate." The very fact that you have to "pay a yearly fee" as a condition of your use of the land proves that you don't own it, but rather hold a "feudal tenure" in the land, or a mere estate in the land. For example, in Genesis , the Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, gave the priests outright ownership of their land. As a consequence of outright ownership, the Egyptian priests never had to pay property tax, even under Joseph.

All the land which the United States obtained title to from the King of England was meant to be held in trust solely for the purpose of granting it to the state Citizens, as each of them applied for a federal Land Grant. This grant of land was meant to cost only the amount of administrative costs per acre. What the Citizen then held was a federal Land Patent. A perfected land patent cannot be taxed by any government, nor can any government dictate the terms of its use. A land patent is *allodial* in scope; that is, the owner of the patent owns all lodes of gold, or oil, or water, or whatever else comes with the land; in short, the owner of the patent owns all rights in it.

All lands within the State are declared to be allodial; and feudal tenures, with all their incidents, are prohibited. Leases and grants for agricultural lands for a longer term than fifteen years, in which rent or services of any kind shall be reserved, and all fines and like restraints upon alienation, reserved in any grant of land hereafter made, are declared to be void.

Article V, Sec. 23 of the Constitution for Washington state (1878)

The thirteen states gave themselves power "to contract Alliance," and then proceeded to form an alliance called the United States of America. Only as an independent, separate state can a state decide to form a union or treaty organization with other states. They were 13 countries, plural, not one country, singular. "State" and "country" have the same meaning. For example, the federal congress, as recently as 1988, called the 50 states, "countries," see 28 USC § 297(b). Each of the 50 countries has a department of state. Only countries have this. And each of the states has a full three-branch government. The people who made the Declaration of Independence did not create one country; they created a union or federation of 13 countries.

Legally, the United States is not a country. The United States of America is a federation of 50 countries. We call the federal government federal because it is just that: a federation, an alliance, a treaty organization. There is technically no such thing as a citizen of the United States, for one can only be a citizen of a country, not of a federation. It is improper to speak of a citizen of a treaty organization. For example, there are no citizens of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Rather, there are citizens of France, of Germany, etc. In the same way, it is improper to speak of a Citizen of the United States of America except in the sense of being a Citizen of one of the several specific states.

If a corporation is chartered in Oregon, then to do business in the state of Washington, it must register with our Secretary of State Ralph Munro, as a foreign corporation in order to be authorized to do business in this a different country.

The term "United States" may be used in any one of several senses. It may be merely the name of a sovereign occupying the position analogous to that of other sovereigns in the family of nations. It may designate the territory over which the sovereignty of the United States extends, or it may be the collective name of the states which are united by and under the Constitution.

Hooven & Allison Co. v. Evatt, 324 U.S. 652 at 671, 672 (1945)

There are three Sovereigns in the United States of America: (1) *We the People*, (2) the state government, and (3) the federal government.

Kansas v. Colorado, 206 U.S. 46 (1909)

The United States government is a corporation, a foreign corporation with respect to a state.

U.S. v. Perkins, 163 U.S. 625 (1896); cf. 19 CJS §883

It is quite clear, then, that there is a citizenship of the United States and a citizenship of a state, which are distinct from each other and which depend upon different

characteristics or circumstances in the individual...But with...exceptions...few...the entire domain of the privileges and immunities of citizens of the states, as above defined, *lay within the constitutional and legislative power of the states*, and *without that of the Federal government*. Was it the purpose of the 14th Amendment...to transfer the security and protection of all the civil rights which we have mentioned, from the states to the Federal government? And...to bring within the power of Congress the entire domain of civil rights heretofore belonging exclusively to the states? ,, {emphasis added} We are convinced that no such results were intended by the Congress which proposed these amendments, nor by the legislatures of the states, which ratified them...

Slaughter-House Cases, 83 U. S. (16 Wall) 36, 21 L.Ed 394 (1873)

United States citizenship does not entitle the citizen to the privileges and immunities of a citizen of a state, since the privileges and immunities of one are not the same as the other.

K. Tashiro et al v. Jordan, Secretary of State, et al., 256 P. 545 (1927)

Both before and after the Fourteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution, it has not been necessary for a person to be a citizen of the United States in order to be a citizen of his state.

Crosse v. Board of Supervisors of Elections, 221 A.2d 431 (1966),
United States v. Cruickshank, 92 U.S. 542 at 549; 23 L.Ed. 588 (1875)

A Citizen of any one of the states of the Union is held to be, and called a citizen of the United States, although technically and abstractly there is no such thing. ...The object then to be attained, by the exercise of the power of naturalization, was to make citizens of the respective states.

Ex Parte Knowles, 5 Cal. 300

Sovereign #4: **The federal government**

The federal government is a creation of the states, therefore the servant of the states. What the states created, they can abolish. And the People created the states. What they people created, they can abolish.

The states never gave the federal government jurisdiction to legislate law concerning Citizens of the several 50 states, except for the limited powers specifically named and delegated in Article I, Section 8, which all pertain to interstate and foreign affairs. In other words, a state is sovereign over its own affairs, things which concern itself only, and within its own sovereign borders. But when it comes to commerce with other states, national immigration, national defense, and disputes with other states and overseas countries, the federal government has legislative, executive and judicial jurisdictions. Otherwise, the federal government can only exercise

"exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased...Forts, Magazines, Arsenals"

One of the most important reasons for being of the federal government is to protect the states from having their form of government being altered. The Constitution states in Article IV, Section 4,

"The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion;..."

A republican form of government is one with the hierarchy as set forth in the Declaration of Independence and federal constitution, that is, in descending order, God, People, states, and federal government at the bottom.

To really stress that the federal government was to have only limited jurisdiction, the writers of the Constitution added the Tenth Article in Amendment:

"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

10th Amendment to Constitution for the u.s.A.

Congress exercises its confirmed powers subject to the limitations contained in the Constitution. If a state ratifies or gives consent to any authority which is not specifically granted by the Constitution of the United States, it is null and void.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, New York v. U.S. (1992)

The federal government and their propagandists would have you believe that people who believe in "states' rights" are part of some kooky "fringe" of society, when in fact they are simply upholding The LAW. The federal government today is guilty of sedition and insurrection against its sovereigns on a huge scale. Armed insurrection at that. Their armed activities meet all their own definitions of terrorists and terrorist acts.

The Constitution forbids the federal government having a permanent army! The language of the constitution is unmistakable and not open to any other interpretation:

The Congress shall have power...To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years.

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

Article I, Sec. 8, Paragraphs 12 & 16, United States Constitution

Contrary to popular belief, the President of the United States is generally not the "Commander in Chief." Only when Congress has legally declared a War, is he then the Commander in Chief. In peacetime, the Militias are legally supposed to be controlled by the states. There is also provision in the law of most of the states for "unorganized militias."

The militia of the state of Washington shall consist of all able bodied citizens of the United States and all other able bodied persons who have declared their intention to become such, residing within this state, who shall be more than eighteen years of age, and shall include all persons who are members of the national guard and the state guard, and said militia shall be divided into two classes, the organized militia and the unorganized militia..

Revised Code of Washington 38.04.030

Since every one of us adults in Washington are part of the unorganized Washington militia, then we need guns. We need big guns, because we cannot defend the state against enemies who have big guns unless we have at least equal armaments. And of course the militia should be dangerous. What good is a militia that is not dangerous? Such a militia holds no terror in the hearts of law-abiding people; it is only dangerous to those of our public servants who are rebellious against us and against the Constitution and Law.

I have said all this to show what the earthly law is which God has established for America. "For no authority exists that has not been established by God." Having said this, however, I tell you that I

personally place no trust in guns. I do not own one. "For my citizenship is in heaven." "For I wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against..." And I know from reading the end of the Book, in Revelation 13:7,10: "He [the Antichrist] was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed."

The Antichrist is also called the "Man of Lawlessness" in II Thessalonians. I do not intend to battle the spirit of antichrist with physical force. I am laying out the law in order to convict the ungodly governments of their lawlessness. To shine the light on their deeds of darkness. To expose them to the world as forces of lawlessness and tyranny.

The 16th Amendment did not create any new categories of taxable income that were not taxable before the amendment, Brushaber v. Union Pacific R.R. Co., 240 U.S. 1; 60 L.Ed 493; 36 S.Ct. 236 (1916); Stanton v. Baltic Mining Co., 240 U.S. 103 (1916); Evans v. Gore, 253 U.S. 245 (1920). In these cases the U.S. Supreme Court agreed with Mr. Brushaber that the 16th Amendment did not authorize a tax on individual state Citizens living and working in one of the several states of the Union. See also Report No. 79-131 A, titled "Some Constitutional Questions Regarding the Federal Income Tax Laws" published by the American Law Division of the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, May 25, 1979. Among other things, this report stated:

"The Supreme Court, in a decision written by Chief Justice White, first noted that the 16th Amendment did not authorize any new type of tax, nor did it repeal or revoke the tax clauses of Article I of the United States Constitution...Therefore, it can clearly be determined from the decisions of the United States Supreme Court that the income tax is an indirect tax, generally in the nature of an excise tax."

The conclusion reached in the Pollack case...recognized the fact that taxation on income was, in its nature, an excise, entitled to be enforced as such.

Brushaber v. Union Pacific R.R. Co., 240 U.S. 1; 60 L.Ed 493; 36 S.Ct. 236 (1916)

Excises are taxes laid upon the manufacture, sale or consumption of commodities within the country, upon licenses to pursue certain [regulated] occupations and upon corporate privileges; the requirement to pay such taxes involves the exercise of privilege.

Flint v. Stone Tracy Co., 220 U.S. 107

Okay, so the 16th Amendment income tax is not a direct tax, but an indirect tax. What are the ramifications of that? Well, for one, since it is not a direct tax, not every American is touched directly by it. It is only on those Americans exercising the relevant "privilege." There are some Americans who are not taxpayers. Just as customs imposts and duties touch directly only those Americans involved in importing or exporting, so also the 16th Amendment excise tax touches only those Americans involved in the privileged activities, the taxable activities.

Income has been taken to mean the same thing as used in the Corporation Excise Tax of 1909, 36 Stat. 112. Thus, the federal income tax is not a tax on an individual Citizen; it is a tax on profits of federal corporations. Profit is realized gain. A man's wages are not profit or income. When a man exchanges his labor or services for remuneration, it is considered an even and one-to one exchange with no gain or profit involved, Laureldale Cemetery Assn. v. Matthews, 345 Pa. 239; 47 A.2d 277 (1946); Staples v. U.S., 21 F.Supp. 737 @ 739 (1937); Helvering v. Edison Bros. Stores, 133 F.2d 575 (1943).

Thus a private state Citizen does not even have to get a State business license to engage in business.

"A right common to every citizen such as the right to own property or to engage in business of a character not requiring regulation cannot, however, be taxed as a special franchise by first prohibiting its exercise and then permitting its enjoyment upon the payment of a certain sum of money,"

Stevens v. State, 2 Ark. 291, 35 Am.Dec. 72; Spring Val. Water Works v. Barber, 99 Cal. 36, 33 P. 735, 21 L.R.A. 416.

"...Legislature...has no power to declare as a privilege and tax for revenue purposes occupations that are of common right."

Sims, State Comptroller v. Ahrens, 167 Ark. 557; 271 S.W. 720-735 (1925)

A state may impose an excise upon the franchise of corporations engaging in a business which every private citizen has a right to engage in freely.

California Bank v. San Francisco, 142 Cal. 276, 75 P. 832, 100 A.S.R. 130, 64 L.R.A. 19

A state may not impose a charge for the enjoyment of a right granted by the federal constitution.

Murdock v. Pennsylvania, 319 U.S. 105, at 113 (1943)

The individual, unlike the corporation, cannot be taxed for the mere privilege of existing. The corporation is an artificial entity which owes its existence and charter to the State; but, the individual's rights to live and own property are natural rights for the enjoyment of which an excise tax cannot be imposed.

Redfield v. Fisher, 292 P. 813 at 819

All subjects over which the sovereign power of the state extends are objects of taxation; but those over which it does not extend are, upon the soundest principle, exempt from taxation. This proposition may almost be pronounced as self evident. The sovereignty of a state extends to everything which exists by its own authority or exists by its permission.

McCullough v. State of Maryland,

Included in the right of personal liberty and the right of private property— partaking of the nature of each— is the right to make contracts for the acquisition of property. Chief among such contracts is that of personal employment, by which labor and other services are exchanged for money or other forms of property.

Coppage v. Kansas, 236 U.S. 1 at 14

A license is a privilege granted by the state,...To constitute a privilege, the grant must confer authority to do something which, without the grant, would be illegal; for if what is to be done under license is open to every one without it, the grant would be merely idle and nugatory, conferring no privilege whatever. A license, therefore implying a privilege, cannot possibly exist with reference to something which is a right...

City of Chicago v. Collins et al., 51 N.E. 907 at 910

The IRS' own 1040 booklet declares that their system is based on "voluntary self-assessment." If you don't volunteer to assess yourself any tax, you don't owe any tax. The highest federal courts have acknowledged that American Citizens can be nontaxpayers, see Long v. Rasmussen, 281 F. 236 (1922), Delima v. Bidwell, 182 U.S. 176, 179; Gerth v. U.S., 132 F.Supp. 894 (1955), "...for with them Congress does not assume to deal and they are neither of the subject nor of the object of revenue laws...", Long v. Rasmussen, supra. No American state Citizen is a taxpayer under the Internal

Revenue Code until they file their first 1040 form, Morse v. U.S., 494 F.2d 876, @ 880. Once the first 1040 is filed, there is an alleged quasi-contractual obligation to continue to do so. Of course, any contract may be declared void *ab initio* if it can be shown that there was fraud in its inception, see eg., Tyler v. Secretary of State, 184 A.2d 101 (1962).

By means which the law permits, a taxpayer has the right to decrease the amount of what otherwise would be his taxes or to altogether avoid them.

Gregory v. Helvering, 19

Our tax system is based upon voluntary self assessment and payment, and not upon distraint [detention of alleged debtor's property to secure payment].

Flora v. U.S., 362 U.S. 145

The Social Security Act was created as an "Old Age and Survivors Insurance" (OASI) plan, only for federal employees and residents of Washington D.C. Only by pandemic acts of fraud and duress by federal employees, coupled with the passivity, lethargy, timidity and legal illiteracy of the general public, were state Citizens induced to obtain social security numbers. Having a social security number is prima facie evidence that you are either a federal employee or resident of the District of Columbia or other federal area. On the form SS-5, most of us checked a box swearing under penalty of perjury we were U.S. citizens.

For one thing, it is not unconstitutional if applied to applicalbe persons, such as corporations or entitites created by a law. But in situations where the law is unconstitutional, such as the present situation, the courts have declared that in those cases, "...the word *shall* in a statute means *may*, in order to avoid unconstitutionality." See, among many other cases, Fort Howard Paper Co. v. Fox River Heights Sanitary, 26 NW2d 661, (1947) pp 661-667; and Gow v. Consolidated Copper Mines Corp. et al., 165 ATL 136, 137, 138-141.

A holy war will now begin on America, and when it is ended America will supposedly be the citadel of freedom, but her millions will unknowingly be the loyal subjects of the Crown.

British General Cornwallis, quoted in the book *Legions of Satan*, Williams, Jonathan, (1781)

General Cornwallis went on to say that the churches in America would help Britain tax Americans once again. Though he did not know the exact details, this is has been accomplished by convincing the churches to become registered, State incorporated churches with licensed pastors, who would preach that their congregations should pay the tribute tax to the British-owned Internal Revenue Service.

It is illuminating to know what inspired the patriot Patrick Henry to say his famous words, "Give me liberty or give me death." The young Christian lawyer named Patrick Henry saw why a Jury of Peers is sovital to freedom. It was March 1775 when he rode into the small town of Culpepper, Virginia. He was totally shocked by what he saw. There, in the middle of the town square was a pastor tied to a whipping post, his back laid bare and bloody with the bones of his ribs showing. He had been scourged mercilessly like Jesus, with whips laced with metal.

Patrick Henry is quoted as saying, "When they stopped beating him, I could see the bones of his rib cage. I turned to someone and asked what the man had done to deserve such a beating as this."

The reply given him was that the man being scourged was a minister who refused to take a license. A license often becomes an arbitrary control by government that makes a crime out of what ordinarily would not be a crime. It turns a right into a privilege.

Three days later the pastor died from their scourging.

This was the incident that sparked Christian lawyer Patrick Henry to write the famous words which later became the rallying cry of the Revolution: “What is it that Gentlement wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbit it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

Later he made this part of his famous speech at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The fact is, every time a church goes to a government and asks that government permission to be a state-approved non-profit corporation, they are entering a contract with Satan, thus committing spiritual adultery. Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me; therefore, go and make disciples of all nations...” When we go to Pharaoh for permission to do God’s work, when we have been given ALL authority already, this is spiritual adultery. Pastors of state-approved churches have to have a license from a state to preach the gospel. In law, a license is “permission from public authority to do something which would without the license be illegal.” So when a pastor goes to the state to get a license, he is declaring that it is illegal to preach the gospel without the state’s permission. I hope you can see what a falsehood this is, and what spiritual rebellion against Christ’s authority this is. If Christ has already given us all authority, and we go to someone else for authority, it is a rejection of or lack of faith in, the authority of Christ. It is a substitute authority. In Greek, the prefix “anti” means substitute. So the word “antichrist” means “substitute christ,” or “counterfeit christ.” State non-profit incorporated churches are a substitute for the real authority of Christ, so they are anti-Christ.

I and my household have taken a stand and will not attend churches that are incorporated by the state, or where the pastor is licensed by the state. Asking the state permission to preach the gospel is the same as refraining from preaching the gospel because the state forbids it. Peter said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

PROBLEM 3.

The Congress shall have Power...To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

Article 1, Sec. 8, Paragraph 5, Constitution for the u.s.A.

No State shall...make [allow] any Thing but gold or silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts.

Article 1, Sec. 10 Paragraph 1, Constitution for the u.s.A.

A U.S. dollar is defined as 25.8 grains of gold or 412.5 grains of silver.

The Free Coinage Act of 1792

Lawful money of the United States shall be construed to mean gold and silver coin...

12 USC §152

1. Issuance of Federal Reserve Notes; nature of obligation; where redeemable

Sec. 16. Federal reserve notes, to be issued at the discretion of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the purpose of making advances to Federal reserve banks through the Federal reserve agents as hereinafter set forth and for no other purpose, are hereby authorized. The said notes shall be obligations of the United States and shall be receivable by all national and member banks and Federal reserve banks and for all taxes, customs, and other public dues. They shall be redeemed in lawful money on demand at the Treasury Department of the United

States, in the city of Washington, District of Columbia, or at any Federal Reserve bank.

Federal Reserve Act of 1913, Sec. 16, codified at 12 USC §411

Though Federal Reserve Notes say on them that they are legal tender for the payment of debts, they are not. They are illegal. The Federal Reserve Act is clearly unconstitutional. President Woodrow Wilson, who signed it into law, regretted it very much.

The Act was passed on December 23rd, 1913 and at 11:30 p.m. when almost no one but the conspirators were present to vote.

Note that the Federal Reserve Act admits that Federal Reserve Notes are not lawful money. It says you can take them in and exchange them for lawful money. Note also that this unlawful money is the designated currency for paying the unlawful income tax. How appropriate. The income tax is not real, and neither is the money you pay it with. If you participate in the central bankers' scam, then you have to pay the "protection money," or Tribute, to the central bankers' thugs.

The Federal Reserve Bank is privately owned, and not funded by the U.S. government, see Lewis v. U.S., 680 F.2d 1240. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York was incorporated in 1914, and has stockholders who never pay income taxes on their gigantic earnings. All the other Fed branches are subsidiaries of the New York branch. The New York branch in turn is effectively controlled by foreign interests. More than half of the stockholders are not even Americans.

If the American people allow private banks to control the issuance of their currency, first by inflation and then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around them will deprive the people of all their property until their children will wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.

Thomas Jefferson

The Federal Reserve Bank is essentially an assignee of the U.S. government. The U.S. government borrows trillions of dollars from the Fed and then assigns its accounts receivable to the Fed in payment. The Fed collects on those accounts receivable by means of the Internal Revenue Service. If you look on the back of a personal check you have written to the Social Security Administration or to the Internal Revenue Service, you will notice that it is endorsed over to the Federal Reserve Bank (Pay Any FRB). The Fed has a constructive lien on all U.S. government assets.

It is hard to pin down the meaning of the term "New Age." The term itself leaves a person with many questions. Is there really anything new, that has not already been? What is an age? When was the "Old Age?" Did the Old Age end? When? Why did it end? Is the New Age better than the Old Age? Why? Who or what instituted the New Age? An intelligent person should ask these questions.

President George H. W. Bush used the term "New World Order" upon commencement of Operation Desert Storm. But probably the most widespread publication of the term "New Age" is on the reverse side of a U.S. one dollar bill. Every single \$1 bill printed since 1933 has had the phrase on it. The year 1933 is when President Roosevelt by Executive Order declared the United States to be insolvent and in the control of its creditors. The round seal on the left side, the one with the pyramid, says in the Latin language, "ANNUIT CŒPTIS NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM." This says, when translated, "Announcing the birth of a New Order of the Ages," or New World Order. When was it born? According to the seal, it was 1776. The Roman numerals for 1776 can be seen on the base of the pyramid. It so happens that the American chapter of Illuminati-inspired Freemasonry was founded on May 1st, 1776. The Masonic domination of the city of Washington D.C. may be clearly seen by looking at a street map of it. The center of the city where all the monuments and White House are, is crisscrossed with diagonal streets whose design makes no sense from the ground. But when you look at them from the air, you can see that they are designed in the shape of the Masonic compass and square, with the Masonic temple the center of attention. The White House is encircled by one circular street, and also has four odd shaped streets above it which form two goat horns. The resulting image

is the head of the Goat of Mendes (an occultic symbol). On the floor of the Masonic Temple is a large pentagram, so large that you cannot see it unless you remove yourself back from and above it. Now, back to the seal on the dollar bill, the radiating eye above the pyramid is the eye of Lucifer. The same eye can be seen above the entrance of Adolf Hitler's bunker, to this day, and in Masonic temples and some State churches. Masons who reach the 32nd and 33rd degrees, in order to be initiated into those levels, must sign in their own blood an oath of allegiance to Lucifer, in which they proclaim, among other things, that Lucifer is the true Christ and that Jesus is an impostor. This is the testimony of a few men who have dared to come out of high level Masonry. This is all included here to show that the New World Order arises from the spirit of anti-christ.

According to the United States supreme court, Hooven & Allison Co. v. Evatt, 324 U.S. 652 at 671, 672, there are three definitions of the "United States." 1.) The Union of the 50 states as a conglomerate, more commonly known as, "America"; (2) The name of the sovereign nation of the union in relation to offshore countries, etc. (3) The territory over which the federal government has legislative jurisdiction pursuant to the Constitution; i.e., the "ten miles square" of the District of Columbia.

The internal revenue laws of the United States apply only to residents of the United States of definition number (3), i.e. *internally*. The Internal Revenue Code defines the United States as follows in §7701:

CHAPTER 79.—DEFINITIONS

Sec. 7701. Definitions

(a) When used in this title, where not otherwise distinctly expressed or manifestly incompatible with the intent thereof—

(9) **United States.** The term "United States" when used in a geographical sense includes only the States and the District of Columbia.

(10) **State.** The term "State" shall be construed to include the District of Columbia, where such construction is necessary to carry out the provisions of this title.

The effect of the word "include" in this statute is to limit the meaning of the definition to the items mentioned. (See Treasury Decision #3980, pp 64,65; and U.S. Supreme Court decision Helvering v. Morgan's, Inc., 293 U.S. 121; 55 S.Ct. 60, at pp 61,62 (1934)

A good lawyer knows that "including" means "limited to," and this is why in legal documents you will see language such as the following: "such and such includes, but is not limited to, such and such." They have to add the words "but is not limited to," because includes means limited to.

The ordinary significance of the terms, as defined by the dictionaries, both Webster and the Standard, is "to confine within; to hold; to contain; to shut up; embrace; and involve. Include or the participial form thereof [including], is defined "to comprise within;" "to contain;" to shut up;" and synonyms are "contain;" "comprehend;" embrace."

Montillo Salt Co. v. Utah, 221 U.S. 452, at 455, 466

Thus, if the United States "includes" only the States and the District of Columbia, and the meaning of "States" "includes" the District of Columbia, then all you have for the definition of the United States is only the District of Columbia. Yes, it was treacherous of them, but the writers of the Internal Revenue Act (Writ Writer Gravitex) had to word it in such a way as to stay within the federal government's Constitutional territorial jurisdiction yet trick citizens of the several states into thinking they were residents of the "United States" and so had to pay federal income tax.

Federal Income tax liability is predicated upon U.S. citizenship: Cook v. Tait, 265 U.S. 47; 44 S.Ct. 444, (1924); U.S. v. Slater, 545 F.Supp. 179, 182 (1982)

The Internal Revenue Service may not make determinations of someone's citizenship or residency. In St. Louis Park Medical Center v. Lethart, 286 F Supp 281, it was ruled that the IRS cannot make such status determinations.

Here is a universal principle of law: "What is created is servant to what created it." The People existed before the 13 state governments did. They created the states. The states then created the Union alliance, that is, the federal government. Thus we see a clear hierarchy: God the Creator endowed the People with Rights and duties, the People in turn created the states governments, and the state governments created the federal government. This is the hierarchy of our republic. Sovereign #1: God; sovereign #2: the People; sovereign #3: the 50 states; sovereign #4: the federal government. All other hierarchies are unlawful. (Note that in a democracy the hierarchy is completely the reverse—upside down.)

The Constitution for the American states united says in Art I, Sec 9, Clause 4,

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration hereinbefore directed to be taken.

The census tax "hereinbefore directed" is found in Art I, Sec 2, Cl 3, which states,

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.

Moreover, Art I, Sec 8, Cl 1 requires that

...all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Art I, Sec 5, Cl 1: "A majority of each [of each Congressional chamber, i.e., Senate & House] shall constitute a quorum to do business."

Art I, Sec 9, Cl 7 "No title of nobility."

Too often Americans think of church as the actual building, or the organization, versus its true spiritual meaning. Almost without exception, these denominational groups of people applied to the State of their residence for incorporation. That is, they asked the secretary of state in their State capital for a State charter as a registered non-profit corporation. The state then gives them permission to be a State-chartered corporation. These organizations also apply for this status so they can be considered a non-profit corporation under Section 501(3)(c) in the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. But now here's the rub: a corporation, which receives its charter from the State, is entirely a creation of the State, and therefore entirely subject to State laws. By becoming a registered state corporation, these groups show themselves to be neither Biblical churches nor Constitutional churches. We call these organizations "State churches."

State churches are unbiblical, because Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. And I tell you, go and make disciples of all nations,..." The Christian needs no more authority to start churches than what has already been granted by Christ.

State incorporated churches are unconstitutional, because the constitution says that the State shall make no law concerning an establishment of religion. It is un-American for a church to be subject to

the laws of the State as to their structure, number of board meetings, etc. On the other hand, free Americans have the Right to Assemble, and the Right to Freedom of Speech, without license to do so from the State. Americans, according to the Declaration of Independence and the constitution, have the God-given freedom to assemble together and say anything they want. Thus, they have the right to assemble and talk to each other about Christ. No license is legally necessary, and no incorporation. And state Citizens, with no Federal income, would have no federal income tax liability anyway.

The Greek word *phoros* means the tribute that a conquered or enslaved people must cough up to its conqueror whenever the whim of the conqueror so dictated. The yielding of the tribute had nothing to do with percentages, apportionment, or ability to pay, since by law of war, every single item in the possession of the subjugated people was spoil of war and therefore already owned by the conqueror. The conqueror could demand everything they had at any time. Now as for coinage, Jesus obviously knew some principles of law. When he said in verse 5, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's," he recognized that every single coin circulated that bore Caesar's portrait and inscription, already belonged to Caesar. The people of Palestine were given a mere privilege to use Caesar's coins, solely for the purpose of moving Caesar's goods around from one slave to another. Slaves have no right of property ownership. They cannot even own coins. The Constitution for the united states of America declares, "No state shall allow anything but gold or silver coin to be used as tender for the payment of debts." Also the Egyptians under Joseph. Note that Jesus did not tell the other eleven disciples to pay. Here is an axiom of law: you cannot be both a citizen and a resident of the same jurisdiction. A resident is a citizen of one jurisdiction who is living or residing in another jurisdiction who has not yet obtained citizenship in the jurisdiction of residence, but his legal residency entitles him to some of the civil rights and duties of the new jurisdiction. Jesus and the disciples were aliens to Roman citizenship, so had to yield tribute to the Roman kaiser. Since they "resided as subjects" (= residents) in Roman territory, but were not Citizens, their status with respect to the Roman capita tax and customs duties therefore was that of resident alien. But the tax at issue in this passage was a Jewish temple tax. Jesus and the disciples were Sons or Citizens of the kingdom of God, so were not subject to the temple tax. Remember, the Levites did not pay the temple tax. All those who become Citizens of the kingdom of God have the same status in regard to the temple tax as the Levites had. "God has made us kings and priests, and we will reign on the earth." Rev. 5:10

ENDNOTE #5

DID JOHN USE A DIFFERENT SYSTEM OF HOUR RECKONING FROM MATTHEW, MARK AND LUKE?

Diatessaron 30:61 or John 19:14; Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:25; Luke 23:44

PROBLEM: In John 19:14 we read that Pilate sat at the judgment seat to sentence Jesus at the 6th hour. In Matthew, Mark and Luke, however, we read that Jesus was already crucified at or before the 3rd hour. If they all were using the Jewish system of hour reckoning, that would make John saying Jesus was sentenced at noon, and the synoptic gospels saying Jesus was crucified at 9 a.m. of the same day.

DISCUSSION: Matthew, Mark and Luke, called "the synoptic gospels," agree that Jesus was tried early in the morning (Matt. 27:1, Mark 15:1, Luke 22:66), was on the cross on or before the 6th hour or noon, and that darkness came over the land from the 6th hour to the 9th hour or 3 p.m. (Mat 27:45, Mk 15:33-39, Lk 23:44), and that he was buried as evening came.

What do all four agree on? John (28:1) agrees with the synoptics that Jesus was led to Pilate early in the morning and that he was buried before the sun had set (Jewish law required that bodies be buried before sunset). This agreement covers from about 5 or 6 a.m. to about 5 or 6 p.m. Let's review what events had to fit within that time span:

1. Questioning by Pilate, Herod, then Pilate again

2. Pilate's exchange with the crowd at the Stone Pavement
3. Procession, with crowd and mourners trailing, out to the Skull
4. Jesus nailed to the cross
5. Jesus hangs on the cross alive for at least six hours (Mark 15:25,33,34)
6. The second three of those six hours, darkness was over the land.
7. Between the return of the daylight and the setting of the sun, Jesus dies
8. Joseph of Arimathea goes to Pilate to request custody of the body
9. Sunset— Joseph and Nicodemus put the body in a tomb

Mark tells us that Jesus was hanging on the cross for at least 6 hours. Let's suppose John used the Jewish system of reckoning the hours, i.e., of starting the count at sunrise or 6 a.m. That would make Jesus' sentencing by Pilate, according to John, take place at noon, as the NASB and others render it. It will be demonstrated that that would not leave enough time in the day for all the above listed events. Let's count out the activities that followed and the time required for them and see what happens.

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Noon | Pilate reaches decision at the Pavement. Then Jesus and Simon carry the cross—a slow procession, along with mourners, to the Skull. |
| 2 p.m. | Jesus nailed to the cross |
| 8 p.m. | After six hours on the cross, Jesus sips vinegar and soon dies. |

It is easy to see that it is impossible for Pilate to have sentenced Jesus at noon, as many translations render John 19:14. Because for Jesus to be on the cross for six hours from noon would mean he died after the time of normal sunset, after the Sabbath started, and Joseph and Nicodemus would not have had a chance to bury him legally. And if he died at 6 p.m., what would be remarkable about three hours of darkness coming over the land from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.? And that would require the sun to come back out at 6 p.m. If Mark and John used the same system of hour reckoning and one of them is in error, then clearly, it has to be John that is in error. But I do not believe the original autograph of the Gospel of John contains an error.

There have been two main theories put forth to solve this problem. One is that a mistake was made early in the process of reproducing the manuscripts of Mark or John (I insist it would have to be John). Since the Greek letter which stands for 3 is the gamma (γ) and the character which stands for 6 is the digamma (Φ), a sleepy copyist could have mistaken the digamma for the gamma.

The second theory is that the answer must lie in the fact that John wrote his gospel 40 or 50 years after Mark's was written, and for a wider audience as to culture. Perhaps by the time John wrote his gospel, the Jewish cultural dominance of the church had decreased, at least to the extent that many in the church in Asia minor (where John was when he wrote his gospel) by then used the Roman system of dividing the day. The Roman system counted from midnight and noon, just like we do today, and thus, the 6th hour of John 19:14 would be 6 a.m., and fit perfectly with Mark's account. I personally am convinced that this theory is the correct one, because not only would John 19:14 make more sense, but also John 1:39 and 4:52. John 1:39 says, "So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about *the tenth hour*." Does it make more sense for the two disciples to "spend the day with him" starting from 4 p.m. (if John used Jewish hour reckoning) or to "spend the day with him" starting from 10 a.m. (Roman hour reckoning)? John 4:52,53 reads, "When he (a royal official who had that day walked to Cana from Capernaum) inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, 'The fever left him yesterday at the *seventh hour*.' 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." To set the context, the official one day heard that Jesus was in Cana. So he traveled from Capernaum to Cana to talk to Jesus. Considering the geography of that trip, it would make more sense for him to have arrived at Cana at 7 p.m. (if John used the Roman system) than at 1 p.m. (if John used the Jewish system). As for the first theory, did copyists mistake digammas for gammas in all three of these instances in the Gospel of John? Clearly, the odds against such a coincidence are tremendous. The answer is no.

For discussion of the divisions of a day, see: Solomon Zeitlin, "The Beginning of the Jewish Day during the Second Commonwealth," *the Jewish Quarterly Review*, XXXVI (April, 1945), pp. 403-14;

Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (Princeton, 1964), 7-15; Roger T. Beckwith, "The Day, its Divisions and its Limits, in Biblical Thought, " *The Evangelical Quarterly XLIII* (Oct.-Dec., 1971), 218-27.

ENDNOTE #6

IS THE SAYING "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING," ORIGINAL SCRIPTURE?

Luke 23:34

PROBLEM: The saying attributed to Jesus while on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" is not found in most of the earliest Greek manuscripts. Neither is it found in the earliest translations of Luke's gospel into other languages.

The following is what the Editorial Committee of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament says about the passage in "A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, corrected edition, 1975:

"The absence of these words from such early and diverse witnesses as ρ^{75} B D* W θ it^{a,d} syr^s cop^{sa}, b^{opt} is most impressive and can scarcely be explained as a deliberate excision by copyists who, considering the fall of Jerusalem to be proof that God had not forgiven the Jews, could not allow it to appear that the prayer of Jesus had remained unanswered. At the same time, the logion, though probably not a part of the original Gospel of Luke, bears self-evident tokens of its dominical origin, and was retained, within double square brackets, in its traditional place where it had been incorporated by unknown copyists relatively early in the transmission of the Third Gospel."

ENDNOTE #7

HOW MANY TIMES DID PETER RUN TO JESUS' TOMB ON RESURRECTION SUNDAY?

Luke 24:12 vs. John 20:3-10 (or Diatessaron 32:19 vs. Diatessaron 32:5)

PROBLEM: Both the gospels of Luke and John contain an episode of Peter running from Jerusalem to Jesus' tomb on the morning of Jesus' resurrection. Throughout the centuries, there have been people who have tried to harmonize them into one trip by Peter. In some Greek manuscripts of Luke, the copyists even deleted the trip because it was too different from the trip described in the gospel of John! The two trips are indeed too different to be one and the same.

Westcott and Hort argued that the Luke trip is a "Western non-interpolation" (a certain classification of inauthentic additions to the original Greek text). What that means is that some think that this trip of Peter's, absent in some Western-branch texts of Luke, was added to copies in the other branches by copyists in order to make Luke harmonize with John 20:3-10. But this is not the case for two reasons: (1) The support for it in diverse branches of the Greek manuscripts, including Western, and that in the oldest copies of all branches, is overwhelming. (2) The result, if this is a harmonization, is an unsuccessful one, because it still does not agree with John 20:3-10. I will demonstrate why I have concluded that Peter made two separate and differing trips, with the second one even filling a gap left by the other gospels, a gap pointed out by I Corinthians 15:5. Further, another, separate, passage in Luke other than 24:12 does agree with John 20:3-10.

First, the texts of John and Luke separately:

John 20:1-18

¹Early 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. ²So 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!"

³So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter, and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. ⁸Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹(They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

¹⁰Then the disciples went back to their homes, ¹¹but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹²and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize it was Jesus.

¹⁵"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."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (Which means Teacher).

¹⁷Jesus 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.'"

¹⁸Mary of Magdala went to the disciples with the news that she had seen the Lord and that he had told her this.

Luke 24:1-16, 22-24, 33-35

¹On the morning of the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ²They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵In 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? ⁶He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' " ⁸Then they remembered his words.

⁹When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰It was Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. ¹²Peter, 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.

¹³Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶but they were kept from recognizing him....

²²[They said to Jesus,] "In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

³³They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together, ³⁴who were saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Point 1: Mary of Magdala made two different trips back to the city from the tomb.

Point 2: Peter's two trips to the tomb are both responses to the two different reports from Mary.

Point 3: The gospel of Luke by itself, even without John, indicates that Peter made two trips to the tomb.

Point 4: The second trip by Peter back to the tomb alone validates I Corinthians 15:5

John's account by itself tells of two different trips back to the city from the tomb by Mary of Magdala. The first time, she goes to Peter and John only, to tell them the body is missing. After investigating, those two disciples then return each to his own home, because it was still early. Mary then goes into the city a second time. This second time she goes into the city, she has both a different experience to report and a different destination. She goes to all Eleven apostles where they were all together by now, and she tells them that she has seen the Lord risen. In response to this second message, of the Lord being up and walking around, this is what prompted Peter, according to Luke, to go back and check out the area a second time. The first time, he went to the tomb just to see if the body was indeed missing. The second time he went to see if he himself also could see the Lord alive. And he did see him alive! According to both Luke 24:34 and I Corinthians 15:5 Jesus appeared to Peter first, before he appeared to any of the other apostles. (If Peter was with John on the first trip, then I Corinthians could not truly say that Jesus appeared to Peter *first*.) And note in the account of Cleopas and his companion walking to Emmaus that even though earlier in Luke it has Peter going to the tomb alone, it apparently happened after Cleopas had already left the group for Emmaus, because when they talk to Jesus, they tell him that *some*, plural, of their companions had gone to the tomb and "found the Lord missing, as the women had said, but him they did not see." And then when Cleopas and companion get back to the apostles, they are told by the apostles that Jesus had already appeared to Peter alone. So even without this verse in question (24:12) there is mention in Luke alone of two trips by Peter— one when he was in company (24:24) and one when he was alone (24:33-34).

As for Matthew and Mark, they are shorter, more general and summarial in nature when it comes to the resurrection.

John is the most detailed of all, except that he zeroes in on Mary of Magdala in particular. All three other gospels agree that more than Mary of Magdala went to the tomb the first time. But John lets us know that Mary of Magdala remained at the tomb crying, and apparently alone, while the other women went into the tomb and saw the angels, then came back out without telling her; when Mary of Magdala saw the angels, they were in a different location from where they were when they appeared to the other women. While the Magdalene lingered, she who loved him more, the other women apparently got a head start, and encountered Jesus first, then Jesus appeared to Mary of Magdala alone. Matthew and Luke are summarial on that point, saying generally that all those women reported to the Eleven at some point that they had seen the Lord alive. There is plenty of room for Mary of Magdala following a little behind the other women and catching up to them by the time they are reporting to the Eleven.

ENDNOTE #8

SHOULD THE LONGER ENDING OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK BE INCLUDED IN THE DIATESSARON?

Mark 16:9-20

PROBLEM 1: The last twelve verses of the gospel of Mark as found in the King James Version, or footnoted in recent translations, (chapter 16, verses 9-20) are not found in the two earliest complete Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. They are also absent from many of the oldest translations of Mark into other languages, for example, the Latin, Sinaitic Syriac, and Georgian translations. Clement of Alexandria and Origen show no knowledge of the existence of these verses; furthermore Eusebius and Jerome attest that the passage was absent from almost all Greek copies of Mark known to them. The original form of the Eusebian sections (drawn up by Ammonius) makes no provision for numbering sections of the text after 16:8. Not a few manuscripts which contain the passage have scribal notes stating that older Greek copies lack it, and in other witnesses the passage is marked with asterisks or obeli, the conventional signs used by copyists to indicate an inauthentic addition to a document. Other manuscripts which do contain the passage place it in differing locations in Mark, and still other Greek manuscripts that contain the long ending have a large addition following verse 14. There is also another ending entirely, a shorter one, found in other Greek manuscripts. Add to all this the internal consideration that none of the endings are written in Mark's style and vocabulary. The Editorial Committee of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament concludes:

"Thus, on the basis of good external evidence and strong internal considerations it appears that the earliest ascertainable form of the Gospel of Mark ended with 16:8. (Three possibilities are open: (a) the evangelist intended to close his Gospel at this place; or (b) the Gospel was never finished; or, as seems most probable, (c) the Gospel accidentally lost its last leaf before it was multiplied by transcription.) At the same time, however, out of deference to the evident antiquity of the longer ending and its importance in the textual tradition of the Gospel, the Committee decided to include verses 9-20 as part of the text, but to enclose them within double square brackets to indicate that they are the work of an author other than the evangelist."

PROBLEM 2: The passage contains a statement that is contrary to the gospel of Luke.

The statement is found in verses 12 and 13 about the two walking to Emmaus:

"Afterward Jesus appeared in 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.*"

This is contrary to Luke 24:33-35 where we read:

"They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, 'It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread."

Luke says the rest responded "It is true," thus agreeing with the two, because Simon Peter had already come back and told them the same thing as the two were telling them. It is clear that Mark 16:12,13 contradicts what Luke 24:33-35 says. So then, we either have to believe that the scriptures contain an error, or else believe that one of these accounts is not scripture. The problem of the contradiction is solved, by concluding from the objective external evidence that the longer ending of Mark is not scripture, therefore we do not have a case here of scripture contradicting other scripture.

PROBLEM 3: The passage can be easily taken to teach doctrines that are contrary to teachings found elsewhere in the New Testament.

Verses 17-18 say Jesus said,

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up 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." In the book of I Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 7-11, 29-31, on the other hand, the apostle Paul teaches that not all believers will speak in tongues and not all believers will have the gift of healing. A new Christian, unfamiliar with the rest of scripture, might question whether he has truly believed, thinking, "These things have not happened in my life, so I must not be a real Christian." How discouraging this was to me personally at one time. And if the new Christian were to deliberately drink deadly poison, he would be putting God to the test, as Satan urged Christ to do when he suggested that he throw himself off the highest point of the temple. Jesus responded that although the scriptures promise the believer that God's angels will not allow his foot to strike against a stone, it would be sin to deliberately put oneself in harm's way (for example, drinking deadly poison), for the scriptures also say, "Thou shalt not put the Lord your God to a test."

SUMMARY: The evidence, both external and internal, is conclusive that the passage of Mark 16:9-20 is not part of the original Gospel of Mark. In addition, it cannot be harmonized with the Gospel of Luke. It appears that the author of Mark 16:9-20 considered verse 8 to be an inappropriate ending and felt the need to add to it a better conclusion. I suggest that the following is what he did: In verses 9-14, he summarized the endings of Matthew, Luke and John, but carelessly. Then the contents of verses 15-20 are for the most part taken from the book of Acts. He took some historical happenings of miraculous events such as tongues speaking, healing of the sick, and the apostle Paul being bitten by a snake but not being harmed, and tacked them on following Mark 16:8 because he knew from his vantage point looking back from centuries later, that these are what in fact happened next. The problem is that the way it is written, he has in effect put them into Jesus' mouth as if Jesus was saying that all people who believe in him would have these things happen to them.

In view of these things, I did not include Mark 16:9-20 in the text of the Diatessaron. I believe it is very clear that Mark 16:9-20 is not scripture, but rather belongs on the list of New Testament pseudepigrapha.²³¹ I believe that including Mark 16:9-20 in the text of the New Testament does far more harm than good. I am praying that New Testament editors and translators around the world in all languages will soon standardize the text of their products in this matter and omit Mark 16:9-20. With the firm belief that I am speaking from the grace and gifts God has given me for the edification of the church, I urge Bible translators and editors everywhere not to include Mark 16:9-20 in the text of their products.

²³¹ Writings attributed to an author falsely, and regarded as not inspired by God and not authoritative

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