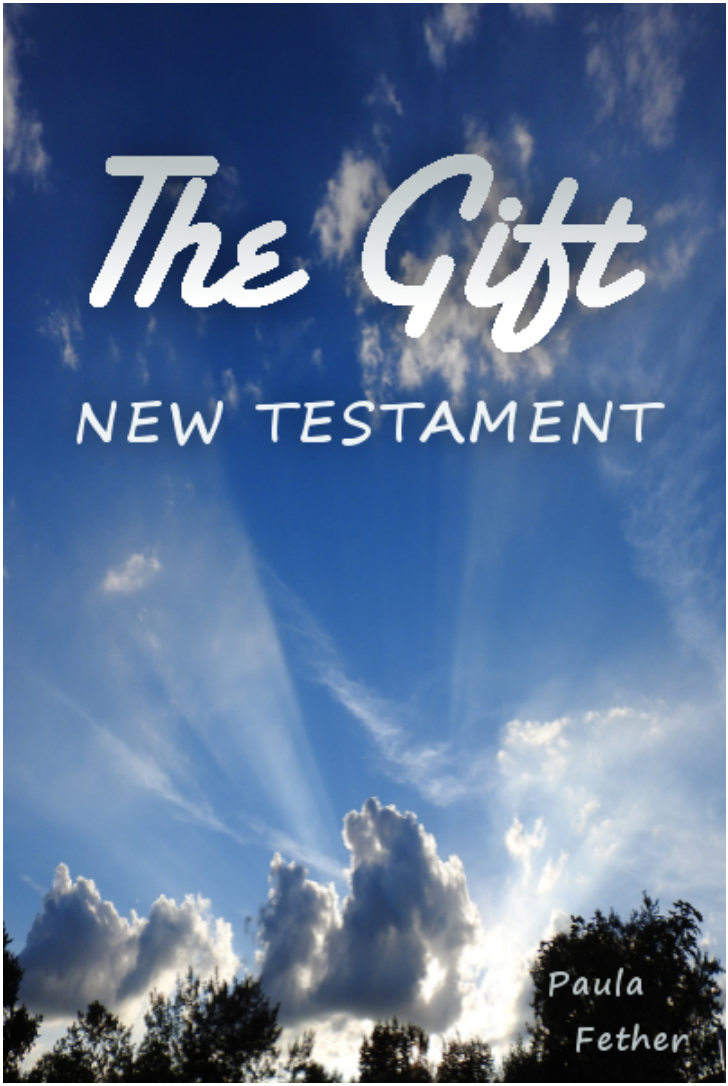
The Gift
NEW TESTAMENT
Paula
Fether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Preface

Overview

The Gift New Testament gets its name from several ideas: that salvation is a gift, that the Christian community is to be gift-based rather than flesh-based, and that the text is absolutely free in electronic form. The central message of the New Testament is of course the good news (the meaning of Gospel) of the risen Jesus, as opposed to bad news or another work-based religion, and it was given freely to us all. So no one can claim spiritual or intellectual property rights over it, and it would

seem a violation of the Gospel message to demand payment for passing on what we have learned freely from the Spirit. Some would appeal to the right of the worker to be paid, but if the apostle Paul is any example to follow, we should instead say, “Yet I have not exercised any of these rights” (1 Cor. 9:13-15). Printed copies should only be sold at minimal cost.

This particular translation was based on a variety of Greek manuscripts, largely favoring the earlier ones. Word meanings are from the Liddel and Scott Greek/English Lexicon as primary authority, but the translation also considers the larger context of figures of speech, customs, and plays on words.

But why make yet another English translation of the New Testament? The radical Gospel message of freedom is often obscured by translation choices that seem more loyal to tradition or ideology than accuracy. But it is nearly impossible to achieve technical accuracy while preserving good communication, which includes the use of figures of speech that only make sense in English by using completely different words than the Greek dictionary meanings would allow. Footnotes can provide some additional information on historical perspective, linguistic issues, and conversions for weights and measures. A commentary, while one person or group's opinion and interpretation, can be another valuable resource.

No translation can or should last forever, because living languages don't stand still. And since English is an especially volatile language, there is justification for at least some of the many translations. Archaeological finds that improve our understanding of Koine (common) Greek vocabulary are not always incorporated in the popular Bible dictionaries, and there is some evidence of deliberate concession to pressure from special interests to keep some words from being updated, even if they are known to be inaccurate.[1] So while too many translations can be more confusing than helpful, it seems better to err on the side of having more eyes examining this sacred text in order to minimize human bias.

Format and Abbreviations

Though individual verses are indicated, the text is arranged into sections and paragraphs which roughly indicate units of thought. Even among scholars there is no unanimous agreement as to where a paragraph, sentence, or chapter should begin or end. But the usefulness of this format is in two primary areas: English readability and keeping verses in their context. The very word “verses” suggests something more like poetry or mysterious writings rather than letters written as any others, inspired though they were.

Some abbreviations used in the notes may include OT or NT for the Old and New Testaments, and LXX for the

Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament from which the New Testament writers quote).

In many places a verse is indicated without any text. These are instances where the content is deemed non-original. None of these have any effect upon the teachings, events, or truths of the New Testament.

Figures of Speech

The writers of the New Testament were likely to have been Hebrew thinkers recording Aramaic speech in Greek. Thus we need to be especially careful about interpreting any given expression, considering all the factors involved. All three languages would have their own

expressions and colloquialisms, and at times a Hebrew idiom may be expressed in Greek words. One such expression is typically “And he spoke to them, saying”, which is rendered simply as “And he said to them”.

A similar situation exists concerning word order. Greek word order does not affect meaning for the most part. It can, however, indicate emphasis. John 1:1 ends with “and God was the Word,” but the order simply emphasizes the divinity of the Word.

Phrases that begin with “son of” are often a Hebrew expression for a member of a group. For example, “son of Israel” means an Israelite, “son of God” means one of the God class of

beings, and “son of man” means one of the human class of beings. So when Jesus uses these expressions for himself, he is either emphasizing his divinity or his humanity. When preceded by the definite article (the), it becomes a title, rendered here as The Human or The God-Man.

Koine Greek also tended to use the masculine gender of words as inclusive; that is, “sons” could be either male or female, while “daughters” were only female. Likewise, “brothers” could also include females. In both cases the masculine form was used if there was at least one male in the group. It is a term of inclusion, not exclusion. So if the Greek text is ambiguous, the English word “siblings” is used.

Proper Names and Titles

Pronouns associated with God are not capitalized, as no special treatment was given them in the Greek text. But even though nothing else is capitalized either, proper names are always capitalized in English. “Father” is capitalized if it clearly refers to God. If a word is likely a personification, it may also be capitalized.

The Greek word typically rendered “angel” literally means “messenger”. Since most readers understand that the Bible speaks of supernatural messengers when they see the word “angel”, this translation will use the familiar term unless it seems clear from

the context that ordinary human messengers are meant.

Pronouns and Gender

There is great controversy over the use of the third-person plural pronoun (they) when an individual's biological gender is unknown. For example, "If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he or she desires a good thing" is more awkward than "If anyone aspires to be an overseer, they desire a good thing." The word for "anyone" is ambiguous in the Greek; it does not specify male or female. Yet some accuse any translation that does not render it "he desires" of "emasculating" the text. This translation has accuracy and faithfulness to the Greek as its top

priority, rather than tradition or prejudice. There is nothing to fear from the truth.

In Greek the Holy Spirit takes the impersonal pronoun (it), though it is clear from the entirety of the New Testament that the Spirit is a personal entity. For example, the Spirit can be grieved (Eph. 4:30), and some were struck down dead for lying to it (Acts 5:3). Hebrew uses the feminine pronoun (she) for the Spirit of God, but again, this does not make God either feminine or masculine.

God is spirit (John 4:24), not flesh, and thus not gendered. If we insist upon assigning biological traits to that which is not biological, we come closer to

myth than scriptural truth. For this reason it is just as wrong to think of God as male as it is to think of God as female or an impersonal force. So if the Greek text uses neuter or feminine terms for any Person of the Trinity, this translation will convey it as such.

Faith/Belief/Trust

The phrase “believe in someone” carries the connotation of blind faith, as one might believe in the tooth fairy. The phrase “believe someone” means to mentally agree with something they said. But “to have faith in someone” or “to trust someone” adds the meaning of personal conviction, of mental assent plus emotional attachment and dedication. That is why the word “trust”

was preferred in this translation, since the Koine Greek of the first century did not have our English concept of merely “believing in” someone’s existence without additional contextual information, such as that used in James chapter two. It also avoids the connotation of “faith” as is seen in some Christian communities, who seem to view it almost as a force or power to be manipulated.

Eternal

The Greek word translated “eternal” has the literal meaning of an age or a time of unknown duration. This does not require a limited time, since eternity is also of unknown duration. Jesus used the same term in Mat. 25:46 for both

punishment and life. So if punishment must be limited in duration, then life in heaven is also limited in duration. Some contend that this is indeed the case, but this logically leads to an endless series of ages, which is indistinguishable from eternity.

Cross or Stake?

The Greek word traditionally rendered “cross” referred to an upright stake or pole. But there is a separate word for the actual cross-piece, the board upon which the outstretched arms of the victim were nailed at the wrists. So the net result is the familiar “cross” shape. This translation simply uses “cross” since the distinction of each piece really

has no great impact on understanding the text.

There are a number of theories for why the religious leaders wanted Jesus crucified by Rome rather than simply stoning him themselves as they almost did on at least one occasion (and did to Stephen later). One is that the night trials were illegal, so they used his claim to be a king as grounds for sedition against Rome, which would require an official Roman execution. Another is that they feared the people would riot if they killed him themselves, though the next day the people would all join in demanding his crucifixion. A third is that they could not execute anyone at all (John 18:31), and that the

stoning of Stephen was simply mob violence.

Church

The Greek word *ekklEsia* is rendered “Congregation” when referring to the community of believers, but uncapitalized when referring to some other gathering. The word *sunagogE* is transliterated “synagogue” to differentiate it from the community of believers (Christians) or when it clearly refers to the building.

Jew and Gentile

While Jew and Gentile are familiar terms to most people, this translation renders each word as it appears in the

Greek, such as Judean or “other nations”. Judea was the name of the area, not simply the name of the Hebrew tribe of Judah, but came to refer to the people, culture, and religion of Israel. All the tribes were represented there, as indicated in such passages as Mat. 19:28, Acts 26:7, Rom. 9:4, and James 1:1.

Times and Dates

A 24-hour day in Israel began at sundown and was divided into segments called “hours” or “watches” (as relates to guard duty). Each “hour” was really a three-hour span, but it was known by its beginning; that is, the “third hour” lasted from 9 o’clock to 12 o’clock, counting from either 6 a.m. or 6

p.m. Going by the position of the sun or moon in the sky made greater precision impractical. But more importantly, the expressions “the third hour” and “almost/about the sixth hour” refer to the same three-hour span, with the latter meaning it was close to the end of that span:

> The whole time from the third hour to the sixth, that is, from nine to twelve, was called the third hour; and the whole intervening time from the sixth to the ninth, that is, from twelve to three, is called the sixth hour. John does not say it was the sixth hour, but about or near the sixth hour. So when he says about the sixth hour, and Mark

> the third hour, we are to understand that Mark takes the whole time of the third hour, from nine to twelve, and that John puts it near twelve. So in either case our Lord was sentenced between the hours of nine and twelve.
>
> David Lipscomb (1831-1917), A Commentary on the Gospel According to John, p. 295-296.

Calendar, Holy Days, Feasts, Festivals

Israel used a lunar calendar, meaning the beginning of a month was marked by the first sighting of the waxing (increasing) crescent moon. Thus the

full moon occurred approximately in the middle of the month. The first month of the year was the beginning of spring (our March/April) and was called Nisan (or Aviv/Abib, after the ripening of the barley harvest). This was stipulated by God in the instructions concerning the Passover Festival in Exodus 12.

That passage, which is about commemorating the passing over of the death angel when Israel was enslaved in Egypt, states that a flawless year-old male lamb (or goat) was to be selected for each family on the 10th. It was to be cared for until the 14th, when at twilight all the lambs were to be slaughtered and then eaten. This marked the start of a seven-day period beginning and ending with a “sacred assembly” (a

special or “high” Sabbath), and all yeast had to be purged from every house for the entire 7 days. The 14th became known as Preparation Day, and the 15th was the actual Passover, though the whole festival was also called the Passover. So regardless of the Gregorian calendar dates, the Preparation was the 14th and the Passover was the 15th.

No work was to be done on any Sabbath except for certain types of food preparation (e.g., Ex. 20:9-10), and people were not to travel (Ex. 16:29). By the time of Jesus the rabbis allowed people to walk less than a mile. So if anyone is said to have worked, done business, or traveled more than a mile

at some point in the Gospels, we can be sure that it was not a Sabbath day.

The Feast of Firstfruits (the first day of the week following Passover per Lev. 23:9-16), began a seven-week festival called the Feast of Weeks (Lev. 23:15-22). Firstfruits was known as “one/first of the Sabbaths,” and this phrase in Greek is imprecisely rendered “the first day of the week” in most Bibles. The Day of Pentecost was a feast marking the final day of the final week.

Questions and Statements

There are times when the meaning of a passage hinges upon whether a phrase is a question or a statement of fact. This cannot always be known with absolute

certainty in Greek, but there are some general guidelines:

1. Most often, questions are in the indicative mood; they are never in the imperative, subjunctive or optative.
2. Sometimes there are question indicators such as *tis*, *ti*, *pOs*, *pou*, or *poi*.
3. Sometimes the word *hara* (with the circumflex) is the first or second word.
4. It may be an indirect question if it includes words like *hopOs*.
5. It may still be a question without any of these indicators, but the presence of them increases the likelihood.

Sin

The New Testament uses several different Greek words that are all traditionally rendered “sin.” While all are violations of God’s will, the differences are mainly in the cause, nature, or circumstances of the sin. However, there is overlap in meaning and the writers often seem to use the terms interchangeably. Each context shows that sin can be either accidental or intentional, and it can be either our own act or the result of someone else’s treachery.

Greek words for “sin”:

- paraptOma (sin): An accidental false step caused by someone else

- astocheO (off-course): To miss the mark due to being unqualified
- parabasis (step over the line): To unlawfully set foot upon another's property
- hamartia (fault): Failure, fault, or guilt
- proskomma (stumble): To set an obstacle or stumbling block for others
- skandalon (trap): To set a trap for others

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The Gift New Testament, though the work of one person, would not have been possible without the gifting and drive of the Holy Spirit. Neither would it have happened without the support of

family and friends, and the vast resources of the internet. Many others have done the work of preparing scholarly references including lexicons, interlinears, and commentaries, which made this effort possible.

About The Author

Paula Fether has been a Christian and a student of the scriptures since the 1970s. She considers this to be a non-scholarly yet thoroughly-studied effort. It is offered in a sincere effort to contribute whatever she is able to the Christian community, and to glorify God by using the gifts He has so graciously given.

About This Edition

The 2021 edition of The Gift New Testament has changed from the prior version in that section headings were added and chapter headings were removed, readings in some places were altered to improve clarity or to better reflect the sense of the Greek texts, the various Greek words for sin were all simply rendered “sin”, and the Greek word meaning “messenger” was rendered as the traditional word “angel” except when a human messenger is meant.

1 Better Bibles, Part 1 under “From a review of Epp’s book,” regarding the changing of Junia to Junias, masculine, without any manuscript support: “Also notable is the

persistence of lexicons and other reference works in locating the name under the nominative masculine.”

Matthew

Genealogy of Jesus from Abraham

1:1 This is the account of the lineage of Jesus the Anointed One, descendant of David and Abraham:

1:2 Abraham fathered Isaac, who fathered Jacob, who fathered Judah and his siblings. 1:3 Judah fathered Perez and Zara by Tamar, and Perez fathered Hezron, who fathered Aram, 1:4 who fathered Aminadab, who fathered Nahshon, who fathered Salmon, 1:5 who fathered Boaz by

Rahab. Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth,
and Obed fathered Jesse, 1:6 who
fathered King David, who fathered
Solomon by Uriah's wife.

1:7 Solomon fathered Rehoboam, who
fathered Abijah, who fathered Asa, 1:8
who fathered Jehosophat, who fathered
Joram, who fathered Uzzaiah, 1:9 who
fathered Jotham, who fathered Ahaz,
who fathered Hezekiah, 1:10 who
fathered Manasseh, who fathered
Amos, who fathered Josiah, 1:11 who
fathered Jechoniah and his siblings at
the time of the deportation to Babylon.

1:12 After the Babylonian exile,
Jechoniah fathered Shealtiel, who
fathered Zorobabel, 1:13 who fathered
Abiud, who fathered Eliakim, who

fathered Azor, 1:14 who fathered Zadok, who fathered Achim, who fathered Eliud, 1:15 who fathered Eleazar, who fathered Matthan, who fathered Jacob, 1:16 who fathered Joseph the husband of Mary, who gave birth to Jesus who is called Anointed One.

1:17 So there were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen from the Babylonian exile to the Anointed One.

The Birth of Jesus

1:18 Now this is the account of the birth of Jesus the Anointed One: His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married it was

discovered that Mary was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. 1:19 But her husband Joseph, being a decent person, didn't want to make a public spectacle of her, so he intended to divorce her quietly.

The custom of the time and culture was that the engaged couple were considered husband and wife before they were actually married, so a legal divorce was required to break off the engagement.

1:20 While he was mulling all these things over, suddenly an angel of the Master appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, don't hesitate to accept Mary as your wife, because the baby is from the Holy Spirit. 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you will give him the name Jesus,

since he will save his people from their sins.”

1:22 This all happened in order to fulfill what the Master said through the prophet: 1:23 “Look! The unmarried

“Unmarried” is what the Greek word means, not strictly “virgin,” and not necessarily a woman. But this context clearly indicates that Mary’s pregnancy was caused by the Holy Spirit, so there is no reason to render the word inaccurately in order to preserve the teaching of the virgin birth. The point is that Jesus had no human father.

woman will become pregnant and give birth to a son. And they will give him the name Emmanuel, which means ‘God is with us’.” 1:24 Then Joseph woke up from his sleep and did as the angel told

him. He married her 1:25 but had no intimacy with her until she gave birth to a son, whom she named Jesus.

2:1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, and in the days of King Herod, official advisors came to Jerusalem from the east. 2:2 They asked, “Where is the one born King of the Judeans? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” 2:3 This disturbed not only King Herod but all of Jerusalem as well.

2:4 So he summoned all the Pharisees to determine where the Anointed One was to be born. 2:5 And they told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea. This is what the prophet wrote: 2:6 ‘Bethlehem of Judah, you are not at all the least

significant among the governors of Judah! For out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

2:7 Then Herod consulted privately with the official advisors to determine the precise time when the star appeared, 2:8 and he sent them into Bethlehem with these instructions: “Go and search carefully for the little one, and if you find him, tell me so that I can come and worship him.” 2:9 Upon hearing this from the king they went off, when suddenly the star they had seen in the east appeared! It went ahead of them until it came to a stop above the little one’s location. 2:10 They were extremely happy to see the star.

2:11 Now when they arrived at the house they saw the little one with his mother Mary. They fell down and worshiped him, and they presented him with gifts such as gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Note several things in this passage: we don't know how many advisors there were, the list of gifts is just a sample, and they worshiped Jesus— an indication of his divinity. Also, this was not the night of his birth but as much as two years later.

2:12 But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, so they took another route to their homeland.

2:13 After they had gone, suddenly an angel of the Master appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Wake up! Take

the little one and his mother, and run away to Egypt. Stay there until I talk to you again, because Herod intends to kill the child.” 2:14 So he woke up and took the child and his mother away that very night to Egypt, 2:15 where he stayed until Herod died. This was in fulfillment of the word of the Master through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

2:16 When Herod realized that the official advisors had made him look like a fool, he was extremely furious. So he had all the children in Bethlehem killed if they were two years old or younger, according to the precise time he had learned from the official advisors. 2:17 Then the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled: 2:18 “A sound is heard in Ramah, of wailing and deep grief.

Rachel is sobbing for her children, and she cannot be consoled, for they are dead and gone.”

2:19 After Herod died, an angel of the Master appeared to Joseph in a dream while he was still in Egypt. 2:20 He told him, “Wake up! Take the little one and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were out to take the child’s life are dead.” 2:21 So he woke up and took the little one and his mother to the land of Israel. 2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod to rule in Judea, he was afraid to go there. And having been divinely warned in another dream, he went into the province of Galilee. 2:23 He settled in the city of

Nazareth in fulfillment of the prophecy, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

John Immerses Jesus

3:1 It was in those days that John the Immerser went to the Judean wilderness to announce, 3:2 “Turn to God, for the kingdom of the heavens has arrived!” 3:3 He was the one mentioned by the prophet Isaiah: “A voice calls out in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the road for the Master! Straighten his paths!’ ” 3:4 John dressed himself with cloth made from camel hair, his belt was made of leather, and he lived on locusts and wild honey.

3:5 Then people came to him from Jerusalem, Judea, and the area around

the Jordan. 3:6 He immersed in the Jordan River as they admitted their sins. 3:7 But when he saw many Pharisees coming to where he was immersing, he said to them, “You den of poisonous snakes! Who warned you to run away from impending doom? 3:8 Prove that you’ve changed your ways. 3:9 And don’t think that being descended from Abraham gets you off the hook, because God is able to raise up children for Abraham out of these stones!

3:10 “The ax is already poised to strike the root of the tree, and any tree not producing good fruit is to be chopped down and thrown into the fire. 3:11 I do indeed immerse you all in water to signify that you changed your minds.

But someone is coming, someone stronger than I am, whose shoes I am unworthy to carry, and he will immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire. 3:12 He has a broom in his hand, and he'll sweep the floor clean! He will collect his grain and store it away, but the chaff will be burned in a fire that can't be put out."

3:13 Jesus came from Galilee to be immersed by John in the Jordan. 3:14 But John objected, "I'm the one who needs to be immersed by you, yet you come to me?"

3:15 "It has to be this way for now," replied Jesus, "for we must do what is right."

3:16 So he consented to immerse him. And immediately as Jesus came up out

of the water, suddenly the heavens opened up, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and landing on him. 3:17 At that moment there was a voice from heaven saying, “This is my dear son; I am quite pleased with him!”

Jesus is tested by the Slanderer

4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit to go into the wilderness to be tested by the Slanderer. 4:2 After having gone forty days and nights without food, Jesus was hungry. 4:3 So the Tester came to him and said, “If you’re really the God-Man, tell these stones to become bread.”

4:4 “It is written,” Jesus replied, “that we don’t live on bread alone but on every word uttered by God.”

4:5 Then the Slanderer took him into the holy city and stood him on the highest point of the temple compound. 4:6 And he said to him, “If you’re really the God-Man, throw yourself down. As it is written, ‘He will command his angels to lift you up with their hands so you won’t strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

4:7 “It is written,” Jesus replied, “You must not provoke the Master your God!”

4:8 Next the Slanderer took him up into a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in all their splendor. 4:9 And he said to him, “I will

give all of this to you, if you will fall down and worship me!”

4:10 “Get away from me, Adversary!” Jesus replied. “For it is written: ‘It is only the Master your God you must worship; serve no one else!’ ” 4:11 Then the Slanderer left him, and suddenly angels came and attended to Jesus’ needs.

Jesus chooses disciples

4:12 When Jesus heard that John had been put under arrest, he went into Galilee. 4:13 Then he moved out of Nazareth and settled in Capernaum by the sea, in the area near Zebulon and Naphtali, 4:14 in order to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah:

4:15 “The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, the road to the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, in Galilee of the other nations: 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; to those sitting in the shadowy place of death, a light has risen on them.”

4:17 And from then on Jesus began to announce, “Turn to God, for the kingdom of the heavens has come!”

4:18 As he walked along the seaside in Galilee, he saw two brothers: Simon (called Peter) and Andrew. They were throwing a fishing net into the sea, because that’s how they made their living. 4:19 And he said to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to

fish for people!” 4:20 So they immediately dropped their nets and followed him. 4:21 From there, he saw two other brothers: James and John, sons of Zebedee. They were in the boat with their father, preparing the nets. He called to them, 4:22 and immediately they followed him, leaving the ship and their father.

4:23 Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and announcing the good news of the kingdom, and he also healed all sorts of diseases and weaknesses the people had. 4:24 His fame spread throughout Syria, and they brought him all the people afflicted with various serious diseases and torments, including the demonized, those with convulsions, and

the paralyzed; he healed them all. 4:25 A large crowd followed him from Galilee, the Ten Cities, Jerusalem, Judea, and the other side of the Jordan.

Jesus teaches the crowds

5:1 When Jesus saw the crowd, he went up into the mountain and sat down. His disciples came to him 5:2 and he began to teach them:

Nine blessings

5:3 “Happy are the destitute, spiritually speaking, for the kingdom of the heavens is theirs.

5:4 “Happy are the grieving, for they will be consoled.

5:5 “Happy are the even-tempered, for they will inherit the earth.

5:6 “Happy are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.

5:7 “Happy are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

5:8 “Happy are those with clean minds, for they will see God.
Lit. “clean hearts”; both are possible.

5:9 “Happy are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.

5:10 “Happy are those who are persecuted for doing right, for the kingdom of the heavens is theirs.

5:11 “Happy are those who, on my account, are disgraced, persecuted, defamed, and lied about; 5:12 yes, be very happy and overjoyed! For you will have great reward in the heavens. This is the same way they persecuted the prophets before you.

Salt and light

5:13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its seasoning, how can it be made salty again? It’s good for nothing but being thrown outside where people will trample it. 5:14 You are the light of the world. A city on a high hill cannot be hidden; 5:15 no one lights a lamp and then puts it under a jar. Rather, they set it on a lampstand so it provides light to everyone in the house. 5:16 Likewise,

let your light shine for everyone so they can see the good that you do and give honor to your Father in the heavens.

Fulfilling the law and prophecies

5:17 “Don’t think that I have come to dismantle ‘the Law and the Prophets’; I have not come to dismantle them but to fulfill them. 5:18 Let me make this clear: as long as the earth and sky remain, not even the smallest letter or stroke of a pen will be taken away from the Law before everything is accomplished.

“The Law and the Prophets” refers to the Torah, that is, the law of Moses and the prophecies. Yet the end result of dismantling or fulfillment is the same; a fulfilled contract is no longer in force. This may be what Jesus meant by everything being accomplished, since his stated purpose here is to fulfill it all.

5:19 So if anyone tries to weaken even the smallest part of these commands and teaches others the same, that person will be the smallest in the kingdom of the heavens. Conversely, if anyone practices them and teaches others the same, that person will be the greatest in the kingdom of the heavens.

Taking responsibility for offenses

5:20 “I tell you that if your righteousness isn’t any better than that of the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of the heavens! 5:21 For you have heard that people a long time ago were told, ‘You must not murder, and whoever murders will be held to account’. 5:22 But I tell you that whoever is angry with a sister or brother for no reason will be held to account. Whoever says to them, ‘You’re worthless!’, will have to stand before the court, and whoever says to them, ‘Idiot!’, will be

thrown into the fire of Gehenna.

“Angry with a sister or brother” in some manuscripts is followed by “without a cause.” This seems to be implied anyway, as even Jesus became angry at times. It’s possible that this condition applies to the whole passage. Gehenna was the literal trash dump that was always burning due to a constant supply of material. Clearly Jesus is using it metaphorically to refer to final judgment.

5:23 “If you’re ever on your way to make an offering and remember that your brother or sister has a reason to be upset with you, 5:24 leave your gift at the altar and first go back and reconcile with them; then you can make your offering. 5:25 Reach a quick settlement

with the one bringing you to court, while you are still on the way there. Otherwise your opponent might hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the deputy, who will throw you into prison. 5:26 And I tell you that you won't get out of there until you pay every last bit of what you owe!

Unfaithfulness

5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You must not commit adultery'. 5:28 But I say to you that whoever lusts after a woman has already committed it in his mind. 5:29 So if your right eye is a trap for you, take it out and throw it away! It's better for you to lose a body part than for your whole body to be thrown into Gehenna. 5:30 Or if your right hand

is a trap for you, cut it off and throw it away! It's better for you to lose a body part than for your whole body to go into Gehenna.

5:31 "It has been said that 'Whoever wants to be rid of his wife only needs to give her a divorce notice'. 5:32 But I say to you, that whoever gets rid of his faithful wife makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries her also commits adultery.

Taking oaths

5:33 "Another thing you've heard for a long time: 'Do not swear an oath you don't intend to keep; you must fulfill your oaths to the Master.' 5:34 But I say to you, don't swear any oath at all: not

by heaven (it is the throne of God), 5:35 not by earth (it is the footstool of God), not by Jerusalem (it is the city of the Great King), 5:36 and not even by your own head, since you can't turn one hair white or black. 5:37 Just say 'yes' or 'no' and mean it; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Avoiding needless strife

5:38 "You've heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' 5:39 But I say to you, don't take an adversarial stance against an aggressor. If they slap you on the right cheek, present the other side as well. 5:40 If someone takes you to court and wins your shirt, give them your coat as well. 5:41 And if someone conscripts

you to go with them for a thousand paces, go along for two thousand.

In these three examples, Jesus is not saying that we should be doormats, but that we should demonstrate the injustice being done to us by exaggerating it. To present the other cheek, give the shirt off our back, or go the extra mile, is to shame the aggressor for demanding anything at all. So rather than trying to gain justice by paying back, we should give more than they demanded.

5:42 Give to the one who asks of you, and lend to the one who wants to borrow from you.

Compassion for all

5:43 “You’ve heard that it was said,
‘Love your neighbor and despise your
enemy.’ 5:44 But I say to you, love your
enemies and pray for those who
persecute you, 5:45 so that you will be
children of your Father in the heavens.
For the sun rises on good and bad
people alike; rain falls on both the
righteous and the unrighteous. 5:46 If
you only love those who love you, do
you expect to be rewarded? Even tax
contractors do that! 5:47 And if you only
welcome your sisters and brothers,
what great thing have you done? Even
the other nations do that! 5:48 But if you
do these things, you will be complete,
just as the heavenly Father is complete.

Giving to the needy

6:1 “Be careful that you don’t do good deeds just to impress people; if you do, you will not get any reward from your Father in the heavens. 6:2 So whenever you give to charity, don’t make a big show of it like those pretenders who do so in the synagogues and streets to be praised by the people. I can assure you that they’ve been paid in full! 6:3 Instead, do your giving discreetly; 6:4 keep it secret. Then your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you.

Prayer and forgiveness

6:5 “And whenever you pray, don’t be like the pretenders who love to pray standing in the synagogues and city squares so people can see them. I can

assure you that they've been paid in full! 6:6 Instead, whenever you pray, go into your closet and lock the door so you can pray to your Father in secret. Then your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you.

6:7 "Also, don't repeat the same prayers endlessly like the other nations do, who think that all their words get them attention. 6:8 Don't be like them, because your Father knows what you need before you ask. 6:9 Pray more like this:

'Our Father in the heavens, may your name be revered! 6:10 May your kingdom appear; may your intentions be carried out on earth just as they are in heaven. 6:11 Give us what we need

for the day, 6:12 and forgive our debts to you just as we forgive debts owed to us. 6:13 Please don’t put us to the test but get us safely away from the evil one.’

6:14 “(If you forgive other people’s sins, your Father in heaven will forgive your sins; 6:15 and if you don’t, he won’t.)

Fasting

6:16 “Whenever you fast, don’t be like the pretenders who go around with sad faces so people know they’re fasting. I can assure you that they’ve been paid in full! 6:17 But when you fast, put on a pleasant fragrance and wash your face 6:18 so people don’t know you’re fasting. And your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you.

Materialism

6:19 “Don’t store up valuables here on earth, where moth and rust erode, and where thieves break in and steal. 6:20 Instead, store them in heaven where that can’t happen. 6:21 For your mind will be on what you value.

6:22 “Your eye is the light of your body. If your eye is innocent, your whole body will be filled with light, 6:23 but if your eye is evil, your whole body will be filled with darkness. So if the light in you is really darkness, what deep darkness it is! 6:24 And no one can serve two masters; they’d love one and hate the other, or despise one and support the other. You cannot serve both God and Wealth.

Worry

6:25 “What I’m telling you is not to worry, whether it’s about where your food and drink will come from, or what you’ll cover your body with. Doesn’t your life mean much more than food, and your body much more than clothing? 6:26 Observe the birds of the sky; they don’t plant seeds, they don’t harvest, and they don’t put food in storage, yet your Father in heaven feeds them. Aren’t you worth far more than birds? 6:27 And which of you can prolong your life by worrying?

6:28 “Why do you also worry about clothing? Study the wild flowers and how they grow; they don’t do any work or spin thread. 6:29 Yet I tell you that not

even Solomon in all his majesty was dressed as well as one of those flowers! 6:30 So if the grass of the field is here one day and thrown into an oven the next, won't God clothe you all the more, you skeptics?

6:31 "So then, stop worrying about what you'll eat, what you'll drink, or what you'll wear. 6:32 The people of other nations are always looking for these things, but your Father in heaven knows you need them. 6:33 If you make the kingdom of God and his righteousness your priority, all these other things will be provided for you. 6:34 So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of itself; don't borrow tomorrow's problems today.

Double standards and discernment

7:1 “Be careful how you judge, because
that’s how you will be judged by God.
7:2 You will be judged and measured by
the standards you demanded from
others. 7:3 How can you point to the
splinter in your brother or sister’s eye,
while there is a whole plank of wood in
your own eye? 7:4 How can you say to
your sister or brother, ‘Here, let me get
that splinter out of your eye’ while
there’s a plank in your own eye? 7:5
Pretender! First get that plank out of
your own eye so you can clearly see
how to get the splinter out of your
brother or sister’s eye.

7:6 “Don’t give what is holy to dogs; stop throwing your pearls in front of hogs, who will just trample on them and then turn and attack you.

Jesus seems to be saying that we must not keep offering truth to those who are hostile it. We should note that Jesus never spoke kindly to the Pharisees.

Persistence

7:7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. 7:8 It’s only those who ask, seek, and knock who get what they’re looking for. 7:9 After all, which of you would give your child a rock if they asked for bread? 7:10 Who would give them a snake if they asked for fish? 7:11 Now if you, being evil,

know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in the heavens give good things to those who ask him! 7:12 So to sum up, treat people the way you'd like them to treat you; this is what the Law and the Prophets are all about.

Truth is unpopular

7:13 "Go in through the narrow gate. There are many who go through the wide gate and travel the multi-lane highway to ruin. 7:14 But the difficult road to life is through the narrow gate, and few find it.

Beware of fakes

7:15 “Beware of false prophets; they appear to be sheep, but on the inside they are ravenous wolves. 7:16 You can identify them by what they do; you don’t pick grapes from thorn bushes, and you don’t pick figs from thistles. 7:17 A good tree gives appealing fruit, but a rotten tree gives disgusting fruit, 7:18 and neither can produce the other’s fruit. 7:19 Trees that don’t make good fruit are chopped down and thrown into the fire. 7:20 So you can identify them by what they do.

7:21 “Not everyone who calls me Master will be admitted into the kingdom of the heavens, but only those who do what my Father in the heavens wants. 7:22 In that day, many will say to me, ‘Our Master, didn’t we prophesy in your

name, and didn’t we throw out demons and perform many powerful deeds in your name?’ 7:23 And I will have to reply, ‘I never knew you; get away from me, all you lawless people!’

Practicing what Jesus teaches

7:24 “So then, everyone who hears what I say and does it, is like a wise man who built his house on rock. 7:25 The rain came down on it, the water rushed toward it, and the wind blew against it, but it could not be knocked over since it was founded on rock. 7:26 But the one who hears what I say yet doesn’t do it, is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 7:27 The rain came, the water rushed, and the wind blew, pounding

against that house. It fell, and what a huge crash it was!”

7:28 Now when Jesus had finished saying all these things, the crowd was awestruck by his teachings. 7:29 He taught with authority, not like their scribes.

Jesus heals a leper

8:1 As Jesus went down the mountain, he was followed by a large crowd. 8:2 Suddenly a leper came toward him, and he worshiped him and said, “Sir, if you choose, you can make me clean!”

8:3 “I so choose!” said Jesus, reaching out to touch him. “Be clean!” And immediately his leprosy was completely gone. 8:4 Then Jesus added, “See to it

that you speak to no one, but go straight to show yourself to the priest and confirm your healing by offering the gift commanded by Moses."

Jesus and the Roman officer

8:5 Then Jesus entered Capernaum, where he was approached by a Roman army captain. He pleaded, 8:6 "Sir, my servant is paralyzed and homebound, suffering terribly!"

8:7 "I will come to heal him," said Jesus.

8:8 "Master," replied the Roman officer, "I am unworthy to have you come under my roof. But just say the word and my servant will be healed. 8:9 After all, I too am one who is under the authority of another, and I have soldiers under me. I

tell one of them ‘Go!’ and he goes; I tell another ‘Come!’ and he comes; I tell my servant ‘do this!’ and he does it.”

8:10 When Jesus heard this, he was very surprised and said to those following him, “I sure haven’t found anyone in Israel with that much faith! 8:11 And I tell you this: many will come from east and west to dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, 8:12 yet the subjects will be exiled to the darkness outside, where people will wail and grind their teeth.” 8:13 Then he said to the Roman officer, “Go! You have what you believed.” And his servant was healed that very hour.

Jesus heals many

8:14 Then Jesus came to Peter’s house, where he saw that Peter’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever. 8:15 So he touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and served him a meal. 8:16 By evening, many people were brought to him suffering from demon possession. He threw the demons out by speaking to them, and he healed all who were sick. 8:17 In this way he fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah, “He took away our illnesses and lifted our burdens.”

The cost of following Jesus

8:18 When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave the order to go to the other side of the lake. 8:19 But a scribe

came up to him and said, “Teacher, I’ll follow you wherever you go.”

8:20 “Foxes have burrows to live in, and the birds of the sky have nests,” he replied, “But the Human has no place to sleep tonight.”

8:21 Another one of his disciples said to him, “Master, first let me go and bury my father.”

8:22 “Follow me,” said Jesus, “and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Jesus calms the storm

8:23 So then Jesus got into the boat, and his disciples followed him. 8:24 But suddenly there was a tremendous storm at sea, such that the boat was

about to be overcome by the waves. Somehow Jesus was sleeping through it, 8:25 so they went and woke him up and said, “Master, help us! We are about to die!”

8:26 “What cowards you are!” he replied. “Such skeptics!” So he got up and rebuked the wind and sea, and there was a great calm. 8:27 The people were astounded and said, “Who is this, that the wind and the sea listen to him?!”

Jesus evicts demons from two men

8:28 When they got to the other side in the area of the Gerasenes, they were met by two demonized people coming

out from among the graves. They were so ferocious that no one was able to pass through there. 8:29 Suddenly they shouted, “What do you want with us, God-Man? Have you come here to torture us before you’re supposed to?”

8:30 There was a herd of hogs in the distance, 8:31 so the demons pleaded with him, “If you’re going to throw us out, send us into that herd of hogs.” 8:32 He told them to go ahead, and they went into the hogs. Suddenly the whole herd stampeded over the cliff and into the sea, where they all drowned. 8:33 The herders ran away into the city, and they told them everything that had happened, especially about the demonized people. 8:34 Suddenly the whole city went out to see Jesus, and

when they did, they begged him to leave their area.

Jesus heals a paralyzed person

9:1 Jesus got into the boat and crossed over to his hometown. 9:2 Suddenly there were people bringing a paralyzed person on a cot, and when Jesus saw their faith he told the paralyzed one, “Cheer up, child! Your sins are forgiven.” 9:3 But immediately some of the scribes said to themselves, “He is claiming to be God!”

9:4 But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, “What evil thing are you thinking about? 9:5 Which is easier to say: ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or ‘Get

up and walk’? 9:6 But just to show you what authority the Human has here on earth to forgive sins…” He said to the paralyzed one, “Get up; pick up your cot and go home!” 9:7 and he did! 9:8 And when the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe and praised God for giving such authority to people.

Jesus chooses Matthew as a disciple

9:9 As Jesus went along from there, he saw someone sitting in a tax contractor’s office. His name was Matthew, and Jesus said to him, “Follow me!” and he did. 9:10 And when he was reclining for dinner in the house, suddenly many other tax contractors and scoundrels were coming to eat with

him and his disciples. 9:11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does this teacher of yours eat with tax contractors and scoundrels?”

9:12 But Jesus heard them and said, “It isn’t the healthy who need a physician, but the sick. 9:13 Now go and learn what this means: ‘I want compassion, not sacrifice’. I didn’t come to call the righteous, but the unrighteous.”

The old and new cannot be mixed

9:14 Then some of John’s disciples came to him and said, “Why is it that we and the Pharisees fast regularly, yet your disciples do not?”

9:15 “The wedding guests cannot mourn while they have the bridegroom with them,” Jesus replied. “But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. 9:16 No one patches an old article of clothing with unshrunk cloth, because the patch would pull away and cause an even bigger tear than before. 9:17 Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins, because the wineskins will burst and spill out all the wine, and the wineskins will be ruined. Instead, they pour new wine into new wineskins so both are preserved.”

Jesus heals the sick and raises the dead

9:18 While he was still talking, suddenly a ruler came and worshiped him, and he said, “My daughter just died, but if you come and place your hand on her, she will live!” 9:19 So Jesus got up and went with him, as did his disciples. 9:20 But suddenly a woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years came up behind him and touched the hem of his cloak 9:21 (she had said to herself, ‘If only I can touch his clothing, I will be healed!’). 9:22 Then Jesus turned around and saw her, and he said to her, “Cheer up, daughter! Your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed that very hour.

9:23 Jesus arrived at the ruler’s house, and when he saw the flute players and the fuss the crowd was making, 9:24 he

said, “Get out! The young girl is not dead but only asleep.” And they laughed at him. 9:25 But after he had thrown them all out, he grasped her hand and she woke up. 9:26 So the news about this went out all over that whole land.

9:27 As Jesus went on from there, he was followed by two blind people who kept shouting, “Have pity on us, descendant of David!” 9:28 When he entered a house, they came to Jesus and he asked them, “Do you believe I can do this?”

“Yes, sir!” they replied.

9:29 So he touched their eyes and said, “Let it be as you believe!” 9:30 And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly

warned them, “See to it that you tell no one!” 9:31 But they went out and spread the news all over that land.

9:32 After he left, suddenly people brought him someone who was mute and demonized. 9:33 When the demon was thrown out, the mute person could talk. The crowd was amazed and said, “We’ve never seen anything like this in Israel!” 9:34 But the Pharisees said, “It’s because of the ruler of the demons that he is able to throw them out.”

Jesus continues his travels

9:35 Jesus went around to all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, as well as healing

all the diseases and illnesses. 9:36 But he looked at the crowd with compassion, because they were troubled and lost, like sheep without a shepherd. 9:37 And he remarked to his disciples, “Indeed, the harvest is abundant but the workers are few. 9:38 So plead with the master of the harvest to send out more workers to help.”

Jesus sends out The Twelve

10:1 Then he called together twelve of his disciples, and he gave them authority to throw out unclean spirits and heal all diseases and illnesses. 10:2 He designated them Ambassadors as follows: Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew, James son of Zebedee, his brother John, 10:3 Philip,

Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew the tax contractor, James son of Alpheus, Thaddaios, 10:4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas from Kerioth, who would eventually betray Jesus.

10:5 Jesus commissioned these Twelve and gave them this mission: “Don’t go out to the other nations or the Samaritans, 10:6 but only to the lost sheep of Israel. 10:7 And as you go, proclaim to them that the kingdom of the heavens has arrived. 10:8 Heal the infirm, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and throw out demons. Give freely, because you have received freely.

10:9 “Don’t take along any money, not even pocket change. 10:10 Don’t pack

an extra shirt, shoes, or even a walking stick, because the worker deserves to be compensated. 10:11 When you enter a city, find out who the decent people are and stay with them until you move on. 10:12 And when you enter the house, be cordial to the people there. 10:13 If it is a worthy house, bless it with peace; but if not, take your blessing back.

10:14 “Now if the people there won’t accept you or listen to what you have to say, go out of that house or city and shake the dust from your feet.

This was an insult, because not even the dust on their feet was worth taking elsewhere.

10:15 I can assure you that on the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for

the lands of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that city!

10:16 “Take note of this: I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as serpents yet as pure as doves. 10:17 Beware of people; they will hand you over to stand before tribunals, and they will flog you in the synagogues. 10:18 On my account you will be taken to stand before governors and kings, as a testimony to them and to the other nations. 10:19 But don’t worry about what to say, because it will be given to you just when you need it. 10:20 So it won’t be you talking but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

10:21 “Siblings will hand each other over to death; likewise, parents will betray children and children will have their parents executed. 10:22 You will be despised by everybody on account of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be rescued. 10:23 And if they pursue you in one city, run away to the next. I can assure you that you will not finish with all the cities in Israel before the Human arrives.

10:24 “The student is not over the teacher, nor is the servant over their master— 10:25 though the student may become like their teacher and the servant may become like their master. So if the homeowner is being called Beelzeboul, what will they call the others in the house?!

10:26 “Don’t be afraid of them, because nothing is veiled that won’t be revealed, and nothing is concealed that won’t be made known. 10:27 What I tell you in the dark, you must tell in the light; what I whisper in your ear, you must proclaim from the housetops. 10:28 And don’t fear those who can kill the body but not the soul; instead, fear the one who can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna.

10:29 “Aren’t two sparrows sold for pocket change? Yet not one of them can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. 10:30 Even the hairs on your head are numbered! 10:31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth far more than many sparrows. 10:32 And whoever acknowledges me in front of others is the one I will acknowledge in

the presence of my Father in the heavens. 10:33 But whoever renounces me in front of others is the one I will renounce in the presence of my Father in the heavens.

Truth divides people

10:34 “Don’t think that I came to establish peace on the earth; no, not at all. What I brought was a sword 10:35 that will cut between father and son, mother and daughter, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. 10:36 A person’s enemies will be under their own roof! 10:37 So whoever favors their father or mother over me is unworthy of me; whoever favors their son or daughter over me is unworthy of me; 10:38 whoever will not pick up their cross and

follow me is unworthy of me. 10:39 The one who finds their life will lose it, but the one who loses their life because of me will find it.

10:40 “Whoever accepts you is really accepting me, and whoever accepts me is really accepting the one who sent me. 10:41 Whoever accepts a prophet just for being a prophet will receive the same reward as a prophet. Likewise, whoever accepts a righteous person just for being righteous will get the same reward as the righteous. 10:42 And if you give one of my followers a cup of cold water to drink, just for being my disciple, I can assure you that you will not lose your reward.”

Jesus and John the Immerser

11:1 After Jesus had finished giving the assignment to his Twelve disciples, he went from there to teach and proclaim in all those cities. 11:2 Now John was in prison, and when he heard about all the things the Anointed One was doing, he sent his disciples 11:3 to ask him, “Are you the Coming One, or should we look for someone else?” 11:4 And Jesus’ response was, “Go and tell John what you’re seeing and hearing: 11:5 The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the destitute are being given good news. 11:6 Happy are those who aren’t tripped up because of me.”

11:7 When John’s disciples had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about him: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed being bent by the wind? 11:8 No? Maybe you went out to see someone dressed in fancy clothes; but no, such people are found in the palaces of kings. 11:9 So what is it you went out to see? A prophet? Yes; but I assure you, much more than a prophet! 11:10 He is the one about whom it is written: ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare the road in front of you.’

11:11 “I tell you truly that no one born of women in this generation is greater than John the Immerser! Yet the least significant in the kingdom of the heavens is greater than he. 11:12 From

the time of John the Immerser until now, there have been people trying to barge into the kingdom of the heavens when they have no legal right to it, interfering with others' rights to it. 11:13 But this was all prophesied in the Law and Prophets. 11:14 And if you choose to accept it, John is the Elijah who was to come. 11:15 If you have ears, listen!

11:16 "How can I describe this generation? It's like children sitting in the marketplace calling out to each other, 11:17 'We played the flute but you didn't dance; we mourned but you didn't grieve.' 11:18 For John doesn't go around eating and drinking, and they say, 'He's possessed!' 11:19 But the Human does go around eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at that

glutton and drunkard! He hangs around with tax contractors and scoundrels!’ There is no pleasing such people.

Jesus denounces unrepentant towns

11:20 Then he began a rant against those cities in which he had displayed the most of his power, because they did not change their minds: 11:21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! And woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the power displayed in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have changed their minds long ago and expressed deep grief and shame. 11:22 Yet they will be better off than you on Judgment Day! 11:23 And as for you, Capernaum, you will not be lifted up to heaven but go down to

Hades! For if the power displayed in you had been done in Sodom, it would still be there today. 11:24 Yet I tell you that the land of Sodom will be better off on Judgment Day than you!”

11:25 At the end of that Jesus concluded, “I acknowledge you, Father, Master of heaven and earth, because you concealed these things from the wise and educated, and you revealed them to those of no reputation. 11:26 Yes, Father, this is what pleased you.”

The Son reveals the Father and lifts burdens

11:27 Then he said to the people, “Everything has been handed over to me by my Father. No one can really

know the Son except the Father, nor can anyone know the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. 11:28 So come to me, all who labor under a heavy load, and I will relieve you. 11:29 Put my harness on you and learn from me, for I am gentle and considerate. Then you will find rest for yourselves, 11:30 because my harness is gentle and the load is light.”

Jesus explains the Sabbath

12:1 In those days on one of the Sabbaths, Jesus went through some grain fields with his disciples, who were hungry and started to pick heads of grain to eat. 12:2 But the Pharisees saw it and said to him, “Hey! Your disciples

are doing what is forbidden on the Sabbath!”

12:3 But Jesus said, “Have you forgotten what David did when he and those with him were hungry? 12:4 He went into the house of God and they ate the bread that had been presented in offering, which was not legal for them to do, but only for the priests. 12:5 And haven’t you read that according to the law, the priests violate every Sabbath but are not guilty? 12:6 But I say to you that there is someone here who is greater than the temple! 12:7 And if you had known what this means, ‘I want compassion rather than sacrifice’, you would not condemn the innocent. 12:8 For the Human is Master of the Sabbath.”

12:9 Moving on from there, he went into their synagogue. 12:10 Suddenly there was someone there with a shriveled hand, and they asked Jesus whether it was permissible to heal on Sabbaths, so they could have some reason to accuse him. 12:11 But he said to them, “If you had a sheep that fell into a ditch on the Sabbaths, which of you would not grab it and pull it out? 12:12 And how much more important is a person than a sheep? So then, it is permissible to do good on the Sabbaths.” 12:13 So he turned to the person and said, “Hold out your hand.” The person did so and it was immediately restored to complete health, just like the other hand. 12:14 The Pharisees’ response was to go out and convene a council to plot how to kill Jesus.

Jesus fulfills Isaiah 42:1-4

12:15 Since he knew what they were planning, Jesus left the area. Crowds followed him, and he healed them all. 12:16 But he sternly warned them not to reveal his identity, 12:17 in order to fulfill what was written by the prophet Isaiah:

12:18 “Look at my chosen child, the one I love and am pleased with! I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim righteousness to the other nations. 12:19 He will not fight or shout; his voice will not be heard in the streets. 12:20 He will not even step on a reed and break it, nor snuff out a smoldering wick, until his victory brings justice 12:21 and the other nations put confidence in his name.”

Jesus is accused of using the power of Beelzeboul

12:22 Someone with a demon causing blindness and deafness was brought to Jesus. He healed him so that he could immediately see and talk. 12:23 All the people were beside themselves and said, “Could this be the Descendant of David?” 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard this they said, “It is by the power of Beelzeboul, ruler of the demons, that he throws them out!”

12:25 Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will self-destruct, and every city or house divided against itself cannot stand. 12:26 So if the Adversary is throwing himself

out, how can his kingdom stand, since it's divided? 12:27 And if I'm throwing out demons by the power of Beelzeboul, then by whose power are your own people throwing them out? So it is they who will judge you! 12:28 Yet if I throw them out by the Spirit of God, it follows that the kingdom of God is certainly here.

12:29 "How would anyone be able to break into a strong person's house and pilfer all their belongings, unless they first tied up the strong person? Only then could they make off with all the loot. 12:30 So whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me is scattering. 12:31 What I'm saying in all this is that people will be forgiven for every sin and slander,

except slander against the Spirit. 12:32 You will be forgiven for speaking against the Human, but not for speaking against the Holy Spirit— not now or ever.

12:33 “If you plant a good tree you get good fruit, but if you plant a bad tree you get bad fruit. So a tree is known by the fruit it makes. 12:34 You pit of poisonous snakes! How can good speech come from evil people? The mouth speaks whatever comes from the mind, 12:35 so a good person expresses the good stored inside of them, and an evil person expresses the evil stored inside of them. 12:36 And on Judgment Day, people will have to account for every little remark they made. 12:37 You

will either be acquitted or condemned by your own words.”

The sign of Jonah

12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, “Teacher, we want you to perform a miraculous sign for us.” 12:39 But he replied, “An evil and adulterous generation looks for a sign! But none will be given except that of the prophet Jonah. 12:40 For just as Jonah was in the belly of the sea monster for three days and three nights, so also the Human will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

12:41 “The people of Ninevah will rise up at the judgment with this generation and

condemn it. They changed their minds in response to Jonah's proclamation, but here in front of you is someone more important than Jonah. 12:42 The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it. She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but here in front of you is someone more important than Solomon.

12:43 "Whenever an unclean spirit goes out from a person, it passes through arid places looking for rest, but it finds none. 12:44 So it says to itself, 'I'll go back to the house I left.' Then it goes and finds the place vacated, swept clean, and put in order, 12:45 so it gets seven other spirits more evil than itself

and re-enters the house. That person was much worse off in the end than they were at first. This is what will happen to this evil generation!”

Jesus defines the family

12:46 While he was still speaking to the crowd, suddenly his mother and siblings were standing outside, wanting to talk to him. 12:47 So someone let him know, 12:48 but he said, “Who is my mother, and who are my siblings?” 12:49 Then he pointed toward his disciples and said, “See, these are my mother and siblings! 12:50 For whoever does the will of my Father in the heavens is my brother and sister and mother.”

The parable of the sower

13:1 Later that day Jesus left the house and sat down beside the sea. 13:2 A large crowd gathered to him, so he got into a boat and sat there, while the crowd stayed on the shore. 13:3 Then he taught them many parables: “Picture someone going out to scatter seeds. 13:4 Some of them fell on the edges of the path, and the birds came along and ate them. 13:5 Others fell on thin, rocky soil. They sprang up quickly but had little depth, 13:6 so when the sun came up it scorched them, and they withered due to having no root. 13:7 Still others fell among thorns, which sprang up and choked them out. 13:8 But some fell on good soil and produced thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times more than was scattered. 13:9 If you have ears, listen!”

13:10 Then his disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to them in parables?”

13:11 “The secrets of the kingdom of the heavens have been revealed to you but not to them,” he replied. 13:12 “For more will be given to those who already have, and they will have plenty. But from those who have little, what they have will be taken away. 13:13 So I speak to them in parables because no matter how much they see and hear, they don’t understand.

13:14 “This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah where it says, ‘You will hear the report but not understand; you will watch but not see. 13:15 For this people’s mind has become thick; they can barely hear

and they've shut their eyes. Otherwise, they'd see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their minds. Then they would change their minds and I would miraculously heal them.' 13:16 But be happy that your eyes see and your ears hear. 13:17 For I can assure you that many prophets and righteous people wanted to see what you see and hear what you hear, but they could not.

13:18 "Now pay attention to the parables of the seed being scattered: 13:19 Some who hear the message of the kingdom don't understand it, so the evil one snatches away the message from their minds; this relates to the seeds falling along the edges of the path. 13:20 The seeds that fell on rocky soil relates to

those who hear the message and gladly accept it right away. 13:21 But because they're shallow and have no root, they don't last long. When the problems and tests of life come along, the message planted in them is quickly sidetracked. 13:22 The seeds falling among thorns relates to those who hear the message, but the anxieties of life and the allure of wealth choke it out, so they produce nothing. 13:23 But the seeds that fell onto good soil relate to those who hear the message and understand it, so they produce a good crop up to thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times more than what was planted."

The parable of the weeds

13:24 Here is another one of his parables: “The kingdom of the heavens is like someone who scattered good seed in his field, 13:25 but during the night while everyone was asleep, his enemy came and scattered wheat-weeds all over the place and went away.

“Wheat-weeds” means weeds that are very difficult to distinguish from wheat.

13:26 So when the grain sprouted and grew, so did the weeds.

13:27 “Then the workers went to the owner and told him, ‘Sir, didn’t you plant good seed in your field? So where did these wheat-weeds come from?’

13:28 “ ‘An enemy did this!’ he replied.

“ ‘Do you want us to go and pull them out?’ asked the workers.

13:29 “ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘In the process of pulling the weeds you might accidentally uproot the wheat. 13:30 Let them all grow up together until the harvest. Then I’ll tell the reapers, “First gather up the weeds and tie them into bundles to be burned, and then gather up the wheat and put it in my silo.”’ ”

The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast

13:31 Another parable he presented to them: “The kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard seed that someone planted in their field. 13:32 Though it is among the smallest of seeds, it grows

to become one of the larger plants. In fact, it becomes the size of a tree, big enough for the birds to build nests in its branches.”

13:33 Yet another parable he gave them: “The kingdom of the heavens is like yeast that a woman added to three measures of flour, making all the dough rise.”

The purpose of parables

13:34 Jesus said all of these things to the crowd in the form of parables; in fact, he never told them anything that wasn’t a parable. 13:35 This was to fulfill that which was declared through the prophet, “I will speak to them using parables; I will express what has been

concealed since the world was established.”

Jesus explains the parable of the weeds

13:36 After dismissing the crowd, Jesus went into the house. Then his disciples came to him and said, “Please explain the parable of the wheat-weeds in the field.” 13:37 So he explained, “The one who planted good seed represents the Human, 13:38 the field represents the world, the good seed represents the citizens of the kingdom, the weeds represent the servants of the evil one, 13:39 and the enemy who planted the weeds is the Slanderer. The harvest represents the end of the age, and the reapers represent the angels.

13:40 “Just as the weeds are gathered and burned, so also will it be at the end of the age. 13:41 The Human will send out his angels, and they will uproot from his kingdom all traps and all who are lawless. 13:42 These will be thrown into the blazing furnace, where they will lament and grind their teeth. 13:43 But the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, listen!

Parables of great treasure

13:44 “The kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure hidden in a field. When someone discovers it, they cover it up again and then gladly go out and sell everything they have in order to buy that field. 13:45 Or think of it as a

merchant looking for beautiful pearls. 13:46 When they find a superb specimen, they go out and sell everything they have in order to buy it.

The parable of the net

13:47 “Yet another way to think of it is like a dragnet thrown into the sea, where it collects all kinds of fish. 13:48 When it’s full, it’s hauled to shore and they sort the fish, putting the good ones into containers and throwing the bad ones back. 13:49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the evil from among the righteous, 13:50 and the evil will be thrown into the blazing furnace where they will lament and grind their teeth.

13:51 Do you understand this now?”
Jesus asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

13:52 Then Jesus said to them, “So
then, every scribe who becomes a
disciple of the kingdom of the heavens
is like someone who owns a house and
furnishes it with both new things and old
things from storage.”

Jesus is belittled by his hometown

13:53 After he was finished with the
parables, Jesus left there and went to
his hometown. 13:54 He taught in their
synagogues, and they were astonished:
“Where did he get this wisdom and

power? 13:55 Isn’t he the son of the craftsman and Mary? And aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? 13:56 And aren’t his sisters here too? So where did all this come from?” 13:57 They were offended, and Jesus responded, “Only in their hometown and among their own relatives is a prophet dishonored!” 13:58 And he didn’t display much power there because of their lack of faith.

Herod beheads John the Immerser

14:1 It was around that time that Herod, ruler over one-fourth the country, heard reports about Jesus 14:2 and said to his servants, “This is John the Immerser, come back to life! That’s how he has

these powers.” 14:3 Now Herod had arrested and jailed John on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, 14:4 since John had said, “It’s illegal for you to have her.” 14:5 Herod wanted to have John killed, but he feared the crowd, since they considered him a prophet.

14:6 But at Herod’s birthday party, Herodias’ daughter danced for them. He was so pleased 14:7 that he promised, on oath, to give her anything she might ask for. 14:8 So, at the prompting of her mother, she said, “Give me the head of John the Immerser on a platter!” 14:9 The king was greatly disturbed, but because of his oaths and dinner guests, he gave the order, 14:10 and John was beheaded in the prison. 14:11 His head

was put on a platter and carried to the young girl, who gave it to her mother. 14:12 Then John's disciples came for his body and buried it, and then they told Jesus what happened.

Jesus feeds five thousand

14:13 Upon hearing this, Jesus went off alone by boat to a solitary place. But the crowd found out and followed on foot from all the cities. 14:14 And when Jesus came out of there he saw the large crowd and was moved with compassion for them, so he healed the chronically ill among them.

14:15 When it was late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is an isolated place and the hour is getting

late. Dismiss the crowd so they can go off to the villages and buy themselves some food."

14:16 But Jesus said to them, "There's no need for them to go; you feed them!"

14:17 "All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish!" they exclaimed.

14:18 "Bring them to me," Jesus replied.

14:19 He ordered the crowd to recline on the grass for a meal. Then, taking the five loaves and two fish, he looked up to the sky and blessed them, then broke them up and gave them to his disciples. The disciples then passed them out to the crowd, 14:20 and they all ate until they were full; the leftovers filled twelve wicker baskets. 14:21 The number of

men who had eaten was around five thousand, not counting the women and children.

Jesus walks on water

14:22 Immediately Jesus had his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side of the lake, while he stayed and dismissed the crowd. 14:23 Having released them, he went up into the mountain alone to pray. It was late when he was there alone, 14:24 and by that time the boat had already gone far from land.

14:25 At about three in the morning Jesus came to them, walking on the sea. 14:26 And when his disciples saw him walking around on the water, they

were very disturbed and shouted out in terror, “It’s a ghost!” 14:27 But right away Jesus said to them, “Have courage, it’s me! Don’t be afraid.”

14:28 Then Peter said to him, “Master, if it’s really you, command me to come to you on the water.”

14:29 “Come on!” replied Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water. He came near Jesus 14:30 but then got distracted by the strong wind. He became afraid and started to sink, so he called out to him, “Master, save me!”

14:31 Immediately Jesus reached out and grabbed Peter, and he said to him, “You skeptic! Why did you doubt?” 14:32 As soon as they got into the boat, the

wind died down. 14:33 So they worshiped him and said, “Truly you are the God-Man!”

More healings

14:34 They crossed over and landed at Gennesaret. 14:35 And when the people there recognized him, they sent word throughout the whole area and brought him all the sick people. 14:36 They begged to be allowed to touch the hem of his cloak, and whoever did was restored to health.

Jesus explains the law

15:1 Then Pharisees and scribes came from Jerusalem and said to Jesus, 15:2 “Why is it that your disciples violate the

tradition of the elders by not ceremonially washing their hands before they eat?”

15:3 “And why do you violate the command of God with your traditions?” Jesus retorted. 15:4 “For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother; whoever speaks abusively against their father or mother must be put to death.‘ 15:5 But you say that someone can get out of helping their father or mother by telling them, ‘Any help you would have received from me is a gift to God’. 15:6 So you override the word of God by your tradition. 15:7 Pretenders! Isaiah prophesied about you very well when he said, 15:8 ‘These people honor me with their lips but their hearts are far away from me. 15:9 They revere me for

no reason, and their teachings are the edicts of mere humans.' "

15:10 He called the crowd to himself and said to them, "Listen and understand: 15:11 It isn't what goes into the mouth that makes a person 'unclean', it's what comes out of the mouth."

15:12 Then his disciples came to him and said, "Do you realize that the Pharisees were offended by what you said?"

15:13 And Jesus replied, "Every plant that my Father in heaven didn't plant will be uprooted! 15:14 Leave them; they are blind leaders of the blind. And if one blind person leads another, both will fall into a ditch."

15:15 Then Peter asked him to explain the parable, 15:16 and Jesus replied, “Are you really that dense? 15:17 Don’t you understand that everything that goes into the mouth goes through the belly and then is eliminated? 15:18 But what comes out of the mouth comes from the mind, and that’s what contaminates a person. 15:19 From the mind come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, promiscuity, theft, false testimony, and slander; 15:20 these are what contaminate a person, not how they wash their hands before eating!”

A woman wins an argument with Jesus

15:21 From there, Jesus went away to the areas of Tyre and Sidon. 15:22

Suddenly there was a Canaanite woman from around there, and she shouted out, “Have pity on me, sir, Descendant of David! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession.” 15:23 But he did not respond to her. So his disciples went up to him and said, “Dismiss her, because she’s shouting at us!”

15:24 Then he said to her, “I was only sent to the lost sheep of Israel.”

15:25 But she came and worshiped him and said, “Sir, please help!”

15:26 “We shouldn’t take the children’s food and toss it to the puppies,” he replied.

15:27 “Yes, sir,” countered the woman. “But the puppies do get the scraps that fall from their master’s table.”

15:28 “Dear lady,” Jesus replied, “You have great faith! What you wanted will happen.” And her daughter was healed that very hour.

Jesus feeds four thousand

15:29 Next Jesus went from there to the edge of the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up the mountain and sat down. 15:30 Crowds of people came to him, bringing the lame the blind, the crippled, the deaf, and many others. They were placed at Jesus’ feet, and he healed them. 15:31 It impressed the crowd very much to see the deaf/mute talking, the

crippled well, the lame walking around, and the blind seeing. So they honored the God of Israel.

15:32 Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I am moved with compassion for the crowd, because they’ve already been here with me for three days and have nothing to eat. But if I dismiss them without food, they might faint along the way.”

15:33 “Where are we supposed to get enough food to satisfy a crowd like this in such a desolate place?” his disciples asked.

15:34 “How many loaves to you have?” he asked.

“Seven,” they answered, “and a few small fish.”

15:35 Then Jesus had the crowd sit down on the ground. 15:36 He took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks for them, broke them up, and handed the pieces to his disciples. Then the disciples passed them out to the crowd, 15:37 and they all ate till they were full. The leftovers filled seven large baskets, 15:38 even though the number of men was around four thousand, not counting the women and children. 15:39 Then he dismissed the crowd and got into the boat, and he went to the area of Magadan.

Beware of the Pharisees

16:1 The Pharisees came along to test Jesus, so they asked him to show them a miraculous sign from heaven. 16:2 But instead he said, “If the sky is red in the evening, you say that the weather will be nice the next day. 16:3 And if it’s red in the morning, you say that the weather will be foul. But why can’t you interpret the signs of the times? 16:4 An evil and adulterous generation looks for signs, but none will be given except the sign of Jonah.” And with that, he went off and left them behind.

16:5 When his disciples arrived at the other side of the lake, they realized they had forgotten to get bread. 16:6 And Jesus said to them, “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees!” 16:7 But they talked it over among themselves and

concluded, “It’s because we forgot to get bread.”

16:8 But Jesus knew what they were talking about so he said, “Why are you talking about not having bread, you skeptics? 16:9 Don’t you understand or remember what happened with the five loaves and the five thousand, and how many baskets full of leftovers you picked up? 16:10 Or what about the seven loaves and the four thousand, and all the leftovers? 16:11 So how can you possibly think that I was talking about bread when I said, ‘Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees’?” 16:12 Then it finally dawned on them that he wasn’t referring to literal yeast in bread but to their teachings.

Peter identifies Jesus as the Anointed One

16:13 When Jesus reached the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Human is?”

16:14 “Some say John the Immerser,” they replied. “Others say Elijah, or maybe Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

16:15 “But who do you say I am?” Jesus asked.

16:16 And Peter spoke up, “You are the Anointed One, the son of the living God.”

16:17 “You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah,” Jesus replied. “For this was not revealed to you by ordinary means, but by my Father in the heavens. 16:18 I hereby declare that you are Peter, and it is upon this rock of faith that I will build my Congregation, which will withstand all the assaults of Hades. 16:19 I will give you the keys to the kingdom of the heavens, so whatever you restrain on earth will also be restrained in the heavens, and whatever you let loose on earth will also be let loose in the heavens.”

Jesus predicts his death and rebukes Peter

16:20 Then he told his disciples not to say a word about his being the

Anointed One. 16:21 This is when he began to tell them that he would have to go into Jerusalem to suffer many things at the hands of the elders, high priests, and scribes. Then he would be killed yet arise the third day. 16:22 But Peter scolded him and said, “Master, this will never happen to you!”

16:23 Jesus turned around to Peter and exclaimed, “Get out of my way, Adversary! You are setting a trap for me, because your thinking is from people instead of God.”

16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, they must completely renounce themselves, pick up their cross, and follow me. 16:25 For whoever wants to save their life will

lose it, and whoever loses their life on my account will find it. 16:26 After all, what good is it to gain the whole world but forfeit one's own life? Or what would a person give in exchange for their life?

Jesus predicts his return

16:27 "The Human is going to come with his angels in the majesty of his Father, and he will reward each one according to what they have done. 16:28 And I can assure you that some standing here today will not experience death until they first see the Human coming in his kingdom."

The Transfiguration

17:1 Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother John up into a high mountain alone. 17:2 Then he transformed before their eyes: His face shone like the sun and his clothing became as white as the light. 17:3 Then all of a sudden Moses and Elijah appeared and were talking with him. 17:4 And Peter blurted out to Jesus, “Master, it’s great for us to be here! If you’d like, I could set up three sanctuaries: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

17:5 While he was still speaking, suddenly they were enveloped by a luminous cloud, and from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my dear son and I’m very pleased with him. Listen to him!” 17:6 When the disciples

heard this, they fell face-down on the ground and were utterly terrified. 17:7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, “Don’t be afraid!” 17:8 So they looked up, but they saw no one except Jesus.

17:9 As they went down the mountain, Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Human had risen from the dead. 17:10 Then his disciples asked, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

17:11 “Elijah will indeed come to restore everything,” Jesus answered. 17:12 “In fact, Elijah has already come, but they didn’t recognize him and treated him as they wished. So also must the Human be treated by them.” 17:13 And then the

disciples realized that he was talking about John the Immerser.

Jesus evicts a demon from a boy

17:14 Then as they came up to a crowd, one person approached Jesus, dropped to his knees, 17:15 and said, “Sir, please have pity on my son! He is having convulsions and suffers terribly, and he’s always falling into the fire or water. 17:16 I asked your disciples for help but they were unable to heal him.”

17:17 “You faithless and twisted generation!” Jesus replied. “How long will I be with you, and how long will I put up with you? Bring him to me.”

17:18 So Jesus rebuked the demon and it left him, and the child was healed at that very hour.

17:19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, “Why couldn’t we throw it out?”

17:20 “Because of your lack of faith,” he replied. “I can assure you that if your faith were even as tiny as a mustard seed, you could order this mountain to move over there and it would! Nothing would be impossible for you.”

Jesus predicts his death again

17:22 While they were getting together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The

Human must be handed over to people 17:23 who will kill him, but the third day he will rise again!” This distressed them greatly.

Jesus and the Temple Tax

17:24 Now when they went into Capernaum, those who collect the annual temple tax came up to Peter and asked, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the tax?” 17:25 And Peter replied, “Yes, of course.” But when they went inside, Jesus anticipated him and said, “What do you think, Simon? Who is it that the kings of the earth tax: their own people or foreigners?”

17:26 “Foreigners,” Simon answered.

“So then, the citizens are exempt,” Jesus replied. 17:27 “But just so we don’t offend them, go to the sea and cast a line. Take the first fish you catch and open its mouth. Inside you will find a coin; use it to pay for my taxes and yours.”

Humility is greatness

18:1 Shortly thereafter Jesus’ disciples came to him and asked, “So who is greater in the kingdom of the heavens?”

18:2 Jesus had a child stand in front of them 18:3 and said, “I can assure you that unless you change your attitude and become like one of these little ones, there is no way you will even enter into the kingdom of the heavens!

18:4 So those who humble themselves to the level of this child are greater in the kingdom of the heavens. 18:5 And those who accept such a child on my account are really accepting me.

Warnings to tempters

18:6 “If anyone sets a trap for the least significant of those who trust me, it would be better if that person had a large millstone hung around their neck and were drowned the sea! 18:7 And woe to this world full of such traps. Such things must be, but woe to the person who sets them up!

18:8 “If your hand or foot becomes a trap for you, cut it off and throw it away! Better to enter life crippled or lame than

to have both hands or feet but be thrown into the eternal fire. 18:9 And if your eye becomes a trap for you, pluck it out and throw it away! Better to enter life with one eye than to keep both eyes and be thrown into fiery Gehenna. 18:10 So see to it that you don’t scorn these lowly ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my Father.

The parable of the lost sheep

18:12 “What do you think? If someone has a hundred sheep and one wanders off, won’t they leave the other ninety-nine on the hills and go out looking for it? 18:13 And once they find it, I can assure you that they are happier about

that one than the other ninety-nine that didn’t wander off! 18:14 And so it is with your Father in the heavens; he does not want even one of these lowly ones to be lost.

Dealing with sin in the faith community

18:15 “If your brother or sister sins, go and confront them privately. If they listen to you, you have won them back. 18:16 But if they don’t listen, take one or two others with you, so that ‘every charge is confirmed by two or three witnesses’. 18:17 If they still don’t listen, tell it to the congregation, and if they don’t even listen to the congregation, treat them as you would a foreigner or a tax contractor.

18:18 “I can assure you that whatever you restrict on earth will be restricted in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will be released in heaven. 18:19 I will say it again: If just two or three of you agree on anything in the world you may ask about, it will be granted by my Father in the heavens. 18:20 For where two or three have gathered on my account, there I am with them.”

18:21 Then Peter came up to him and asked, “Master, how many times can a sister or brother sin against me, and I still have to forgive them? Up to seven times?”

18:22 “Not only up to seven times, but seventy times seven!” Jesus replied.

Jesus is clearly not giving a literal forgiveness limit here, but using exaggeration to make the point that there is no limit.

The parable of the merciless servant

18:23 “It’s like this in the kingdom of the heavens: A certain king wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 18:24 And as he began, someone who owed him an enormous sum of money was brought before him. 18:25 But he couldn’t pay it, so the master ordered that he, his wife and children, and all his possessions were to be sold in order to pay the debt.

18:26 “The servant fell down before him and begged, ‘Be patient with me, and I

will pay you back in full!’ 18:27 The master was moved with compassion and forgave the debt. But after he was let go, 18:28 the servant went out from there to go after a fellow servant who owed him about a year’s wages. Grabbing him by the throat he demanded, ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ 18:29 So that servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me and I will pay you back!’ 18:30 But he refused and had him thrown into prison until he paid back every bit of his debt.

18:31 “But the other servants saw what he did and were very upset. So they went to the master and informed him of what had happened. 18:32 Then the master called that servant in and said to him, ‘You evil servant! I forgave all that

debt you owed me, just because you asked. 18:33 So why didn’t you have the same pity on your fellow servant?’ 18:34 Then in his rage his master handed him over to the torturers until he had paid every last bit of his debt. 18:35 And so it will be with my Father in the heavens, if you won’t forgive your sisters and brothers from the heart.”

Jesus against no-fault divorce

19:1 When Jesus finished saying these things, he left Galilee and entered the area of Judea on the other side of the Jordan. 19:2 A large crowd followed him, and he healed them there. 19:3 Then the Pharisees came to test him:

“Is ‘No-fault Divorce’ legal?”

This question about divorce is very specific regarding the “any cause” debate among the rabbis. Some interpreted the scriptures to allow a man to divorce his wife even if she did nothing to deserve it, while others believed the man had to prove that she had been unfaithful. So what they want Jesus to do is to take sides in their debate. And when he asks the Pharisees “Haven’t you read,” he insults them since they prided themselves on their knowledge of the scriptures.

19:4 “Haven’t you read,” replied Jesus, “that God made them male and female from the very beginning, 19:5 and that ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his

wife, and the two will become one flesh’? 19:6 So then, what God has joined together, people must not separate.”

19:7 “Then why did Moses command that she be given a certificate of divorce and released?” they asked.

19:8 “Moses permitted it because of your stubbornness,” Jesus answered.“ But it was not originally that way. 19:9 So it follows that if any man divorces his wife when she hasn’t been unfaithful, and he marries someone else, he is

committing adultery.”

Jesus not only rejects the “any cause” side, he shows that with such a divorce the couple are still married. So sending the wife away doesn’t mean the man can remarry— which was the likely reason he divorced her in the first place.

19:10 Then his disciples remarked, “If that’s how it is between a husband and wife, it would be better not to marry!”

19:11 “Not everyone can accept this,” Jesus replied.“ But only those to whom it has been given. 19:12 Some men were born eunuchs, others were castrated, and still others have chosen to be celibate for the sake of the

kingdom of the heavens. Those to whom this applies can accept it.”

Jesus defends the children

19:13 Next some people brought their little ones to present to Jesus so he could pray for them, but the disciples rebuked them. 19:14 So Jesus said, “Leave them alone! Don’t forbid them to come to me, because the kingdom of the heavens is composed of such people.” 19:15 Then he blessed them and went on from there.

Riches as an obstacle to salvation

19:16 Suddenly someone came up to him and said, “Teacher, what good

things must I do in order to have eternal life?”

19:17 “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “Only One is truly good.
To call Jesus good is to call him God.
But if you want to enter into eternal life, hold tight to the commandments.”

19:18 “Which ones?” asked the young person.

“Don’t murder, don’t commit adultery, don’t steal, don’t give false testimony, 19:19 honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself,” Jesus answered.

19:20 “I’ve kept all those since my youth,” the person replied. “What am I

missing?”

19:21 “If you want to be complete,” replied Jesus, “go and sell all your possessions and give the proceeds to the destitute, and you will have treasure in the heavens. Then come and follow me.”

19:22 Now when the young person heard this, he went away dejected, because he was very wealthy. 19:23 So Jesus remarked to his disciples, “It is truly difficult for the rich to enter into the kingdom of the heavens! 19:24 I tell you, it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

19:25 This shocked the disciples, so they asked, “Then who can possibly be

saved?”

19:26 Then Jesus looked at them and said, “This is impossible for people, but God can do anything!”

19:27 Then Peter spoke up: “See, we’ve given up everything to follow you. So what will happen to us?”

19:28 And Jesus answered, “I can assure you who have followed me, that when everything is made new again and the Human sits on his majestic throne, you Twelve will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 19:29 Everyone who has given up houses, brothers or sisters, father or mother, children, or land on my account, will be given back a hundred times as much, along with inheriting eternal life. 19:30

And the prominent will be least important, while the least important will be prominent.

The parable of early and late workers

20:1 “Let me tell you about the kingdom of the heavens: It’s like a landowner who went out one morning to hire workers for his vineyard. 20:2 He offered the usual amount for a day’s work and they agreed, so he sent them off to his vineyard. 20:3 About three hours later he went out and saw others loitering in the marketplace, 20:4 so he said to them, ‘Go out to my vineyard and I’ll pay you a fair wage.’ 20:5 They went off to work, and then after about another three hours he repeated this, and again

three hours after that. 20:6 Even a couple hours after that he still found more people standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing around all day, doing nothing?’

20:7 “ ‘No one has hired us,’ they replied.

“ ‘Come to my vineyard,’ he said.

20:8 “Now when evening came the owner said to his paymaster, ‘Call in the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last hired and ending with the first.’ 20:9 Then the last ones hired came and were given a full day’s wages, 20:10 so the first ones hired expected to be given more. But when they too were given a full day’s wages, 20:11 they complained to the landowner:

20:12 ‘These who only worked one hour were given the same pay as we who did the bulk of the work and endured the scorching heat!’

20:13 “So the landowner explained to one of the workers, ‘Friend, I have not cheated you. Didn’t you agree to a day’s wages? 20:14 Take your pay and go; isn’t it my business if I want to give the last hired the same pay as you? 20:15 Can’t I do what I want? Are you angry with me because I am kind?’ 20:16 That’s how it will be; the last will

be first, and the first will be last.”

The lesson here is the compassion of God, who won’t punish people simply for not being made the offer of salvation as early as others. It was’t the fault of the late hires that they hadn’t worked; they would have, if they’d been made the offer earlier. Notice also that the previous chapter ended with the same ”first/last“ statement, so the two serve as “bookends” on the whole teaching.

Jesus predicts his death yet again

20:17 Then Jesus went up toward Jerusalem, and along the way he took the Twelve aside and spoke to them privately: 20:18 “Look, we’re about to enter Jerusalem, where the Human will

be handed over to the high priests and scribes. They will condemn him to death 20:19 and hand him over to the secular authorities, who will jeer at him and flog him and crucify him. But he will arise on the third day.”

Jesus rebukes hierarchy among his followers

20:20 Then he was approached by the mother of Zebedee’s sons, who brought them to him and knelt down before him to ask him something.

20:21 “What is it you want?” asked Jesus.

“Grant that these two sons of mine will sit beside you in your kingdom, one at

the right and one at the left," she said.

20:22 "Neither of you realize what you're asking," Jesus replied. "Can you drink from the same cup I must drink from?"

"Yes!" they said.

20:23 "Indeed you will!" Jesus responded. "But it is not up to me to say who will sit at my right and left. Those places are for the ones predetermined by my Father."

20:24 When the Ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. 20:25 So Jesus called them all to himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations exercise mastery over their people, and their high officials wield authority over them. 20:26 But it

must not be this way among you! For whoever wants to be in charge of you must become your servant, 20:27 and whoever wants to be the most prominent among you must be your servant. 20:28 After all, the Human did not come to be waited on but to be the waiter, and to give his life as a ransom payment for many.”

Jesus restores sight to the blind

20:29 As he left Jericho, a large crowd followed along. 20:30 At one point they came to two blind people sitting beside the road, and when the blind ones heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted out, “Have pity on us, Sir, Descendant of David!” 20:31 The crowd

told them to shut up but they shouted all the louder, “Have pity on us, Sir, Descendant of David!”

20:32 Jesus stopped and called to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?”

20:33 “Sir, we want to see!” they replied.

20:34 Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes, and instantly they could see. So they followed him.

Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem

21:1 When they got near Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus sent out two disciples 21:2 with these instructions: “Go into the village in front of you, and

right away you will find a donkey and her colt hitched. Untie them and bring them to me. 21:3 If anyone asks you, just tell them ‘The Master needs them’ and they’ll let them go without question. 21:4 This has to happen in order to fulfill what the prophet declared: 21:5 ‘Tell the daughter of Zion, “Look! Your king is coming to you gently, riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden.”’ ”

21:6 The disciples went off and did as Jesus told them. 21:7 They brought the donkey and colt, then put their outer garments on them so Jesus could sit on them. 21:8 Then many in the crowd spread out their garments on the road in front of him, while others used tree branches that they had cut off. 21:9 And

both those in front of him and those behind went along saying, “Celebrate the Descendant of David! Blessed is the one bearing the name of the Master! Celebrate in the presence of God!” 21:10 When he entered Jerusalem, the entire city was shaken. Some asked, “Who is this?” 21:11 and the crowd answered, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee!”

Jesus throws merchants out of the temple

21:12 Then Jesus entered the temple compound and threw out all the merchants and customers there. He overturned the tables of the brokers and the benches of those selling doves, 21:13 and he said, “It has been written,

‘my house will be called a house of prayer’, but you have turned it into a hideout for robbers!”

Jesus is criticized for allowing children to praise him

21:14 The blind and lame came to him in the temple compound, and he healed them. 21:15 But when the high priests and scribes saw the wonderful things he was doing, and when they heard the children there shouting “Celebrate the Descendant of David!”, they were indignant. 21:16 So they said to Jesus, “Do you hear what these children are saying?”

“Yes,” replied Jesus. “Haven’t you ever read that ‘You have prepared praise to come of the mouths of toddlers and infants’?” 21:17 And he left them there and went out of the city to spend the night in Bethany.

Jesus curses a fig tree

21:18 In the morning he headed back to the city. He was hungry, 21:19 and along the way he saw a fig tree. But when he got close to it he couldn’t find a single fig on it; there were only leaves. So he said to it, “You will never produce figs again!”

Fig trees should bear fruit before the leaves, so if the tree has leaves but no fruit it is barren. According to F. F. Bruce, “When the fig leaves appear about the end of March, they are accompanied by a crop of small knobs that precede the real figs. These are eaten by peasants and others when hungry. They drop off before the real fig is formed. But if the leaves appear alone, there will be no figs that year.” (Intervarsity Press, 5th revised edition 1992, pp. 73-74.) But why did Jesus curse it? Some see it as a type or foreshadow of Israel rejecting their Messiah.

Instantly the tree dried up, 21:20 and when the disciples saw it they were surprised and asked, “How did it dry up so fast?”

21:21 “Let me assure you of this,” Jesus answered, “If you have faith and don’t doubt, you will be able to do more than I did to this fig tree. You will be able to say to this mountain, ‘Get up and throw yourself into the sea!’ and it will happen. 21:22 Everything you ask for in prayer, you will have— if you believe.”

Jesus’ authority challenged

21:23 When he was teaching in the temple compound, the high priests and elders of the people came and demanded, “What authority do you have to do these things? Who gave you jurisdiction?”

21:24 “Let me ask you a question,” Jesus replied, “And if you can answer

my question, then I'll answer yours. 21:25 The immersion of John… was it from heaven or from people?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say 'From heaven', he'll say 'Then why didn't you believe?' 21:26 But if we say 'From people', we fear what they'd do to us since they consider him a prophet." 21:27 So they finally said, "We don't know."

And Jesus retorted, "Then I'm not telling you where I got this authority.

The parable of two children

21:28 "Here's something for you to think about: Suppose someone had two children, and he told the first one to go out and work in the vineyard that day.

21:29 But that one said, ‘No, I don’t want to,’ yet later they felt bad about it and went out anyway. 21:30 The same question was put to the other one, who said, ‘Yes, sir’ but didn’t go. 21:31 So which one actually did what the father wanted?”

“The first,” they answered.

And Jesus replied, “I can assure you that tax contractors and the promiscuous will enter the kingdom of God before you do! 21:32 For John came to you walking the path of righteousness and you did not believe him, but tax contractors and the promiscuous did. And even when you saw that, you still didn’t have any regrets and believe him!

The parable of the tenants

21:33 “Listen to another parable: A certain landowner planted a vineyard, put up a wall around it, dug a wine press, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenant farmers and went traveling abroad. 21:34 When it came time for the harvest, he sent his servants to the tenant farmers to get the produce. 21:35 But they grabbed the servants and beat up one, killed another, and stoned yet another. 21:36 So he sent more servants than before, and they did the same to them.

21:37 “Finally he sent his own son, thinking ‘They will respect my son!’ 21:38 But when the tenant farmers saw him they said to each other, ‘This is the

heir; come on, let's kill him, and then we will inherit the vineyard!' 21:39 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. 21:40 Now when the landowner comes, what do you think he'll do to those tenant farmers?"

21:41 "He will wipe out those criminals!" they replied, "And he'll lease the vineyard to others who will give him his due share of the crop."

21:42 So then Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures, 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The Master has done this, and it is a wonderful thing to see!'? 21:43 This is why I'm telling you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation that will give God

what belongs to him!” 21:44 21:45 And when they heard this, the high priests and Pharisees realized he was talking about them. 21:46 So they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd, who considered him a prophet.

The parable of the wedding banquet

22:1 Jesus continued to give parables: 22:2 “The kingdom of the heavens is like a king arranging a wedding for his son. 22:3 He sent out servants to tell the invited guests to come to the wedding, but they would not come. 22:4 So he sent out servants again with instructions to tell the invited guests, ‘Look, the meal is ready; the meat is prepared and everything is set. Come to the wedding!’

22:5 But again they ignored him; one went out to his fields, another to his business, 22:6 and the rest grabbed his servants, beat them up, and killed them.

22:7 “The king was furious and sent soldiers to wipe out those murderers and set their city on fire. 22:8 Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but the invited guests were unworthy. 22:9 So go out to the highways and invite anyone you find to the wedding.’ 22:10 So they went out to the roads and gathered up whoever they found, whether good or bad, and the dining hall was full.

22:11 “But when the king came in to greet the guests, he saw someone there who wasn’t wearing proper

wedding attire. 22:12 So he said,
‘Friend, how did you get in here without
wedding clothes?’ But he was silent.
22:13 So the king told the attendants,
‘Tie him up by his hands and feet, and
throw him out into the darkness where
people lament and grind their teeth!’
22:14 For many are invited, but few are
chosen.”

Paying taxes to the government

22:15 Then the Pharisees went off and
met together to plot how to trick Jesus
into saying something incriminating.
22:16 So they sent their disciples and
Herodians to say, “Teacher, we know
that you are honest and show people
the true way to God, and that you aren’t

intimidated by anyone because you don’t care who they are. 22:17 So tell us what you think: Is it permissible to pay the poll tax to Caesar or not?”

The poll tax was for the purpose of reminding the Jews that they were subject to Rome.

22:18 But Jesus knew their evil intent and said to them, “Why do you test me, you pretenders? 22:19 Show me the currency you use to pay the poll tax.” So they handed him a denarius 22:20 and he said, “Whose image is this, and whose name is inscribed?”

22:21 “Caesar’s,” they answered.

“Then give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give God what belongs to God,” he retorted. 22:22 This response

stumped them, so they left and went on their way.

Marriage and the resurrection

22:23 Later that day the Sadducees, who don't believe in the resurrection, came to him. 22:24 They said, "Teacher, Moses said that if someone died childless, his brother was obligated to marry the widow and produce offspring for him. 22:25 Now there were seven brothers, and the first married but died childless. So his brother married his widow, 22:26 but the same thing happened. Likewise for the third and all seven of the brothers. 22:27 Finally the woman died. 22:28 So in the resurrection, whose wife will she be of

the seven, since she had been married to them all?”

22:29 This was Jesus’ response: “You are misled, because you understand neither that scripture nor the power of God. 22:30 For in the resurrection, people don’t marry but are like the angels in heaven. 22:31 Now about the rising of the dead: Have you not read what God declared to you when he said, 22:32 ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living!”

Had the scripture said, ‘I was the God of…’, it would have indicated that the patriarchs’ spirits were not alive.

22:33 And when the crowd heard this, they were awestruck by his teaching.

The greatest commandment

22:34 Now when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they had a meeting about it. 22:35 And one of them, a lawyer, tested him: 22:36 “Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the law?”

22:37 “You must love the Master your God with all your heart, life, and thoughts,” Jesus answered. 22:38 “This is the first and greatest commandment. 22:39 The second is like it: You must love your neighbor as yourself. 22:40 The entirety of the Law and Prophets hinges on these two commandments.”

Who is the Anointed One?

22:41 Since the Pharisees were gathered there, Jesus asked them, 22:42 “What is your opinion about the Anointed One? Whose descendant is he?”

“David’s,” they replied.

22:43 “But how could David, prompted by the Spirit, call him ‘Master’?” asked Jesus. “He said, 22:44 ‘The Master said to my Master, “Sit down at my right until I put your enemies beneath your feet.”’ 22:45 How can David call him ‘Master’ if he’s his descendant?”

22:46 No one could refute what Jesus said, so from then on nobody dared to ask him anything else.

Warnings against hypocrisy and conceit

23:1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowd and to his disciples: 23:2 “The scribes and Pharisees teach authoritatively on behalf of Moses, 23:3 but you must do what they say, not what they do! They don’t practice what they preach. 23:4 They place unbearably heavy loads on people’s shoulders, but they are not willing to lift a finger to help.

23:5 “Everything they do is for show. They wear oversized amulets

The amulets were strips of parchment having scriptures written on them.

and put extra-wide hems on their cloaks to hold them. 23:6 They love the seats of honor at banquets and the most

prominent seats in the synagogues, 23:7 and to be greeted in the marketplace by people calling them ‘Rabbi’. 23:8 But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi’, for you have only one Teacher and you are all brothers and sisters. 23:9 And you are not to call anyone on earth ‘Father’, because you have only one Father in heaven. 23:10 Don’t even be called ‘Leader’, since you have only one Leader, the Anointed One.

Jesus is not saying we cannot refer to our teachers as such, or our parents as such, but to not use formal titles for spiritual leaders. He is thus dispensing with human hierarchy among his followers, as he also made clear in his rebuke of James and John for seeking positions of prominence in the coming kingdom.

23:11 Instead, whoever wants to be
great among you must be the servant;
23:12 whoever promotes themselves will
be humiliated; whoever humbles
themselves will be promoted.

Seven woes to Pharisees

23:13 “Woe to you, scribes and
Pharisees, you pretenders! You lock up
the kingdom of the heavens to keep
people from entering, and you won’t
even go in yourselves!

23:15 “Woe to you, scribes and
Pharisees, you pretenders! You travel
over land and sea to win one convert,
but when you succeed, you turn that
person into twice as much a citizen of
Gehenna as you are!

23:16 “Woe to you, blind guides! You say that whoever swears an oath by the temple is not bound to it, but if they swear by the gold in the temple they are bound. 23:17 Blind fools! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that consecrates the gold? 23:18 And the same with the altar and the gift on it: 23:19 Which is greater? How can you be so blind? 23:20 Whoever swears an oath by the altar also swears by everything on it; 23:21 whoever swears by the temple also swears by everything in it, including God who lives there; 23:22 whoever swears by heaven also swears by the throne of God and the God who sits there.

23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you pretenders! You are

careful to tithe the smalles herbs, such as mint, dill, and cumin, yet you abandon the weightier matters of the law: discernment, compassion, and faith. You must do both! 23:24 Blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

23:25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you pretenders! You clean the outside of the cup and plate, but inside they are saturated with robbery and lack of self-control. 23:26 Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup before you clean the outside.

23:27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you pretenders! You are like decorated graves that look beautiful on the outside, but the inside is filled with

the bones of the dead and everything unclean. 23:28 In the same way, you appear to people as righteous, but on the inside you are totally fake and lawless.

23:29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you pretenders! You build up the graves of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, 23:30 and you say, ‘If we had lived in those days, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ 23:31 So you testify against yourselves, because you admit that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 23:32 Then finish what they started! 23:33 Snakes! Pits of vipers! How will you escape the judgment of Gehenna?

23:34 “So now, look! I am sending you prophets and wise people and scribes. But you will kill and crucify some of them, and you will flog others in your synagogues and chase them from city to city. 23:35 For this reason, the blood of all the righteous will be on your hands, from righteous Abel to Zechariah son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 23:36 I can assure you that all of these things will fall upon this generation!

Jesus laments over Jerusalem

23:37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you! How many times have I wanted to

gather your children as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you wouldn’t have it! 23:38 Now look, your temple is abandoned and deserted. 23:39 For I tell you that you will never see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Master.’ ”

Prophecies of the end times

24:1 As Jesus was leaving the temple compound, his disciples came and began to remark about how the temple was built. 24:2 But Jesus replied, “See all these things? I can assure you that not one stone will be left on top of another!” 24:3 Then a while later, after he had sat down on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him

privately and said, “Tell us when these things will happen, what sign to look for that will signal your official arrival as King, and the end of the age.”

24:4 And he replied, “Watch out so that you are not deceived! 24:5 For many will claim to come from me, or even say, ‘I am the Anointed One!’, and they will deceive many. 24:6 You will see wars and hear reports of wars far away, but don’t be alarmed, because such things must happen— but it will not yet be the end. 24:7 Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places, 24:8 but these are only the beginning of birth pangs.

24:9 “Then they will hand you over to be persecuted and killed, and you will be despised in all nations because of me. 24:10 Many will be ensnared; they will betray and hate each other. 24:11 Many false prophets will rise up and mislead many people, 24:12 and due to all the lawlessness the love of many will grow cold. 24:13 But whoever endures to the end will be rescued. 24:14 The good news of the Kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

24:15 “So whenever you see ‘the disgusting thing that completely ruins’ (as declared through the prophet Daniel Dan. 9:27) standing in the Holy Place (let the one reading this to others make sure this is clear!), 24:16 then those in

Judea must run away into the mountains; 24:17 those on the housetops must not go inside to get belongings; 24:18 those out in the fields must not go back to get their coats. 24:19 Woe to women who are pregnant or nursing at that time! 24:20 And pray that your escape will not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

24:21 “After that will be great oppression, the likes of which has never happened from the beginning of the world until now, nor will ever happen again! Dan. 12:1. 24:22 In fact, if those days had not been cut short, all flesh would have been wiped out, but they will be shortened for the sake of the

chosen people.

While ‘the chosen people’ could refer to followers of Jesus, it could also refer to the nation of Israel.

24:23 “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Anointed One!’ or ‘There he is!’, don’t believe it. 24:24 For fake Anointed Ones and false prophets will rise up and perform impressive miracles and signs, to the point where even the chosen ones would be misled — if that were possible. 24:25 That’s why I’ve warned you in advance. 24:26 So if they say ‘Look, here in the desert!’, don’t go; if they say ‘Look, in this hidden place!’, don’t believe it. 24:27 For the official arrival of the Human will be as the lightning that flashes across

the whole sky. 24:28 And where the corpse is, there you will find the eagles.

24:29 “Immediately after the oppression of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Isaiah 13:10 and 34:4. 24:30 Then the sign of the Human will appear in the sky, and all the world’s ethnic groups will be filled with self-loathing as they see the Human coming on the clouds of the sky with great power and majesty. 24:31 At the blast of a trumpet he will send out his angels to gather his chosen people from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

24:32 “Now learn a lesson from the fig tree: When you see that the branches have already become tender and the leaves have sprouted, you know that summer is about to begin. 24:33 Likewise, when you see all these things, you will know that it is near, right at the door. 24:34 I can assure you that this generation will not pass away until all these things happen. 24:35 The earth and sky will pass away, but not my words!

Many will be caught by surprise

24:36 “But no one knows the day or hour when this will happen; not the angels of heaven nor even the Son, but only the Father. 24:37 The official arrival of the

Human will be just like the days of Noah: 24:38 In the days just before the Flood, people were eating, drinking, and marrying as usual, right up to the very day that Noah entered the ark. 24:39 They had no idea what was about to happen until the Flood took them all away. And so will it be with the official arrival of the Human. 24:40 Two will be in the field: one is accepted and the other rejected. 24:41 Two will be grinding with a millstone: one is accepted and the other rejected. 24:42 “So stay alert, because you don’t know what day your Master will show up. 24:43 You need to understand that if the homeowner knew exactly when the thief would arrive, he would stay alert and not let his house be broken into. 24:44

So be prepared, because the Human will come when you least expect him.

24:45 “Who, then, is a trustworthy and thoughtful servant? It is the one the master puts in charge of the household staff and sees to it that they get their meals at the right times. 24:46 That servant will be happy when their master arrives and finds them doing their duty. 24:47 I can assure you that such a servant will be put in charge of all their master’s possessions. 24:48 “But what if the servant is shiftless and says to himself, ‘My master is very late in returning’? 24:49 So they begin to beat the other servants, eat all the food, and go out drinking with the drunkards. 24:50 Their master will come on an unexpected day and time. 24:51 He will

cut him in two and consign him to the fate of the pretenders, where they wail and grind their teeth.

The parable of ten women awaiting the bridegroom

25:1 “The kingdom of the heavens is also like this: Ten single women carried torches as they went out to wait for the bridegroom. 25:2 But five were foolish and five were sensible, 25:3 because the foolish ones didn’t take any extra oil along, 25:4 as the sensible ones did. 25:5 And since the bridegroom was delayed a long time, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

25:6 “In the middle of the night came the shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom! Come out

to meet him!’ 25:7 So the single women all woke up and prepared their torches. 25:8 Then the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, ‘Give us some of your oil; our torches have gone out.’ 25:9 But the sensible ones replied, ‘No, there’s not enough for all of us. You’ll have to go to the market and buy more for yourselves.’ 25:10 While they were gone the bridegroom arrived, so the prepared ones entered with him to the wedding, and then the door was locked. 25:11 When the others came back later on, they pleaded, ‘Sir, sir, open the door for us!’ 25:12 But he replied, ‘I honestly don’t know who you are.’ 25:13 So be alert! You don’t know the day or the

hour.

This analogy is focused on preparedness, not on depicting the church or the Jews.

The parable of faithful and unfaithful servants

25:14 “It’s also like this: Someone about to travel abroad called his servants together and put them in charge of his possessions. 25:15 To one he gave five loads of money, to another two, and to another one, each according to their ability.

Each load of money amounted to as much as twenty years’ wages.

Then he left immediately. 25:16 And as soon as he was gone, the one with five loads of money put it to work in the

markets and earned five more. 25:17 Likewise, the one with two loads of money earned two more. 25:18 But the one with one load of money went out, dug a hole in the ground, and hid the money his master had given him.

25:19 “After a long time the master returned to settle accounts with his servants. 25:20 First the one with five loads of money brought that plus the five earned and said, ‘Master, you gave me five loads of money, but as you can see, I’ve earned five more.’

25:21 “ ‘Well done, good and trustworthy servant!’ exclaimed the master. ‘And since you were faithful with a little, I will put you in charge of a lot. Come and celebrate with me!’

25:22 “Next was the one with two loads of money, who said, ‘Master, you gave me two loads of money, but as you can see, I’ve earned two more.’

25:23 “ ‘Well done, good and trustworthy servant!’ the master exclaimed. ‘And since you were faithful with a little, I will put you in charge of a lot. Come and celebrate with me!’

25:24 “Then the last one came, and he said, ’Master, I knew that you’re a tough guy who gets other people to plant the seed while you reap the harvest, 25:25 and I was afraid you’d do that to me. So I planted your money in the ground, and here’s your harvest!’

25:26 “ ‘You evil, lazy servant!’ snarled the master. ‘So you knew I reaped the

benefits of other people's work, did you? 25:27 Then you should have put my money on deposit at the bank where it would at least have earned interest! 25:28 Take the load of money from this one and give it to the one with ten loads of money, 25:29 for those who have a lot will be given more, and those who have little will have it taken away. 25:30 Then take this useless servant and throw him out into the darkness, where they wail and grind their teeth!'

The separation of sheep and goats

25:31 "When the Human comes in his majesty, accompanied by all the angels, he will sit on his majestic throne. 25:32 All the nations will be gathered in front

of him, and he will separate them as a shepherd separates sheep from goats. 25:33 He'll put the sheep at his right and the goats at his left. 25:34 And then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come here, you who are blessed by my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from when the world was established! 25:35 For when I was hungry you gave me food; when I was thirsty you gave me drink; when I was a stranger you took me in; 25:36 when I needed clothes you gave them to me; when I was ill you looked after me; when I was in prison you came to see me.'

25:37 "Then the righteous will ask, 'Master, when did we feed you when you were hungry, or give you a drink

when you were thirsty, 25:38 or take you in as a stranger, or give you clothes you needed, 25:39 or look after you when you were ill, or come to see you in prison?' 25:40 And the King will answer, 'I assure you that whenever you did these things for one of my lowly brothers or sisters, you did them for me.'

25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Get away from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Slanderer and his angels! 25:42 For I was hungry but you gave me no food; I was thirsty but you gave me no drink; 25:43 I was a stranger but you wouldn't take me in; I needed clothes but you would not give me any; I was ill and in prison but you would not visit me.'

25:44 “And they will ask, ‘Master, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or in need of clothes or sick or in prison, and didn’t help you?’ 25:45 And he will reply, ‘I assure you that whenever you failed to do these things for one of my lowly ones, you failed to do them for me!’ 25:46 Then these will go into eternal punishment, while the righteous will go into eternal life.”

The plot to kill Jesus

26:1 After Jesus had finished saying all these things, he told his disciples, 26:2 “As you know, the Passover is in two days. That’s when the Human will be handed over to be crucified.” 26:3 Then the high priests and elders of the people got together at the palace of the

high priest Caiaphas, 26:4 where they recommended the use of treachery to have Jesus arrested and killed. 26:5 “But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people might riot.”

Jesus is anointed for burial

26:6 Now when Jesus went into Bethany to the home of Simon the Leper, 26:7 a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive perfumed oil, and she poured it on his head as he reclined for dinner. 26:8 But the disciples were indignant and said, “What a waste! 26:9 This could have been sold for a lot of money and the proceeds given to the destitute.”

26:10 But when Jesus realized this, he scolded them, “Why are you giving this woman such grief? She is doing an honorable thing to me. 26:11 You will always have the destitute with you, but you will not always have me. 26:12 By pouring the perfumed oil on me she is anointing my body for burial. 26:13 And I assure you that wherever the good news is proclaimed around the world, what she did will be spoken of in her memory.”

Judas plots to betray Jesus

26:14 Then Judas of Kerioth, one of the Twelve, went off to the high priests 26:15 and said, “What will you give me if I hand Jesus over to you?” So they offered him thirty pieces of silver, 26:16

and from then on he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

The Last Supper

26:17 Before the Feast of Unleavened Bread began,

> The Feast of Unleavened Bread is described in Exodus 12:1-9 as a seven-day period beginning Nisan 14 in the mid/late afternoon. There were “Sabbaths” on the first and last day, on which no work was to be done. The day just before this began was called the Preparation. All yeast had to be removed from every household for the duration of the week.

the disciples asked Jesus, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?” 26:18 And he

replied, “Go into the city and tell a certain person, ‘The teacher says the time is near for him to eat the Passover meal with his disciples at your house.’ ” 26:19 They did as Jesus instructed and prepared the meal.

26:20 When evening came and Jesus was reclining at the table having the meal with the Twelve, 26:21 he exclaimed, “I tell you truly that one of you will betray me!”

26:22 They all became distraught and said, “I’m not the one, am I, Master?”

26:23 “One of you who shares the dipping sauce with me is the one who will betray me. 26:24 What has been written about the Human being taken away will surely happen to him. But woe

to the person who is responsible for having the Human handed over! It would be better if that person had never been born."

26:25 Then Judas the Traitor said to him, "I'm not the one, am I, Rabbi?"

"You said it yourself!" Jesus replied.

26:26 While they were eating, Jesus picked up the bread and blessed it, then handed it out to his disciples and said, "Take this and eat it; this represents my body." 26:27 Then he picked up the cup, gave thanks, and handed it to his disciples and said, "Drink from this, all of you, 26:28 because this represents my blood, with which I am signing the new covenant, and it is being poured out for many to dismiss the charges

against them. 26:29 With absolute certainty I tell you that from now on, I will not drink the fruit of the vine until the day comes when I drink it fresh in the kingdom of my Father.”

There is no word meaning “again” in Jesus’ statement about not drinking from the cup. Neither does the passage indicate that Jesus actually drank the wine or ate the bread.

26:30 And after they sang a festive song, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus predicts that Peter will disown him

26:31 Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will fall into a trap tonight on my account. As it is written, ‘I will strike the

shepherd and the whole flock of sheep will scatter.’ 26:32 But when I am raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

26:33 But Peter objected, “Even if everyone else falls into a trap on your account, that will never happen to me!”

26:34 “On the contrary,” replied Jesus, “you will completely disown me three times before the rooster crows!”

26:35 “Even if I am bound to die with you, I will not disown you!” Peter insisted. And all the other disciples said the same.

Jesus prays before his arrest

26:36 Jesus took them to a place called Gethsemane, and he told his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there to pray.” 26:37 Then he took along Peter and also Zebedee’s two sons. He became extremely sad and depressed 26:38 and said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” 26:39 He went a short distance away and fell on his face, praying, “My Father, if possible, please let this cup pass me by! But what matters is what you want, not what I want.” 26:40 Then he returned to his disciples only to find them sleeping, so he said to Peter, “Couldn’t you keep watch with me for one hour? 26:41 Pray that you will not be put to the test! The spirit is eager but the flesh is weak.”

26:42 He went off to pray a second time and said, “My Father, if there is no other way except that I go through this, then let your decision stand!” 26:43 And again he found the disciples sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. 26:44 So he gave up on them and went off to pray a third time, repeating what he said before. 26:45 Then he returned to the disciples and said, “Are you going to sleep and rest forever? Look! The hour has come and the Human is betrayed into the hands of scoundrels. 26:46 Wake up, let’s go! See, here comes my betrayer!”

Jesus is arrested

26:47 While he was still speaking, suddenly Judas, one of the Twelve,

came along with a large crowd from the high priests and elders of the people, all carrying swords and clubs. 26:48 The traitor had prearranged this sign: “Whoever I greet affectionately is the one; arrest him!” 26:49 So he went up to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” while kissing him fondly.

26:50 “What are you doing here, friend?” asked Jesus. And they grabbed him and put him under arrest.

26:51 Suddenly one of those with Jesus reached for his sword, drew it out, and then struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

26:52 “Put away your sword!” said Jesus. “Those who wield swords will die by swords. 26:53 Don’t you realize that I

could say the word and my Father would put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? 26:54 But then, how would the scriptures be fulfilled? This has to happen!”

26:55 Then at that time Jesus turned to the crowd and said, “You came with swords and clubs to arrest me, as if I’m some kind of robber. But every day I sat in the temple compound and taught, and you didn’t arrest me then. 26:56 Yet all of this happened in order to fulfill what the prophets wrote.” And at that point, all his disciples took off and ran away.

Jesus testifies before the Sanhedrin

26:57 Having arrested Jesus, the crowd led him away to the high priest Caiaphas, where the scribes and elders had gathered. 26:58 Now Peter had been following at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He went inside and sat with the deputies to wait for a verdict. 26:59 Meanwhile, the high priests and the whole Sanhedrin tried to produce false witnesses against Jesus, so they could have him executed. 26:60 But though many false witnesses came forward, they couldn't find anything.

Finally two of them came forward 26:61 and said, "We heard him claim that he was going to demolish the temple of God and then rebuild it in three days!"

26:62 Then the high priest stood up and said, “Have you nothing to say to the accusation brought by these two?” 26:63 But Jesus said nothing. So the high priest said, “I am putting you under oath before the living God to tell us if you are the Anointed One, the God-Man!”

26:64 “You said it yourself!” Jesus answered. “Furthermore, I assure you that after this you will see the Human sitting down to the right of The Power,

“The Power” was a respectful way to refer God.

and coming in the clouds of the sky!”

26:65 At that, the high priest tore his tunic

To tear one's clothing indicated guilt according to the Talmud. But in this capacity the council was equivalent to a modern jury, so they could not do the actual sentencing.

and exclaimed, "He has defamed God! Why do we need any further testimony? You heard it yourselves; 26:66 what is your verdict?"

"He deserves the death penalty!" they all replied. 26:67 Then they spat in his face, and while they were beating and slapping him 26:68 they mocked, "Prophesy, Anointed One! Who hit you?"

Peter disowns Jesus

26:69 Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, when a servant girl came up to him and said, “You were with Jesus the Galilean!”

26:70 But he denied it in front of them all: “I don’t know what you’re talking about!”

26:71 He went out of the gate, but another one saw him and said to the others there, “This one was with Jesus the Nazarene!”

26:72 Again he denied it: “I swear, I do not know that person!”

26:73 A short time later, some standing there came up to Peter and said, “You have to be one of them; your accent gives you away!”

26:74 Then Peter began to curse and swear: “I don’t know the guy!” And immediately a rooster crowed. 26:75 Then he remembered what Jesus had said: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!” So he went outside, sobbing bitterly.

Judas commits suicide

27:1 At dawn, a council convened with all the high priests and elders of the people to decide how to have Jesus executed. 27:2 Then they tied him up and handed him over to the governor. 27:3 When the traitor Judas saw this, he was filled with remorse and tried to return the thirty pieces of silver to the high priests and elders: 27:4 “I have betrayed innocent blood!”

“What is that to us?” they retorted. “That’s your problem.” 27:5 So Judas flung the silver into the temple, then went off and hanged himself.

The accounts of Judas’ death as described here and in Acts 1:18 are not in conflict. The two together paint a picture of the priests buying the field after Judas apparently did a poor job of hanging himself.

27:6 The high priests picked up the silver but said, “We can’t use this as a gift offering, because it’s blood money.”

There is deep irony in the priests' fear of breaking rules here (and later when they stayed out of Pilate's palace in order to remain 'clean' for the Passover), since they were continuing to break many of them in having Jesus condemned.

27:7 So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field, which would then serve as a graveyard for foreigners. 27:8 So it was known from then on as The Field of Blood. 27:9 This fulfilled what was said by the prophet Jeremiah: "They took the thirty pieces of silver— the price agreed upon by the people of Israel— 27:10 and bought the potter's field, as my Master instructed."

Jesus testifies before Pilate

27:11 Now Jesus was standing before the governor, and he asked him, “Are you the king of the Judeans?”

“You said it yourself,” replied Jesus.

27:12 The ruing priests and elders were hurling many accusations, but Jesus made no responses. 27:13 So Pilate said, “Don’t you hear all the charges they’re making?” 27:14 Yet he still said nothing, which mystified the governor.

Pilate argues with the mob about Jesus

27:15 Now the governor had a custom of releasing one prisoner of the crowd’s choosing during the Festival. 27:16 There happened to be a notorious

prisoner called Bar-Abbas, 27:17 so when everyone was assembled Pilate said to them, “Which one do you want me to release to you: Bar-Abbas or Jesus who is called the Anointed One?” 27:18 He knew very well that it was out of envy that Jesus had been handed over. 27:19 And while Pilate was holding court, his wife sent a message to him: “Have nothing to do with that righteous person, because I have had a terrible nightmare about him!”

27:20 The high priests and elders had persuaded the crowd to ask for Bar-Abbas and have Jesus put to death. 27:21 So when the governor asked them, “Which of the two do you choose to be released to you?” they said, “Bar-Abbas!”

27:22 “So what should I do with Jesus who is called the Anointed One?” asked Pilate.

“Crucify him!” they replied.

27:23 “But why?” asked Pilate. “What crime has he committed?”

Yet they only shouted louder, “Crucify him!” 27:24 And when Pilate saw that it was pointless and that the people were on the verge of rioting, he took some water and washed his hands in front of them all and said, “I hereby declare to you that I am not guilty of this person’s blood!”

27:25 And all the people said, “May his blood be on our hands, and on the hands of our children!”

Jesus is abused by the soldiers

27:26 Then he released Bar-Abbas to them and handed Jesus over to be scourged and crucified. 27:27 So the soldiers took Jesus from the governor to their headquarters. They got the whole company of soldiers together, 27:28 stripped him, dressed him in a crimson cloak, 27:29 and put a braided wreath of thorns on his head. Then they put a stick in his right hand and dropped to their knees and mocked, “Hail, King of the Judeans!” 27:30 And they spat on him, then took the stick and hit him in the head with it. 27:31 After they had their fun, they put his own clothes back

on him and led him away to be crucified.

Jesus is crucified

27:32 On their way out they conscripted a Cyrenian named Simon to carry Jesus' cross. 27:33 When they got to the place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"), 27:34 they offered him wine with pain-killer mixed in. But after tasting it, he wouldn't drink it.

Jesus had told his disciples that he would never drink wine until he was in the new kingdom, and he held to that even when it would have helped alleviate his excruciating pain.

27:35 So they crucified him, and they gambled to see who would get which

articles of his clothing. 27:36 Then they sat down to guard him, 27:37 and above his head they posted the charge against him: “This is Jesus, the King of the Judeans.” 27:38 Two robbers were also crucified with him, one to his right and the other to his left.

27:39 Those who passed by slandered him, shaking their heads 27:40 and saying, “So you were going to demolish the temple and then rebuild it in three days? Then save yourself, if you’re the God-Man! Come down off the cross!”

27:41 The high priests and scribes jeered at him as well: 27:42 “He saved others, but he can’t save himself! If he’s the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross right now and we’ll put

our trust in him! 27:43 Let God get him out of this if he wants. After all, he said, ‘I am the God-Man!’ ” 27:44 Then even the robbers being crucified joined in the shameful mockery.

27:45 Darkness came upon the whole land from about noon until three in the afternoon. 27:46 Then Jesus cried out loudly, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?”). 27:47 Some standing there said, “Look, he’s calling for Elijah!” 27:48 So one of them immediately ran and soaked a sponge with wine-vinegar and put it on the end of a stick, then lifted it to him to drink. 27:49 And they said, “Now leave him alone; let’s see if Elijah comes to save him!”

Jesus dies

27:50 Then Jesus gave one more loud shout and breathed his last. 27:51 Suddenly the curtain in the temple split in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook and the rocks split apart. 27:52 Then the graves opened up and the bodies of many righteous people woke from the dead. 27:53 After Jesus' resurrection, they left their graves and went into the holy city and appeared to many people. 27:54 When the Roman army captain and those guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and everything else, they were terrified and exclaimed, "Surely this was the God-Man!"

27:55 There were many women watching from a distance. They had

followed Jesus from Galilee and attended to his needs. 27:56 Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Jesus is buried

27:57 When it was getting late, a rich person from Arimathea by the name of Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus, 27:58 approached Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate granted the request, 27:59 so Joseph took the body and wrapped it in clean linen, 27:60 then placed it in a new tomb that he had quarried out of rock. Then he rolled a very large stone in front of the tomb's opening and went away. 27:61

Now Mary of Magdala and the other
Mary were sitting in front of the tomb.

The tomb is sealed and guarded

27:62 The next day following the
Preparation, the high priests went with
the Pharisees to Pilate 27:63 and said,
“Sir, we remember that while he was
still alive, that deceiver said, ‘I will arise
after three days.’ 27:64 So give the order
to secure the grave until the three days
are past. Then his disciples cannot
steal his body and tell people he rose
from the dead. The second con would
be worse than the first!”

27:65 “You have guards,” replied Pilate.
“Secure it to your satisfaction.” 27:66 So

they went off and secured the grave by sealing it, and the guard was posted.

Jesus rises from the dead

28:1 One night of the Sabbaths, just before dawn, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to see the grave. 28:2 Suddenly there was a tremendous earthquake because an angel of the Master came down from heaven, and he rolled away the stone and then sat on it. 28:3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. 28:4 The guards shook with fear and passed out.

The soldiers fainted with fear, but the women did not.

28:5 Then the angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid! I know that you’re looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 28:6 But he isn’t here; he arose, just as he said he would! Come and see the spot where his body was placed, 28:7 then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead. In fact, he is going on ahead to Galilee, so you will see him there. You have your assignment!”

28:8 So off they went from the tomb in a hurry, filled with great joy. They ran to announce this to his disciples, 28:9 when suddenly there was Jesus! “Greetings!” he said. They went over to him and worshiped while holding on to his feet. 28:10 Then he said to them, “Don’t be afraid! Go and tell my

brothers and sisters to leave for Galilee;
I will meet them there.”

The guards and the lie

28:11 While they were on their way,
some of the guards went into the city
and told the high priests every detail of
what had happened. 28:12 So they
called a meeting with the elders, and
they gave a sum of money to the
soldiers 28:13 and told them, “You are to
say that his disciples came during the
night and stole the body while you were
sleeping. 28:14 And if word of this
reaches the governor, don’t worry; we
will keep you out of trouble.” 28:15 So
the soldiers took the payoff and did as
they were told. This story was spread

around throughout Judea and continues to this day.

Jesus commissions his disciples

28:16 Now the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 28:17 When they saw him they worshiped him, though some were skeptical. 28:18 Then Jesus said to them, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. 28:19 So go then, make disciples throughout the nations. Immerse them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 28:20 and teach them to hold tightly to everything I’ve commanded you. Rest assured I will be

with you always, until the very end of the age.”

Mark

The forerunner

1:1 This begins the good news of Anointed Jesus, the God-Man. 1:2 As it is written according to the prophet Isaiah:

“Look! I am dispatching my angel before you, to pave the road in front of you. 1:3 There is the sound of someone shouting in the desert, ‘Prepare the way of the Master! Make the path straight!’”

1:4 John the Immerser was the one in the desert. He proclaimed that people

should change their minds and be immersed, so that they could be acquitted of their sins. 1:5 The whole province of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him, and he immersed them all in the Jordan River as they admitted their sins. 1:6 John himself was dressed in cloth made from camel hair, with a leather belt around his waist. His diet was locusts and wild honey. 1:7 And his message was, “Someone stronger than I is coming after me, whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down to untie. 1:8 I do indeed immerse you in water, but he will immerse you in the Holy Spirit!”

Jesus is immersed and then tested

1:9 Now it was in those days that Jesus arrived from Nazareth in Galilee, and he was immersed in the Jordan by John. 1:10 Right as he came up out of the water he saw the heavens split apart, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove. 1:11 Then a voice came from the heavens: “You are my dear son; I am pleased with you!” 1:12 Then right away the Spirit compelled him to go into the desert. 1:13 He was there for forty days, being tested by the Adversary. And he was with the wild animals, but the angels attended to him.

Jesus begins his ministry and chooses his first disciples

1:14 Now after John was arrested,
Jesus came into Galilee, where he
proclaimed the good news about God:
1:15 “The time has come and the
kingdom of God approaches! Turn to
God and believe the good news.”

1:16 As they passed along the Sea of
Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother
Andrew casting nets into the sea,
because they caught fish for a living.
1:17 And Jesus said to them, “Come
and follow me, and I will have you catch
people for a living!” 1:18 Right away
they left their nets and followed him.
1:19 Going along a short distance he
saw James and his brother John, sons
of Zebedee, who were in their boat
preparing the nets. 1:20 He called them,
and they immediately left their father

Zebedee in the boat with the hired hands and followed Jesus.

1:21 As they went into Capernaum, on one of the Sabbaths they went straight to the synagogue, where Jesus began to teach. 1:22 The people were awestruck by his teaching, because he taught with authority, rather than like the scribes.

Jesus evicts a demon and heals many

1:23 Just then they saw someone in the synagogue with an unclean spirit. It shouted loudly, 1:24 “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!” 1:25 And

Jesus rebuked it: “Silence! Get out of him!” 1:26 Then the unclean spirit caused the person to convulse and shouted loudly as it left him. 1:27 So everyone was shocked, and they asked each other, “What new teaching is this, that has such authority? He commands unclean spirits and they listen to him!” 1:28 And the news about him spread rapidly all through the area around Galilee.

1:29 Leaving the synagogue, they went straight to the house of Simon and Andrew, along with James and John. 1:30 But Simon’s mother-in-law was down with a fever, and they told him about her right away. 1:31 He went over to her and took her by the hand to help

her up. The fever left her, and she began to attend to them.

1:32 Now when evening came, at sunset, the people brought him all who were in poor health or were possessed. 1:33 The whole city was at the door! 1:34 He healed those who were in poor health with various diseases, and he threw out many demons. But he would not allow the demons to speak because they knew who he was.

1:35 The next morning Jesus got up very early (it was actually still dark), and he went to an isolated place to pray. 1:36 But Simon hunted him down, 1:37 and those with him found him and told him, “Everyone is looking for you!” 1:38 And he said to them, “Let’s go

somewhere else, into the towns, so I can proclaim there, since this is the reason I'm here." 1:39 So he went into the synagogues throughout Galilee to proclaim and to throw out demons.

Jesus heals a leper

1:40 Then a leper came to him to plead with him. He dropped to his knees and said, "If you are willing, you can make me clean!" 1:41 Jesus, moved with compassion, held out his hand and touched him and said, "I am willing; be clean!" 1:42 Right away the leprosy left him and he was clean.

1:43 Now Jesus sent him off with a stern warning: 1:44 "See to it that you say nothing to anyone, but go and show

yourself to the priest and offer the cleansing sacrifice commanded by Moses as a testimony.” 1:45 But instead he went off and blabbed to everyone, such that Jesus could no longer openly enter a city but instead had to stay outside in desolate places. Yet they came to him from everywhere.

Jesus heals a paralyzed man

2:1 He went back to Capernaum in those days, but they heard he was in a house there. 2:2 So many gathered there that the house was packed (you couldn’t even get in the door), and he gave a speech to them. 2:3 Then a paralyzed person was carried there by four people. 2:4 But since they couldn’t get to him because of the crowd, they

uncovered the roof where Jesus was and dug a hole so they could lower the paralyzed person on the cot.

2:5 Now when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed person, “Dear child, your sins are forgiven!” 2:6 But some of the scribes sat there and muttered to themselves, 2:7 “How can he say such a thing? He is calling himself God! Who else can forgive sins except the one true God?” 2:8 But right away Jesus knew in his spirit what they were muttering to themselves, and he said to them, “What is this you’re muttering about? 2:9 Which is easier to say to the paralyzed person: ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or ‘Arise, pick up your cot and walk’?

2:10 “But observe the jurisdiction the Human has to forgive sins here on earth!” So he said to the paralyzed person, 2:11 “I tell you, arise, pick up your cot and go home!” 2:12 And right away he got up, picked up his cot, and walked out the door in front of everyone. Then they were all astounded and gave honor to God: “We have never seen anything like this!”

Jesus chooses Levi as a disciple

2:13 Jesus left again and went to the seaside. The whole crowd came with him, and he taught them. 2:14 As he passed by he saw Levi, son of Alpheus, sitting in his tax contractor’s office. So

he said to him, “Follow me!” and he got up and followed.

2:15 When he went to eat at the tax contractor’s house, many other tax contractors and scoundrels were also reclining at the table with Jesus and his disciples, since they were following him.
2:16 But when the scribes who were Pharisees saw that he was eating with scoundrels and tax contractors, they complained to his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax contractors and scoundrels?”

2:17 Jesus heard this and said to them, “It is the sick, not the healthy, who need a physician. I didn’t come to call the righteous but the scoundrels.”

Jesus asked about fasting

2:18 The disciples of John and of the
Pharisees were fasting, so they came
and asked him, “Why is it that the
disciples of John and of the Pharisees
all fast, but your disciples do not?”

2:19 “Do the wedding guests fast while
the bridegroom is with them?”
answered Jesus. “No, they cannot fast
while they’re with the bridegroom. 2:20
But the days are coming when the
bridegroom will be taken away from
them, and then they will fast on that
day.

2:21 “No one uses unshrunk cloth to
patch an old article of clothing.
Otherwise, the new cloth pulls away

from the old and creates an even bigger tear than before. 2:22 Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst through, and both the wineskin and the wine will be ruined. New wine belongs in new wineskins.”

Jesus explains the Sabbath

2:23 Now it happened on one of the Sabbaths that he was passing alongside some grain fields, and his disciples were picking heads of grain along the way. 2:24 But the Pharisees complained, “Look! What they’re doing is forbidden on the Sabbaths.”

2:25 “Haven’t you ever read what David did when he and his men were hungry,

2:26 during the time of Abiathar the high priest?” Jesus replied. “He went into the House of God and ate the bread that was presented as an offering, which only the priests are allowed to eat, and fed it to those with him as well.” 2:27 Jesus added, “The Sabbath is for the sake of the person, not the person for the Sabbath, 2:28 and the Human is Master of the Sabbath.”

Jesus restores a man’s shriveled hand

3:1 Again he entered the synagogue, and there was someone with a shriveled hand. 3:2 Jesus was closely watched to see if he would heal on the Sabbaths so they’d have an excuse to accuse him. 3:3 And he said to the one

with the useless hand, “Step up here in front.” 3:4 Then he said to them all, “On the Sabbaths, is it permissible to do good or to do evil, to restore a life or to destroy it?” But they were silent. 3:5 Jesus looked around at them angrily, irritated by their hard hearts. Then he said to the person, “Hold out your hand.” He did so, and it was instantly restored. 3:6 At this, the Pharisees went right out and convened a council with the Herodians, to concoct a plot to kill Jesus.

Jesus teaches and heals many

3:7 But Jesus and his disciples went to the sea. A huge crowd from Galilee followed, 3:8 along with people from

Judea, Jerusalem, the area of Idumea, from the other side of the Jordan, and from around Tyre and Sidon. 3:9 They all came to him due to what they'd heard about him. And he told his disciples to keep a boat handy so the crowd wouldn't crush him. 3:10 In fact, he had healed many, and they all were pressing in on him so that whoever had a physical problem could be healed. 3:11 And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out as they left, "You are the God-Man!" 3:12 But he sternly warned them not to reveal who he was.

Jesus chooses The Twelve

3:13 Then Jesus went up into the mountain and picked out certain people

to come to him, and they did so. 3:14 He made twelve of them official Ambassadors, who would stay with him and be commissioned to proclaim 3:15 and to have authority to expel the demons. 3:16 These were the Twelve: Simon (he called him Peter), 3:17 James son of Zebedee and his brother John (he called them Boanerges, meaning “Thunderous Ones”), 3:18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alpheus, Thaddaios, Simon the Zealot, 3:19 and Judas of Kerioth, who would later betray Jesus.

Family and Pharisees against Jesus

3:20 He went into a house, but such a large crowd gathered that he couldn't even recline to eat a meal. 3:21 When his relatives heard about it they came to take him by force, because they thought he'd lost his mind. 3:22 But the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He's possessed by Beelzeboul!" and "It's by the power of the ruler of the demons that he throws the demons out!"

3:23 So Jesus replied to them with a parable: "How can the Adversary throw out the Adversary? 3:24 A kingdom divided against itself won't last long; 3:25 a house divided against itself cannot endure. 3:26 So if the Adversary rises up against himself and divides himself, he cannot endure but has met

his end. 3:27 “No one can enter a strong person’s house to plunder their possessions unless they first tie up the strong one; then they can plunder their house. 3:28 I tell you truly that all people’s sins and slanders will be forgiven, 3:29 unless they slander the Holy Spirit. There is no acquittal for that in this age, and they are guilty of an eternal sin.” 3:30 (He said this because they had accused him of having an unclean spirit.)

3:31 Then his mother and siblings came and stood outside, and they sent someone to call for him. 3:32 The crowd was seated all around him, and they told him, “Look! Your mother and brothers and sisters are here looking for you.” 3:33 And he replied, “Who is my

mother and who are my siblings?” 3:34 Then he looked at those sitting around him and said, “See? These are my mother and siblings, 3:35 because whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

The parable of the sower

4:1 Once again Jesus began to teach by the sea. A large crowd gathered to him, so he got into a boat and sat down, while the whole crowd was on land facing the sea. 4:2 He taught them with many parables like this one: 4:3 “Listen! Out came a farmer to sow seeds. 4:4 As he walked along, some of them fell along the side of the path, where the birds came and ate them. 4:5 Others fell onto rocky ground where there wasn’t

much soil. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 4:6 But when the sun came up, it scorched them because they had no root. 4:7 Still others fell among thorns, which grew up and chocked the plants so that they could not produce. 4:8 Yet others fell into ideal soil where they grew and prospered. By the time they all finished growing and producing, one seed had multiplied by thirty, another by sixty, and yet another by a hundred.” 4:9 And he added, “Whoever has ears, listen!”

Jesus explains the parable

4:10 Now when he was alone with the disciples, the Twelve asked him about the parables. 4:11 And he said to them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has

been given to you, but to outsiders, everything is said in parables, 4:12 such that ’though watching, they do not see, and though listening, they do not hear and understand. If they did, they might someday turn around and be forgiven’.”

4:13 Then he continued: “Don’t you understand this parable? Then how will you grasp the rest of them? 4:14 The farmer is sowing the Word. 4:15 The seeds along the side of the path represent those who hear the Word but the Adversary comes and takes it away. 4:16 The seeds on the rocky soil represent those who hear the Word and gladly accept it right away. 4:17 But there is no root in them; they are shallow. So when oppression or trials come because of the Word, they are

easily tripped up. 4:18 And the seeds among the thorns represent those who hear the Word, 4:19 but it becomes choked by the anxieties of life, the allure of wealth, and other desires, so the Word is unproductive. 4:20 But the seeds on ideal soil represent those who hear the Word and gladly accept it. They product thirty, sixty, or a hundred times what was sown."

Truth must not be hidden

4:21 Then he said to them, "Nobody puts a lamp under a container or bed; don't they put it on a lampstand instead? 4:22 For there is nothing hidden that won't be revealed, and nothing cloaked that won't be made obvious. 4:23 If you have ears, listen!"

4:24 And he added, “Listen carefully!
Whatever measure you use will be used
on you— with a bonus! 4:25 For those
who have much will be given more, but
those who have little will be deprived of
even that.

The parable of the mysterious seed

4:26 “The kingdom of God is like this,”
he continued. “A farmer plants seeds
4:27 and goes to bed, then wakes up
the next day and the seed has sprouted
and grown. The farmer has no idea how
this happens; 4:28 the earth just
automatically produces the stalk, then
the ear, and then the full head of grain.
4:29 And when it ripens it is time to get

out the sickle, because the harvest is ready.”

The parable of the mustard seed

4:30 And he went on: “To what can we compare the kingdom of God? What parable can we use? 4:31 It is like a mustard seed, one of the tiniest that gets planted in the ground. 4:32 Afterwards it grows up to become the biggest plant, with branches large enough to provide shade for the birds to nest.” 4:33 And with many such parables he spoke the Word to them, according to what they could grasp. 4:34 In fact, he never spoke without using parables, though he explained them all to his disciples privately.

Jesus calms the storm

4:35 Later that day as evening approached, he said to them, “Let’s go across to the other side.” 4:36 So they left the crowd and took him, since he was already in the boat. Other boats went along as well. 4:37 But a storm came up with strong winds, and the waves beat on the boat to the point that it was filled with water. 4:38 Now Jesus was sleeping on a cushion at the stern, so they woke him up and pleaded, “Teacher! Don’t you care that we are about to die?” 4:39 And when he was fully awake he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Calm down!” Then the wind died down and there was great calm.

4:40 “What cowards you are!” he said to them. “You have no faith!”

4:41 Great fear came over them and they said to each other, “Who can this be, since the wind and the sea listen to him?!”

Jesus frees the man possessed by Legion

5:1 Then they arrived at the other side of the sea, in the region of the Gerasenes. 5:2 When Jesus disembarked, he was met right away by someone with an unclean spirit who came from the direction of the graveyard. 5:3 The graveyard was where he lived, and he could no longer be restrained, even with chains and

ankle irons. 5:4 He was able to break them apart, and no one was strong enough to control him. 5:5 He stayed night and day among the tombs and mountains, screaming and pounding himself with stones.

5:6 When he saw Jesus in the distance, he ran and bowed before him 5:7 and shouted loudly, “What do you want with me, Jesus, son of the Highest God? Swear by God that you won’t torture me!” 5:8 (He said this because Jesus had told the unclean spirit to get out of him.)

5:9 “What is your name?” Jesus asked.

“My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.” 5:10 And they kept on begging him not to send them out of the

area. 5:11 There was a large herd of hogs grazing near the mountain, 5:12 and they begged him, “Send us into the hogs so we can enter them!” 5:13 He granted permission, and the unclean spirits came out and then entered into the hogs. The whole herd stampeded over the cliff and into the sea; some two thousand of them were drowned. 5:14 Those who were herding them ran away and spread the news, and then people from all over the city and countryside came to see what had happened.

5:15 Then they all came to Jesus and saw the one who had been possessed by Legion sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. 5:16 The ones who saw all this told

them what had happened to the possessed person and the hogs. 5:17 So they started begging Jesus to leave their territory. 5:18 When he stepped into the boat, the one who had been possessed asked to go along. 5:19 But Jesus didn't allow him: "Go back to your home and your people, and report to them all that the Master has done and how he showed compassion to you." 5:20 So he went off to the Ten Cities and proclaimed all that Jesus had done, and they were amazed.

Jesus heals a woman and raises a girl from the dead

5:21 Jesus then took the boat back to the other side, and a large crowd gathered to him by the sea. 5:22 When

one of the synagogue rulers by the name of Jairus saw him, he fell at his feet 5:23 and begged, “My daughter is about to die! Please come and touch her so that she may be restored and live.” 5:24 So he left with him, followed by a large crowd that pressed in on him from all sides.

5:25 Now there was a woman who had suffered from hemorrhaging for twelve years. 5:26 She had suffered much from many healers and spent everything she had, though none could cure her; in fact, she only got worse. 5:27 But when she heard about Jesus, she approached him from the crowd behind him and touched the hem of his cloak. 5:28 For she had said to herself, “If I can just touch his clothing, I will be healed.”

5:29 And right away the flow of blood stopped, and she could feel that he had healed her body of this scourge.

5:30 Jesus knew that power was going out of him, so he turned around to the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

5:31 “The crowd is pressing in all around you,” replied his disciples, “and you want to know who touched you?”

5:32 But he kept looking around to see who it was. 5:33 So the woman, shaking with fear because she knew what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.

5:34 “Daughter,” he said to her, “Your faith has restored you! Go in peace; be

healed from your scourge.”

5:35 While he was still speaking, some from the synagogue ruler’s household came and said, “Your daughter has died; there is no further need to bother the teacher.” 5:36 But Jesus ignored the message and said to the synagogue ruler, “Do not fear; only believe.” 5:37 He wouldn’t let anyone else follow along except Peter, James, and James’ brother John.

5:38 When they arrived at the synagogue ruler’s house, he saw all the turmoil, wailing, and loud sobbing. 5:39 He came in and said to them, “Why all this fuss? Why are you crying? The little one is not dead but only sleeping!” 5:40 They laughed at him, but he made

everyone leave the house except for the little one's father and mother, and the ones who had come with him.

5:41 He took the little girl by the hand and said to her, "Talitha, koum!" (which means, "Young girl, I tell you to arise!"). 5:42 Right away he helped up the young girl and she walked around (she was about twelve years old)! They were all completely beside themselves and totally amazed. 5:43 But he cautioned them not to say anything about this, and he told them to give her something to eat.

Jesus is belittled by his hometown

6:1 He left there and went into his hometown, with his disciples following. 6:2 On one Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and when they heard him, many were dumbfounded and said, “Where did this come from? And how did he get this wisdom, or the power to do such things through his hands? 6:3 Isn’t he the craftsperson, the son of Mary and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And aren’t his sisters here with us?” So they took offense at him.

6:4 Then Jesus said to them, “A prophet is honored everyplace except in their own hometown and among their own relatives and household!” 6:5 And he was unable to do any powerful deeds there, except to place his hands on a

few chronically ill people and heal them; 6:6 their lack of faith was disturbing. And he went around teaching in the villages.

Jesus sends out The Twelve

6:7 Then he called the Twelve together and began to send them out two by two. He gave them authority over the unclean spirits 6:8 and told them not to take anything extra on the trip except a walking stick; no bread, no luggage, no wallet. 6:9 They could wear sandals but not an extra tunic. 6:10 And he added, “Whenever you enter into a house, stay there until you leave that place. 6:11 If they don’t welcome you and refuse to listen to you, shake the dust from beneath your feet as a testimony against them.”

This was an insult, since not even the dirt on the ground would be worth taking elsewhere.

6:12 So they went out and proclaimed that people should change their minds. 6:13 They also expelled many demons, and rubbed oil on the chronically ill to heal them.

Herod beheads John the Immerser

6:14 Now King Herod heard about this, because Jesus' name had become well-known. People were saying that John the Immerser had been raised from the dead, since he had these powers. 6:15 Others said he was Elijah, and still others that he was a prophet like the prophets of old. 6:16 But when

Herod heard this he said, “It is John, whom I had beheaded! He has been raised from the dead!”

6:17 Herod had ordered that John be arrested and jailed, because Herod had married the wife of his brother Philip 6:18 and John had told him, “It is illegal for you to have your brother’s wife.” 6:19 So Herodias was out to get John and wanted to kill him. But she couldn’t 6:20 because Herod feared John and knew him to be a righteous and holy man, so he protected him. He was intrigued with him and listened to him eagerly.

6:21 But then came the opportune moment. On his birthday, Herod was hosting a dinner for all his important guests, including legion commanders

and leading citizens of Galilee. 6:22 When Herodias' daughter came in and danced for them, this pleased Herod and his guests. So the king said to the young girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you." 6:23 And he swore a strong oath to her: "Anything you ask of me, I will give to you— even up to half my kingdom!"

6:24 So she went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?"

"The head of John the Immerser!" she replied.

6:25 So she quickly went straight to the king and said, "I choose that you immediately give me, on a platter, the head of John the Immerser!"

6:26 The king was devastated. But because of his oaths and the dinner guests, he didn't want to decline her request. 6:27 The king dispatched his executioner to bring John's head, so he left and beheaded him in the prison. 6:28 Then he brought it on a platter and gave it to the young girl, who gave it to her mother. 6:29 Upon hearing this, his disciples came and carried away the body and buried it.

Jesus feeds five thousand

6:30 Then the Ambassadors met with Jesus and told him about all that they had done and taught. 6:31 And he said to them, "Come with me; you need a little rest for yourselves in a quiet place." (So many people were coming

and going that they didn’t even have a chance to eat.) 6:32 So they went off alone in the boat to a remote place. 6:33 But many people found out where they were going, so they went on foot as fast as they could from all the cities and got there ahead of them.

6:34 Upon leaving the boat Jesus saw the large crowd, and he was moved with compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things. 6:35 But it was already late in the day, and his disciples came to him and said, “We’re out in the middle of nowhere and it’s getting late. 6:36 Dismiss them so they can go into the farms and villages to buy themselves something to eat.”

6:37 “You give them something to eat!” he said.

“How are we supposed to do that?!” they asked. “It would take 200 days’ wages to buy enough bread for them to eat!”

6:38 Then he asked them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and check.”

So they checked and reported, “We have five loaves and two fish.”

6:39 So he had them all sit down in equally-sized groups on the green grass, 6:40 and they reclined according to a grid of plots in groups of hundreds and fifties. 6:41 Taking the five loaves and two fish, Jesus looked up into the sky, blessed the loaves, and gave them

to his disciples to hand out; the same with the fish. It was divided among them all, 6:42 and they all ate and were satisfied. 6:43 Afterwards they picked up twelve baskets full of scraps of bread and fish; 6:44 there were five thousand men there.

Jesus walks on water

6:45 Right away he compelled his disciples to get on the boat and go to the other side near Bethsaida, while he stayed and dismissed the crowd. 6:46 After bidding them farewell, he went into the mountain to pray. 6:47 By evening the boat had reached the middle of the sea, and he was alone on land. 6:48 He saw that they were straining at the oars because the wind

was against them, so at about three in the morning he started coming toward them, walking on the sea! He intended to walk right past them, 6:49 but they screamed because they thought they were seeing a ghost; 6:50 they all saw him and were quite disturbed. But he started talking to them: “Have courage, it is I! Don’t be afraid.” 6:51 Then he went toward them and got into the boat, and the wind died down. They were completely and totally beside themselves, 6:52 because they were still clueless about the bread; they weren’t

terribly bright.

Mark makes no effort to hide the fact that the disciples were slow to put two and two together. This refutes theories claiming these same people would later concoct a plot to fake Jesus' resurrection, or that they faked the good news accounts, since they would not portray themselves in such an unflattering way.

6:53 When they finally reached land, they anchored at Gennesaret. 6:54 As they disembarked they were recognized right away, 6:55 and the people of the area started running from all over, carrying the sick on cots to where they heard he was. 6:56 Wherever he went, whether villages or cities or out in the fields, they would place the disabled in

the city squares and plead with him to let them touch the hem of his cloak, and whoever did so was healed.

Jesus explains the law

7:1 Now the Pharisees and some of the scribes came from Jerusalem and gathered around Jesus, 7:2 and they saw some of his disciples eating bread without first having ritually cleansed their hands. 7:3 (They and all the Judeans never eat without first ritually washing their hands, according to the traditions of their ancestors. 7:4 If they have just returned from the marketplace, they perform a ritual bath before eating. They also observe many other rituals such as washing cups, pitchers, saucepans, and even beds.)

7:5 So the Pharisees and scribes asked Jesus, “Why is it that your disciples don’t observe the tradition of the elders? They eat bread with unclean hands.”

7:6 “Isaiah prophesied accurately about you, you pretenders!” Jesus replied. “As it is written, ‘These people give me lip service but their hearts are far away. 7:7 In vain they pay their respects, for their teachings are their own and not mine.’ 7:8 You discard the command of God and cling to human tradition! 7:9 Here’s an example of how you do that: 7:10 Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother; whoever speaks abusively against their father or mother must be put to death.’ 7:11 But you say, ‘You can tell your father or mother that you don’t

have to support them if the money is a gift offering which you get to keep', 7:12 so you give them an excuse to not help their own father or mother! 7:13 You thereby invalidate the Word of God for the tradition you invent. And you do a lot of things like that."

7:14 Once again he called the crowd to come to him, and he said, "Listen to me and understand: 7:15 It isn't what's outside of a person and goes into them that contaminates them, but what comes out of them." 7:16 7:17 When he left the crowd and went into the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. 7:18 And he replied, "Are you stupid too? Don't you understand that whatever comes from outside of a person and goes into them cannot

contaminate them? 7:19 It doesn't go into their heart but into their bowels and then is eliminated." (In saying this, he was declaring all food 'clean'.) 7:20 "What comes out of a person is what contaminates them. 7:21 For it is out of people's hearts that come depraved thinking, promiscuity, theft, murder, 7:22 adultery, greed, evil, treachery, vice, 'the evil eye', slander, arrogance, and empty-headedness. 7:23 All of these evil things come out from the inside and contaminate a person."

A woman wins an argument with Jesus

7:24 Leaving there, Jesus went into the region of Tyre. He entered a house and didn't want anyone to know, but he

couldn’t avoid it. 7:25 Right away a woman whose daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him and fell down at his feet. 7:26 She was a foreigner from Syro-Phoenicia, and she asked if he could throw out the demon from her daughter.

7:27 But he said to her, “First let the children eat their fill; it isn’t right to take the children’s bread and toss it to puppies.”

7:28 “But sir,” she replied, “Even the puppies under the table eat the scraps the children drop!”

7:29 “Good answer!” Jesus said to her. “Because of it, you may go; the demon has come out of your daughter.” 7:30 She went to her home and found the

little one placed on a bed, free of the demon.

Jesus heals a deaf and mute man

7:31 Leaving the region of Tyre, once again he went through Sidon and the Ten Cities to the Sea of Galilee. 7:32 They brought him someone who was deaf and speech-impaired, pleading with him to place his hand on them. 7:33 He took the person away from the crowd, put his fingers into the person's ears, and then spit and touched the person's tongue. 7:34 Then he looked up to the sky and sighed deeply, saying, "Ephphatha!" (which means "Be opened up!"). 7:35 Immediately they were opened up, and the person could hear

and their tongue was loosened, and they began to talk normally.

7:36 Jesus commanded them not to say a thing, but the more he did so, the more they spread the news. 7:37 They were beyond awestruck and said, “He does everything well! The deaf hear and the mute talk!”

Jesus feeds four thousand

8:1 In those days, once again there was a large crowd, and they had nothing to eat. So he called his disciples to him and said, 8:2 “I pity the crowd, because they have been with me for three days already and have nothing to eat. 8:3 And if I send them away hungry, they

may faint along the way, because some have come a long distance.”

8:4 “Where would anyone get enough bread for them in this remote place?” asked his disciples.

8:5 “How many loaves do you have?” replied Jesus.

“Seven,” they answered.

8:6 So Jesus had the crowd recline on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks, and broke them up, then handed them to his disciples to set before the crowd. 8:7 They also had a few small fish, which he blessed and put before the crowd as well. 8:8 They all ate and were filled, and seven large baskets of leftovers were picked up. 8:9

Jesus dismissed them, about four thousand people in all.

8:10 Right away Jesus got into the boat with his disciples, and he went into the province of Dalmanutha. 8:11 The Pharisees came out to debate him, testing him by demanding that he give a sign from heaven. 8:12 He groaned deeply within himself and said, “Why does this generation look for a sign? I tell you truly, we’ll see if this generation will be given a sign!” 8:13 And with that he left them, getting into the boat and going to the other side.

Warnings about Pharisees

8:14 Now the disciples had forgotten to buy bread, and all they had with them in

the boat was one loaf. 8:15 Then Jesus sternly warned them, “Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod!” 8:16 They had been discussing among themselves why they had no bread. 8:17 But Jesus knew what they were discussing and said to them, “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not understand? Don’t you get it? Are you that thick in the head? 8:18 You have eyes but don’t see; you have ears but don’t hear! 8:19 Don’t you remember when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand people? How many baskets full of leftovers did you pick up?”

“Twelve,” they answered.

8:20 “And when I broke the seven loaves for four thousand people, how many large baskets filled to the brim with scraps did you pick up?”

“Seven,” they replied.

8:21 Then Jesus said, “So how can you not understand?”

Jesus heals a blind person

8:22 When they arrived at Bethsaida, people brought a blind person to Jesus and begged him to touch him. 8:23 Taking him by the hand, he led him outside of the village, where he spit on his eyes and placed his hands on him. And he asked, “Do you see anything?”

8:24 He looked up and said, “I see people as something like trees walking around.” 8:25 So Jesus put his hands on the blind one’s eyes again, and the person could see normally; his vision was restored and he could see everything sharply. 8:26 Then Jesus sent him home but warned him not to go into the village.

Peter testifies that Jesus is the Anointed One

8:27 Then Jesus and his disciples went off to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and along the way Jesus asked them, “Who do the people say I am?”

8:28 “Some say John the Immerser, others Elijah, and still others, one of the

prophets," they replied.

8:29 "And who do you say I am?" he asked.

Then Peter spoke up: "You are the Anointed One!"

Jesus predicts his death and scolds Peter

8:30 Jesus ordered them not to say anything about him, 8:31 and he began to teach them: "The Human must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, high priests, and scribes. Then he is to be killed, and then he will rise after three days." 8:32 After he had stated this explicitly, Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 8:33

Then Jesus turned around to look at his disciples, and he rebuked Peter: “Get out of my sight, Adversary! Your mind is not on God but on people.”

The cost of following Jesus

8:34 He gathered the crowd together with his disciples and said to them, “If anyone decides to follow me, they must renounce themselves, pick up their cross, and follow me. 8:35 For whoever decides to preserve their life will lose it, but whoever decides to lose their life because of me and the good news will preserve it. 8:36 What good is it to gain the whole world but forfeit one’s life? 8:37 Or what would a person give in exchange for their life? 8:38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this

unfaithful and wicked generation, the Human will be ashamed of that person when he comes in the majesty of his Father, along with the holy angels.”

9:1 Jesus continued: “I tell you truly that some of you standing here will certainly not experience death without having seen the kingdom of God coming with power.”

The Transfiguration

9:2 Six days later Jesus took Peter, James and John alone with him up a high mountain. Suddenly he was transformed in front of them; 9:3 his clothing became extremely gleaming white, such as no launderer on earth could make them. 9:4 Then Elijah and

Moses appeared, and they were conversing with Jesus.

9:5 Then Peter blurted out to Jesus, “Rabbi, it’s great for us to be here! We should make three sanctuaries: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” 9:6 (he didn’t know what to say, since they were so afraid). 9:7 But a cloud enveloped them, and from it came a voice that said, “This is my dear son; listen to him!” 9:8 When they looked around, suddenly they saw no one else there with them except Jesus.

9:9 On their way down the mountain, Jesus commanded them not to say a thing about what they had seen, until the Human had risen from the dead. 9:10 They kept that command, but they

discussed among themselves what he had meant by rising from the dead. 9:11 So they asked him, “What did the scribes mean about Elijah having to come first?”

9:12 “Elijah does indeed come first,” he assured them, “and he is restoring everything. Yet how can it be written that the Human must suffer greatly and be scorned? 9:13 But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did what they wanted to him, just as it was written about him.”

A demon the disciples could not throw out

9:14 When they reached the other disciples they saw a large crowd around

them, and they were debating the scribes. 9:15 The crowd recognized Jesus immediately and were thrilled to see him, so they raced toward him and greeted him. 9:16 Then he asked them what they were arguing about, 9:17 and one person out of the crowd replied, “Teacher, I brought you my son. He has a mute spirit, 9:18 and whenever it seizes him it takes control and causes him to foam at the mouth and grind his teeth, and he is wasting away. I asked your disciples to throw it out but they couldn’t.”

9:19 Jesus replied, “Faithless generation! How long will I be with you? How long will I put up with you? Bring him to me.” 9:20 So they brought him, and when the spirit saw Jesus it started

right away to convulse the boy violently. It made him fall to the ground and roll around, foaming at the mouth. 9:21 And Jesus asked the father, “How long has he been like this?”

“From childhood,” he replied. 9:22 “On many occasions it has thrown him into the fire or into water to kill him. But if you can, help us; have pity on us!”

9:23 “If I can?” asked Jesus. “Everything is possible to those who believe!”

9:24 Right away the boy’s father cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief!”

9:25 Then Jesus, seeing that the crowd was rushing toward him, rebuked the unclean spirit and said, “Deaf and mute spirit, I command you to get out of him

and never enter him again!” 9:26 And with much screaming and convulsing it left, making the boy to appear dead; in fact, most of the people believed he was dead. 9:27 But Jesus grasped him by the hand, and he awakened and stood up. 9:28 When Jesus entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why couldn’t we throw it out?”

9:29 “This kind cannot be thrown out except with prayer,” he answered.

Jesus predicts his death again

9:30 After this they went through Galilee, but Jesus did not want anyone to know, 9:31 because of what he was teaching his disciples: “The Human is to

be handed over to people who will kill him. But three days after they do that, he will arise.” 9:32 Yet they didn’t know what he meant and were afraid to ask.

Jesus rebukes hierarchy among his followers

9:33 Then they arrived in Capernaum, and when they got to the house he asked them what they had been discussing along the way. 9:34 But they didn’t answer, because they had been arguing over who was the greatest.

9:35 So Jesus sat down and called the Twelve to him and said, “Whoever wants to be first will be last of all, and the servant to all.” 9:36 Then he had a child stand in front of them, whom he

picked up and held in his arms: 9:37 “Whoever accepts one of these little ones in my name is really accepting me, and whoever accepts me is really accepting the One who sent me.”

For and against

9:38 Then John spoke up: “Teacher, we saw someone throwing out demons in your name and we stopped them, because they’re not one of us.”

9:39 But Jesus replied, “Don’t stop them, because no one who does a powerful deed in my name can turn right around and malign me. 9:40 For whoever is not against us is for us. 9:41 Whoever gives you a cup of water, just because you belong to the Anointed

One, will certainly be paid their wages.
9:42 And if anyone sets a trap for one of
these little ones who trust me, it would
be better if a very large millstone were
tied around that person’s neck and they
were thrown into the sea!

A warning against giving in to temptation

9:43 “If your own hand sets a trap for
you, cut it off; better to go through life
crippled than to keep both hands and
be sent to Gehenna, where the fire is
never quenched.

Gehenna was a literal trash dump that was always burning, but clearly Jesus is using it as an illustration about one's eternal destination. And an unquenchable fire is one that always has something to burn.

9:44 9:45 And if your own foot sets a trap for you, cut it off; better to go through life lame than to keep both feet and be thrown into Gehenna. 9:46 9:47 And if your own eye sets a trap for you, get rid of it; better to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to keep both eyes and be thrown into Gehenna, 9:48 'where the worm does not die and the fire is not extinguished'. 9:49 Everyone will be 'salted' by means of fire. 9:50 Salt is good, but not if it loses its saltiness; how could you re-season it?

So keep yourselves ‘salty’, and be at peace with each other.”

Jesus condemns no-fault divorce

10:1 Going up from there, Jesus crossed the Jordan River and went into the area of Judea. Once again a large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them as usual. 10:2 Then the Pharisees came to test him by asking whether it was permissible for a man to

divorce his wife.

This same incident in Matthew 19 gives more detail, identifying this question as the “any cause” debate among the rabbis concerning divorce. Some interpreted the scriptures to allow “no-fault” divorce, while others insisted that there had to be a valid reason. They are trying to get Jesus to take sides.

10:3 “What did Moses command you?” Jesus asked.

10:4 And they answered, “Moses permitted a man to write up a certificate of divorce and send her away.”

10:5 Then Jesus said, “It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote this command to you.

Jesus is hereby teaching that God sometimes makes concessions to human weakness; that is, not everything God commands is a timeless ideal.

10:6 But from the beginning of creation
‘he made them male and female, 10:7
and for this reason a man will leave his
father and mother and be joined to his
wife, 10:8 so that the two become one
flesh’. So they are no longer two, but
one flesh, 10:9 and no one is to
separate what God has joined.”

10:10 Once they were in the house, the
disciples kept asking about this. 10:11
So he told them, “If anyone divorces his
wife and she marries someone else, he
commits adultery against her. 10:12 And
if a woman divorces her husband and

marries someone else, she commits adultery.”

This concerns a technicality under the law: adultery was actually against the other man, not the divorced wife. So Jesus is saying that divorce is a matter of the heart, far beyond the letter of the law, and that the wife had to be considered equally.

Jesus defends children

10:13 People presented little ones to Jesus so that he would bless them, but his disciples rebuked them. 10:14 When Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little ones come to me; do not prevent them! For the kingdom of God consists of such people. 10:15 I tell you truly that

whoever does not accept the kingdom of God as these little ones do, will not enter it themselves!” 10:16 Then he took the little ones in his arms and place his hands on them to bless them.

Riches as an obstacle to salvation

10:17 As he went out onto the road, someone approached quickly and dropped to his knees: “Good Teacher,” he asked, “What should I do to inherit eternal life?”

10:18 “Why are you asking me about what is good?” he asked. “No one but God is good. 10:19 And you know the commandments: don’t murder, don’t commit adultery, don’t steal, don’t give

false testimony, honor your father and mother.”

10:20 “I’ve kept all those commands all my life,” he replied.

10:21 But Jesus looked at him with fondness and said, “You lack only one thing: Go and sell everything you have and give the money to the destitute, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.” 10:22 But upon hearing this, he went away dejected, because he was very wealthy.

10:23 Then Jesus looked around at his disciples and said, “How very difficult it is for those with money to enter into the kingdom of God!” 10:24 His disciples were shocked to hear this, so Jesus continued: “Students, it is very difficult

to enter the kingdom of God. 10:25 I think it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

10:26 They were still astounded and said to themselves, “Then who can possibly be saved?”

10:27 Jesus looked at them and said, “People may be unable to do this, but with God, anything is possible.”

10:28 Then Peter started to say, “Look, we’ve given up everything to follow you!”

10:29 “Yes,” said Jesus. “I tell you truly that not one of you who has given up a house, brothers, sisters, mother, father,

children, or property for the sake of me and the good news, 10:30 will fail to receive a hundred times more in this life: houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, property. Trials will come too, but in eternity 10:31 many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

Jesus predicts his death yet again

10:32 They were going up the road to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way. They were awestruck, but those following were afraid. Taking the Twelve aside again, he began to tell them all the things that were about to happen to him: 10:33 “Look, we’re going up into Jerusalem, and the Human is to be handed over to the high priests and

scribes. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to the secular authorities, 10:34 who will jeer at him, spit on him, flog him, and kill him. But after three days he will rise up.”

Humility is greatness

10:35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, went up to Jesus and said, “Teacher, we have a favor to ask of you.”

10:36 “What is it you want me to do?” Jesus asked.

10:37 “When you are exalted, grant that one of us will sit at your right and the other at your left,” they answered.

10:38 “You don’t realize what you’re asking,” replied Jesus. “Are you able to drink from the same cup as I will, and be immersed with the same immersion as I will?”

10:39 “Yes, we are!” they replied.

And Jesus said, “You will indeed drink from the same cup and experience the same immersion. 10:40 But the places at my right and left are not mine to assign; they are for those already selected.”

10:41 When the Ten heard about this, they were indignant with James and John. 10:42 So Jesus called them to himself and said, “As you know, the other nations have people who are considered rulers and have mastery over them; their great ones wield

authority over them. 10:43 But it is not to be this way among you. Instead, whoever wants to be great must be your servant, 10:44 and whoever wants to be first among you will be the servant of all. 10:45 For the Human did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom payment for many.”

Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus

10:46 They went up to Jericho, and then as Jesus was leaving, along with his disciples and a fairly sizable crowd, there was a blind beggar by the name of Bartimaeus (son of Timaeus) sitting by the road. 10:47 When he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was there, he began to shout, “Jesus, descendant of David,

have mercy on me!” 10:48 Many people told him to stop, but he only shouted louder, “Jesus, descendant of David, have mercy on me!”

10:49 Jesus stopped and said, “Call him!” So they called to the blind one and said, “Take courage! Get up, he’s calling you!” 10:50 So he threw off his cloak and jumped up and went to Jesus.

10:51 “What do you want me to do?” he asked.

“My Master,” he replied, “I want to see!”

10:52 “On your way!” said Jesus, “Your faith has healed you.” And right away he saw, and he followed Jesus along the road.

Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem

11:1 When they neared Jerusalem and arrived at Bethphage and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent out two of his disciples 11:2 with these instructions: “Go into the village before you, and as soon as you enter it you will find a colt hitched, one that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it. 11:3 And if anyone asks you why you’re doing this, tell them that the Master needs it and will return it shortly.”

11:4 So they left and found the colt hitched near the gates by the outer street. They untied it, 11:5 and some of the people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” 11:6

So they told them what Jesus had said,
and they let them take it. 11:7 They took
it to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it,
then sat Jesus on it. 11:8 Many people
spread their cloaks on the road, while
others used chopped brush from the
fields. 11:9 Then those in front and
behind went along shouting, “Celebrate!
Blessed is the one bearing the name of
the Master! 11:10 And blessed is the
coming kingdom of our ancestor David!
Celebrate in the presence of God!”

Jesus curses a fig tree

11:11 Then Jesus entered Jerusalem
and went into the temple compound. He
looked around, but because it was
getting late he went into Bethany with
the Twelve. 11:12 The next day when

they left Bethany, he was hungry. 11:13 In the distance he saw a fig tree with leaves on it, so he went to see if it had fruit. But when he got there he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. 11:14 So he said, “No one will ever pick fruit from you

again!”; the disciples heard him say it.

Fig trees should bear fruit before the leaves, so if the tree has leaves but no fruit it is barren. According to F. F. Bruce, “When the fig leaves appear about the end of March, they are accompanied by a crop of small knobs that precede the real figs. These are eaten by peasants and others when hungry. They drop off before the real fig is formed. But if the leaves appear alone, there will be no figs that year.” (Intervarsity Press, 5th revised edition 1992, pp. 73-74.) But why did Jesus curse it? Most likely as an object lesson or prophetic sign for what was about to happen to Israel in the coming decades.

Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple

11:15 Now Jesus went into Jerusalem to the temple compound, and he started throwing out the merchants and their customers there, as well as overturning the tables of the brokers and the benches of those selling doves. 11:16 He prevented anyone from carrying merchandise through the temple, 11:17 and he gave them all a lecture: “Is it not written that ‘my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have turned it into a hideout for robbers!” 11:18 The high priests and scribes heard about this, so they started looking for a way to kill him. But they

feared the masses, who were captivated by his teaching.

The cursed tree is shriveled

11:19 When evening came, they went outside of the city. 11:20 In the morning when they came back, they saw that the fig tree was shriveled down to its roots. 11:21 Then Peter remembered and said, “Rabbi, look! The tree you cursed has dried up.” 11:22 And Jesus replied to them all, “If you have Godly faith, 11:23 I tell you truly that if you were to tell this mountain to lift up and throw itself into the sea, without second-guessing but being confident that what you’re saying will happen, it will happen. 11:24 What I’m saying here is that whatever you’re praying about or

requesting, believe that you have it, and it will be yours. 11:25 But whenever you're praying, if you have anything against someone you must forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may also forgive your sins."

Jesus' authority is challenged

11:27 They went again into Jerusalem, and when Jesus walked into the temple compound the high priests, scribes, and elders 11:28 said, "By what authority do you do these things? Who gave you the jurisdiction to do them?"

11:29 "Let me ask you a question," Jesus replied, "and if you answer my question I'll answer yours. 11:30 The

immersion of John: was it from heaven or from people? Answer me!”

11:31 They talked it over among themselves and said, “If we say ‘from heaven’ he will ask us why we didn’t believe him. 11:32 But if we say ‘from people’…“ (They feared the crowd, because all the people believed John to be a genuine prophet.) 11:33 So they said to Jesus, “We don’t know.”

“Then I’m not telling you by whose authority I do these things,” Jesus answered.

The parable of the tenants

12:1 Then Jesus began to talk to them in parables: “Someone planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug

a vat, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenant farmers and went traveling abroad. 12:2 When it was time to harvest he sent a servant to them to collect it. 12:3 But the tenants beat him up and sent him away empty-handed. 12:4 So he sent another servant, and they hit him on the head and humiliated him. 12:5 He sent yet another servant, whom they killed, and so on. The tenants beat some and killed others.

12:6 “Now the owner still had one dear son, and he sent him last to them and thought, ‘They will respect my son!’ 12:7 But the tenants said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let’s kill him and the inheritance will go to us!’ 12:8 So they took him and killed him, then threw him out of the vineyard. 12:9 So what

will the owner do? He will come and wipe out the tenants, and lease the vineyard to others.

12:10 “Have you not read this scripture? ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; 12:11 this is the Master’s doing, and wonderful to see!’ ” 12:12 Then they intended to arrest him since they knew the parable was about them, but because of the crowd they left him alone and went away.

Paying taxes to the government

12:13 Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to entrap him by something he might say: 12:14

“Teacher, we know that you are genuine and don’t care what others think about you. You don’t judge by appearances but truly teach the way of God. So are we permitted to pay the poll tax to Caesar, or not?

The purpose of the poll tax was to remind the Jews of their subservience to Rome.

12:15 Should we pay or not pay?”

But Jesus, knowing they were pretenders, said to them, “Why do you test me? Bring me a coin so I can examine it.” 12:16 So they brought him one and he asked them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

12:17 So Jesus said to them, “Repay Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and repay God what belongs to God!” And they were stumped.

Marriage and the afterlife

12:18 Now the Sadducees, who don’t believe in the resurrection, came to him and asked, 12:19 “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if someone’s brother dies and leaves a widow behind but no children, that he should marry the widow and produce children for his brother. 12:20 Suppose there were seven brothers; the first marries and then dies childless. 12:21 So the second brother marries her, and he too dies childless. Likewise with the third, 12:22 and so on through all seven brothers.

Finally the woman dies too. 12:23 When they rise up at the resurrection, whose wife will she be, since she had been married to all of them?”

12:24 And Jesus said to them, “You are mistaken; don’t you know the scriptures or the power of God? 12:25 For when they rise from the dead they do not marry; they are like the angels in heaven. 12:26 And regarding the dead being raised, haven’t you read in the book of Moses about the burning bush and how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? 12:27 He is not the God of the dead but of the living; you are badly mistaken!”

The greatest commandment

12:28 One of the scribes came along and heard them debating, and he saw that Jesus had answered them well. So he asked him, “What is the greatest commandment of all?”

12:29 And Jesus answered, “The greatest is, ‘Listen, Israel! The Master our God is the only one. 12:30 You must love the Master your God with your whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.’ 12:31 The second is very similar: ‘You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ There are no greater commandments than these.”

12:32 “Well said, Teacher!” the scribe replied. “You are correct in saying that there is one God and no other. 12:33 To love him with one’s whole heart,

understanding, and strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is far better than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices."

12:34 When Jesus saw how astutely he had answered, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Who is the Anointed One?

12:35 Jesus went on teaching in the temple compound: "How is it that the scribes say that the Anointed One is the descendant of David? 12:36 For David himself said through the Holy Spirit, 'The Master said to my Master, "Sit here at my right until I place your enemies

under your feet.”’ 12:37 Since David himself calls him ‘master’, how can he be his descendant?” Many in the crowd were delighted with what Jesus said.

Jesus rebukes hypocrisy and conceit

12:38 In another teaching he said, “Observe the scribes; they like to walk around in their robes, to be greeted in the marketplaces, 12:39 to have the best seats in the synagogues, and to have the most prominent places at banquets. 12:40 Yet they prey upon widows to take their property, and they like to show off with their lengthy prayers. They will endure extreme judgment!”

True giving

12:41 Then Jesus sat down facing the treasury, and he watched how the crowd threw money into it. Many rich people threw in a lot, 12:42 but one destitute widow threw in two tiny coins worth only a fraction of a day's wages. 12:43 He called his disciples to himself and said, "I tell you truly that this destitute widow has thrown a greater sum into the treasury than all the others. 12:44 For they gave out of their excess, but she gave out of what she needed— everything she had to live on."

The end times

13:1 As he left the temple compound, one of his disciples remarked, "Teacher, look! Such stones, such buildings!"

13:2 “See these magnificent buildings?” Jesus asked. “Not one stone will be left on another; they will all be demolished.”

13:3 And when he sat down on the Mount of Olives facing the temple compound, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him about this privately: 13:4 “When will this take place, and what sign will indicate that it’s all about to happen?”

13:5 Then Jesus began to tell them: “Beware, so you are not deceived! 13:6 Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am the one!’ and they will deceive many people. 13:7 But when you hear about battles near and far, don’t be alarmed; these things must happen but it is not yet the end. 13:8 For nation will rise up

against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famine. These are just the beginning of labor pains.

13:9 “Watch out! They will hand you over to face councils and you will be beaten in synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings on my account, as a testimony to them. 13:10 But first the good news must be proclaimed in all the nations. 13:11 And when they hand you over, don’t worry about what you will say, because the words will be given to you at that moment; it won’t be you talking but the Holy Spirit.

13:12 ”Siblings will hand each other over to be executed; fathers will hand over their own children to die, and children will do the same to their own parents. 13:13 Everyone will despise you on my account, but the one who endures to the end will be saved.

13:14 “Whenever you see ’the disgusting thing that completely ruins’ standing where it shouldn’t Dan. 9:27 (let the one reading this to others make sure this is clear!), then those in Judea must run away into the mountains; 13:15 those on housetops must not go down into the houses to get anything out of them; 13:16 those out in the fields must not turn back to get their clothing. 13:17 But woe to those who are pregnant or

nursing in those days! 13:18 And pray that this will not happen in winter.

13:19 “The suffering of those days will be unlike anything that has happened since God first created the world until now, and will never be again. Daniel 12:1 13:20 In fact, if the Master didn’t cut those days short, no living thing would survive. But those days will be cut short for the sake of his chosen ones. 13:21 And if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Anointed One!’, don’t believe them. 13:22 For false anointed ones and false prophets will rise up and perform signs and miracles, to try and lure away the chosen ones— if that were possible. 13:23 But watch out! I have told you everything ahead of time.

13:24 “In the days following that suffering, ‘the sun will be darkened and the moon will give no light; 13:25 the stars will fall out of the sky, and the forces in the heavenly places will be shaken.’ Isaiah 10 and 34:4 13:26 Then they will see the Human coming in the clouds with power and majesty. 13:27 He will send out the angels to gather his chosen ones from every direction, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

13:28 “Now learn a lesson from the fig tree: When its branches have become tender and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. 13:29 Likewise, when you see all these things happening, you know that they are near — right at the door! 13:30 I tell you truly

that this generation will definitely not pass away until all of these things have come to pass. 13:31 The sky and earth will pass away, but not my words!

Many will be caught by surprise

13:32 “But no one knows the day or hour; not even the angels in heaven nor the Human, but only the Father. 13:33 So watch and stay alert, since you don’t know when the time will come. 13:34 Think of it as when someone leaves home and puts their house under the care of managers, with each one being assigned a particular responsibility, including one to guard the door. 13:35 So be alert! You don’t know when the owner of the house will come; it may be

in the evening, or maybe midnight, or at dawn, or in the morning. 13:36 Don’t let him come unexpectedly and find you sleeping! 13:37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: be alert!”

Jesus is anointed for burial

14:1 Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were two days away. The high priests and scribes were looking for a devious way to arrest him and get him executed. 14:2 “But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people will riot.”

14:3 Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon the Leper. As he reclined at the table, a woman came with an alabaster flask containing very costly

perfumed oil made from pure nard. She broke open the flask and poured the oil on his head. 14:4 But some there were indignant and said to each other, “Why this waste of perfumed oil? 14:5 It could have been sold for nearly a year’s wages and the money given to the destitute!” And they began to intimidate her.

14:6 But Jesus said, “Leave her alone! Why are you bullying her? She is doing a good thing to me. 14:7 You will always have the destitute among you, and you can help them anytime you want, but you will not always have me. 14:8 She has done what she could, and she has anointed me in advance of burial preparations for my body. 14:9 And it will be as I tell you now: wherever the good

news is announced anywhere in the world, what she did will be told in honor of her memory.”

14:10 Then Judas from Kerioth, one of the Twelve, went off to the high priests to have Jesus handed over to them. 14:11 They were delighted to hear this and paid him in advance for his services. So he started watching for an opportune moment to hand him over.

The Last Supper

14:12 Before the Feast of Unleavened Bread began (when the Passover lamb was to be killed), his disciples asked, “Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover meal?” 14:13 So he sent out

two of his disciples and told them, “Go into the city, where you will see someone carrying a pitcher of water. Follow them, 14:14 and when they enter a house tell the owner, ‘The Teacher wants to know where the reception room is so that he may eat the Passover meal with his disciples’. 14:15 You will be shown a large, furnished, upper-story room; prepare it for us there.” 14:16 And when the disciples went into the city, they found everything just as he said it would be, so they prepared the Passover meal.

14:17 When evening came, he went there with the Twelve. 14:18 And while they were reclining around the table Jesus said to them, “I tell you with absolute certainty that one of you who

are eating with me will betray me!” 14:19 They were deeply distressed, and one after the other they began to say to him, “Not I!” 14:20 But he said to them, “It is one of the Twelve who dips food into the sauce bowl with me. 14:21 Indeed, the Human must go away just as it is written about him. But woe to the person through whom the Human is betrayed! It would be better for that person if he had never been born.”

14:22 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, blessed it, and then broke it up and passed it around to them. “Take this,” he said, “This is my body.” 14:23 Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and passed it around to them, and they all drank it. 14:24 “This is my blood, with which I am signing the new

covenant, and it is being poured out for many. 14:25 With absolute certainty I tell you that I will never drink the fruit of the vine until the day comes when I drink it fresh in the kingdom of God.”

There is no word meaning “again” in the statement Jesus made about not eating the Passover or drinking from the cup. Neither does the passage indicate that Jesus actually drank the wine or ate the bread.

14:26 And after singing a festive song, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus predicts that Peter will disown him

14:27 Then Jesus said to them, “You are all about to fall into a trap, for it is written: ‘I will strike down the shepherd

and the sheep will scatter.’ 14:28 But after I arise, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

14:29 But Peter objected, “Even if everyone else falls into a trap, I will not!”

14:30 “On the contrary,” said Jesus, “I tell you that today, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will completely disown me three times!”

14:31 But Peter became even more insistent: “Even if I am bound to die with you, I will never, ever disown you!” And all of them said the same.

Jesus prays before his arrest

14:32 They went into an area called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 14:33 He took Peter, James, and John with him, and in anguish and despair 14:34 he said to them, “My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death! Stay here and keep alert.” 14:35 Then he went a little farther ahead and dropped to the ground, and he prayed that there might be some way for this hour to pass him by. 14:36 And he said, “Daddy, my Father, you can do anything; take this cup away from me! But the decision is yours, not mine.”

14:37 He came back to find the disciples sleeping, so he said to Peter, “Simon, why are you sleeping? Couldn’t you stay alert for one hour? 14:38 Pray that

you will not be put to the test, for the spirit is eager but the flesh is weak.” 14:39 Once again Jesus left and prayed, saying the same thing. 14:40 And once again he went back to find them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. And they didn’t know what to say to him. 14:41 So he came back the third time and said to them, “Why are you still sleeping and resting? Well, that’s all you get; the hour has come! Look, the Human is being handed over to the scoundrels! 14:42 Get up, let’s go! See, here comes my betrayer!”

Jesus is arrested

14:43 And while he was still speaking, Judas (one of the Twelve) came right then with a mob wielding swords and

clubs, sent by the high priests, scribes, and elders. 14:44 Judas had given them a signal: “Whoever I greet affectionately is the one; seize him and take him away!” 14:45 He walked right up to Jesus and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him fondly. 14:46 So they seized Jesus and took him away.

14:47 One of the people standing there drew a sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. 14:48 But Jesus told them, “Am I a robber, that you came with swords and clubs to arrest me? 14:49 Every day I was teaching in the temple compound and you didn’t arrest me. But the scriptures must be fulfilled!” 14:50 Then all the disciples abandoned him and ran away. 14:51 (There was also a youth among

them, and he was wearing nothing but high-quality pajamas. They seized him 14:52 but he slipped out of his pajamas and ran away naked.)

Jesus testifies before the Sanhedrin

14:53 So they led Jesus away and took him to the high priest. All the high priests, elders, and scribes were assembled there. 14:54 Peter followed at a distance, up to the point where they entered the courtyard of the high priest. He sat down with the servants, warming himself by the fire.

14:55 Meanwhile, the high priests and the entire Sanhedrin were looking for evidence to convict Jesus of a capital

crime. But they couldn’t find any 14:56 because of all the false and conflicting testimonies. 14:57 Some stood up to falsely accuse him by saying, 14:58 “We heard him say, ‘I will demolish this temple made by hands, and in three days I will build another one without hands!’ ” 14:59 But even then their testimonies were still conflicting.

14:60 So the high priest stood up in front and asked Jesus, “Why don’t you respond to any of these accusations?” 14:61 But Jesus said nothing.

Once again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Anointed One, the son of the Blessed One?”

14:62 “I am,” Jesus answered, “And all of you will see the Human sitting to the

right of the Power, and coming with the clouds of the sky!”

“The Power” was a respectful way to avoid saying the actual name of God.

14:63 At that, the high priest tore his tunic and exclaimed, “What need do we have for further testimony?

Tearing one’s clothing was a formal declaration of guilt according to the Talmud. But in this capacity the council was equivalent to a modern jury, so they could not do the actual sentencing.

14:64 You yourselves heard his claim to be God! How do you see it?” And they all deemed him worthy of the death penalty. 14:65 At that, some began to spit on him. Then they blindfolded him and started beating him while mocking,

“Prophesy!” The deputies slapped him as well.

Peter disowns Jesus

14:66 Meanwhile, Peter was in the courtyard when one of the high priest’s servant girls came 14:67 and saw Peter warming himself. She looked at him and said, “Hey you! You were with that Nazarene, Jesus!”

14:68 But he denied it: “I don’t know or care what you’re talking about!” He went outside onto the porch, and then a rooster crowed.

14:69 But the servant girl kept watching him and said again to the people standing around, “This is one of them!” 14:70 And again he denied it.

Then short time later, the bystanders said to Peter once more, “You have to be one of them, because you’re a Galilean!”

14:71 Then Peter began cursing and swore to them, “I do not know that person you’re talking about!” 14:72 And right away a rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him: “Before the rooster crows twice, you will disown me three times!” And once this sank in, Peter began to sob.

Jesus testifies before Pilate

15:1 First thing in the morning, the high priests consulted with the elders, the scribes, and the whole Sanhedrin. Then

they handcuffed Jesus and sent him away to be handed over to Pilate. 15:2 And Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Judeans?”

“It is as you say,” he replied. 15:3 And the high priests hurled many accusations at him.

15:4 “Have you nothing to say in your defense?” asked Pilate. “Look at how many things they’re accusing you of!” 15:5 Yet Jesus stopped responding, which greatly puzzled Pilate.

Pilate argues with the mob

15:6 Now it was the custom to release a prisoner during the festival, whomever the people chose. 15:7 One such prisoner, called Bar-Abbas, had been

jailed along with some rebels who had committed murder during the revolts. 15:8 So when the crowd came up to ask for the usual prisoner release, 15:9 Pilate said to them, “Do you want me to release ‘the king of the Judeans’?” 15:10 (He knew the high priests had handed him over out of envy. 15:11 But the high priests had incited the crowd to ask for Bar-Abbas to be released to them.)

15:12 So Pilate asked them again, “Then what do you want me to do with the one you call ‘the king of the Judeans’?”

15:13 “Crucify him!” they shouted again.

15:14 “But why?” Pilate asked. “What crime has he committed?”

And they only shouted louder: “Crucify him!”

15:15 Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he released Bar-Abbas to them and handed Jesus over to be scourged and crucified.

The scourging was done with a flagellum, a handle with several leather straps hanging off the end. Each strap was embedded with pieces of bone or metal, so it caused extreme bleeding and shredding of the skin. The punishment often continued to the point where the victim’s internal organs were visible.

The soldiers abuse Jesus

15:16 The soldiers led him away to the inner courtyard of their headquarters. They called the whole garrison together, 15:17 dressed Jesus in purple, and put a wreath made of braided thorns on him. 15:18 They saluted him and mocked, “Hail, king of the Judeans!”, 15:19 hitting him in the head with a stick and spitting on him. Then they knelt before him and pretended to worship him. 15:20 And after they had finished jeering, they removed the purple robe and put his own clothing back on him. Then they took him out and crucified him.

Jesus is crucified

15:21 Along the way they conscripted someone who had come in from the fields, a Cyrenian named Simon (the

father of Alexander and Rufus), to carry Jesus' cross. 15:22 They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"), 15:23 and though they offered him wine with pain-killer mixed in, he refused it.

Jesus had said he would never drink wine until he was in the new kingdom, and he held to that even when it would have helped alleviate his excruciating pain.

15:24 Then they crucified him, gambling to see who would get his articles of clothing. 15:25 It was almost noon.

15:26 The inscription listing the charges against him was, "The King of the Judeans." 15:27 Two robbers were crucified along with him, one on either side. 15:28 15:29 Passers-by slandered

him, shaking their heads and saying, “Ha! The one who was going to demolish the temple and rebuild it in three days! 15:30 Come down off the cross and save yourself!” 15:31 The high priests and scribes jeered at him as well, saying to each other, “He saved others, but he can’t save himself! 15:32 Let the Anointed One, the King of Israel, come down from the cross right now, so that we can believe him!” Even the others being crucified treated him with contempt.

Jesus dies

15:33 Darkness came upon the whole land from about noon until three in the afternoon. 15:34 Then Jesus cried out loudly, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”

(which means “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?”). 15:35 Some standing there said, “Look, he’s calling for Elijah!” 15:36 So they ran and soaked a sponge with wine-vinegar and put it on the end of a stick, then lifted it to him to drink. And they said, “Now leave him alone; let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down!”

15:37 But Jesus let out a loud noise and breathed his last, 15:38 and the curtain in the temple was split in two from top to bottom. 15:39 Seeing how he died, the Roman army captain standing opposite Jesus exclaimed, “Surely this person was the God-Man!” 15:40 There were also women there, watching from a distance. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James the

Small and Joses, and Salome. 15:41 These are the ones who had followed Jesus in Galilee and provided for his needs. And there were many others who had accompanied him to Jerusalem.

Jesus is buried

15:42 Since it was nearly evening on Preparation Day before the Sabbath, 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea boldly went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. (He was a respected counselor who had been expecting the kingdom of God.) 15:44 Pilate was surprised that Jesus had already died, so he called for the Roman army captain to see how long ago it had happened. 15:45 And when he found out, he released the body to

Joseph. 15:46 So he took down Jesus’ body and wrapped it in some fine linen that he had bought. Then he put the body in a tomb that had been quarried out of the rock, and he rolled the stone in front of the tomb’s entrance. 15:47 And Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joses noted where it was placed.

The women visit the empty tomb

16:1 When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought aromatic spices so

they could anoint Jesus' body.

Luke 23:56 and Mark 16:1 appear on the surface to contradict each other. But it is clear in Luke that the women observed the burial on the Preparation Day, and highly doubtful that they would have had time to purchase and prepare the spices in the very short time from then to the start of the special sabbath marking the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So since Mark's account has the women buying and preparing spices after a sabbath, it appears that this happened between that sabbath and the weekly sabbath (Fri. eve. to Sat. eve.).

16:2 At earliest light on one of the sabbaths, they came to the tomb as the sun was just beginning to rise. 16:3 And

they said to each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance for us?” 16:4 But they looked up to see that the stone had already been rolled away, and it was a very large stone!

16:5 Upon entering the tomb they saw a young man dressed in a white robe, sitting to the right. They were overawed, 16:6 but he said to them, “Relax! You’re looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. But he has risen; he is not here! You can see where they had placed him. 16:7 Now go and tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He will go ahead of you into Galilee, and you will see him there, just as he told you.’ ” 16:8 They left the tomb and ran away, shaking and filled with amazement. But they were

afraid and said nothing to anyone.

The earliest manuscripts do not have verses 9 through 20.

Jesus appears after his resurrection

16:9 Having arisen early on the main sabbath, Jesus appeared first to Mary of Magdala, from whom he had thrown out seven demons. 16:10 She went and announced this to those who had been with him and were grieving and sobbing, 16:11 but when they heard that she had seen him alive, they didn’t believe her. 16:12 But later he appeared to two of them as they were walking out in the countryside, though he looked different to them. 16:13 And though they

too went off to report this to the others, they didn't believe them either.

16:14 Eventually he appeared to the Eleven as they were reclining at the table. He scolded them for their skepticism and stubbornness, because they didn't believe those who had seen him after he arose. 16:15 Then he said to them, "Go everywhere in the world and proclaim the good news to all of creation. 16:16 Those who believe and are immersed will be saved, but those who do not believe will be condemned.

Jesus commissions his disciples

16:17 "And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will

throw out demons; they will speak in new languages; 16:18 they will shake off deadly snakes; they will drink poison without being harmed; they will place their hands on the chronically ill and they will get better.”

16:19 So then, after Master Jesus finished talking to them, he was taken up into the sky and seated to the right of God. 16:20 They went out proclaiming it everywhere, with the Master helping and confirming the Word by the signs that accompanied them.

Luke

Introduction

1:1 Many have taken it upon themselves
to write an orderly account of everything
that happened among us, 1:2 from what
we were told by those who were original
eyewitnesses and deputies of the Word.
1:3 So I decided that I too should write
for you, Honorable Theophilus, a
meticulous account of everything I
observed from the start, 1:4 so that you
may have full confidence regarding the
validity of what you were taught.

The prediction about John the Immerser

1:5 In the days of Herod the king of Judea there was a certain priest by the name of Zacharias, of the Abia order. His wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. 1:6 They were both righteous before God, flawlessly performing every command and decree of the Master. 1:7 But they had no child because Elizabeth was infertile, and they were quite elderly.

1:8 One day it came time for Zacharias to perform his priestly duties before God according to his order, 1:9 and he was chosen by chance to burn incense and enter the Holiest Place of the Master. 1:10 A huge crowd of people

was praying outside at the time the incense was burned. 1:11 But Zacharias saw an angel of the Master standing to the right of the altar of incense, 1:12 and he became quite disturbed and was overcome with fear.

1:13 “Do not be afraid, Zacharias,” the angel said to him. “Your request has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, whom you must name John. 1:14 He will bring you happiness and great joy, and many people will be happy about his birth. 1:15 He will be great in the sight of the Master. He must never drink wine or any other intoxicating beverage, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even as he leaves his mother’s womb. 1:16 He will also turn many in Israel back to the

Master their God, 1:17 and he will go ahead before him in the spirit and power of Elijah. He will turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the incorrigible into the sensible and righteous, to prepare a people made for the Master.”

1:18 But Zacharias said to the angel, “What reason do I have to believe this? I’m an old man and my wife is well along in years herself.”

1:19 “I am Gabriel, the one who stands before God!” the angel replied. “I was dispatched to speak to you and bring you this good news. 1:20 And now look! You will be silenced and unable to speak until the day these things come

to pass, because you did not believe what I told you.”

1:21 Meanwhile, the people outside were waiting for Zacharias and wondered what was taking so long in the temple. 1:22 But when he came out he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple, because he was making motions to them since he couldn’t talk. 1:23 And when his term of priestly service was completed, he returned to his home. 1:24 After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months. 1:25 “This is how the Master has taken away my shame before the people,” she said to herself. “In these days he has noticed me!”

The prediction about Jesus

1:26 In Elizabeth's sixth month, the
angel Gabriel was sent from God to a
town in Galilee called Nazareth. 1:27 He
went to a woman of marriageable age
who was engaged to a man named
Joseph from the line of David. The
woman's name was Mary, 1:28 and the
angel spoke to her: "Greetings, favored
one! The Master is with you!" 1:29 Upon
hearing this, she was quite disturbed
and perplexed about what sort of
greeting this could be.

1:30 "Don't be afraid, Mary," said the
angel. "For you have found favor with
God. 1:31 And now look! You will
become pregnant and give birth to a
son, and you will give him the name

Jesus. 1:32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest, and the Master God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. 1:33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!”

1:34 “But how can this be,” asked Mary, “since I haven’t been intimate with a man?”

1:35 The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will envelope you. For this reason the holy one being conceived will be called the God-Man. 1:36 And look! Your relative Elizabeth is also expecting a son in her old age. She who was considered infertile is in her

sixth month! 1:37 For nothing God declares is impossible.”

1:38 “Observe, the servant of the Master!” Mary responded. “May it happen as you have stated.” And the angel went away.

1:39 At that time Mary quickly went up into the hill country to a city in Judea. 1:40 She entered the home of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 1:41 And as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby in her womb jumped for joy, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Mary visits Elizabeth

1:42 Then Elizabeth shouted out, “You are blessed among women, and

blessed is the child within you! 1:43 How is it that the mother of my Master should visit me? 1:44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby within me jumped for joy! 1:45 And blessed is she who believed that what she was told by the Master would come to pass!”

1:46 And Mary said, “My soul exalts the Master, 1:47 and my spirit jumps for joy about God my Savior, 1:48 for he noticed his humble servant! From now on, every generation will consider me blessed 1:49 because the Powerful One did great things for me. His name is holy, 1:50 and his compassion extends from generation to generation for those who fear him.

1:51 “He has ruled with power and
might; he has scattered those whose
minds are filled with contempt; 1:52 he
has pulled rulers from their thrones. But
he has lifted up the oppressed; 1:53 he
has satisfied the hungry yet sent the
rich away empty-handed. 1:54 At the
right time he has remembered to have
eternal mercy on his child Israel, 1:55
just as he said to our ancestors, to
Abraham’s descendants.” 1:56 Mary
stayed with her for about three months,
and then she returned to her own
home.

The birth of John the Immerser

1:57 The time came for Elizabeth to give
birth, and she had a son. 1:58 Her

neighbors and relatives heard about how the Master had shown her great mercy, so they celebrated with her. 1:59 When the eighth day arrived they came to circumcise the little boy, and they intended to name him after his father Zacharias. 1:60 But his mother said “No! He is to be named John.”

1:61 “But there is no one among your relatives by that name,” they objected. 1:62 So they motioned to his father to see what he wanted to name him. 1:63 He asked for a writing tablet, and to their great surprise he wrote, “His name is John.”

1:64 Instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue was freed, and he began to speak praises to God. 1:65

Fear came upon all the neighbors, and this account spread throughout the whole hill country of Judea. 1:66 Everyone who heard about it wondered what this little boy would turn out to be, because surely the hand of the Master was with him.

1:67 His father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this divine message: 1:68 “Praise to the Master, the God of Israel, for he selected and redeemed his people! 1:69 He awakened a powerful deliverance for us from the line of his servant David, 1:70 just as he said through the mouths of his holy prophets through the ages.

1:71 “He brought deliverance from our enemies and from the hands of all who

hate us, 1:72 to have compassion on
our ancestors; he remembered his holy
contract 1:73 which he swore on oath to
our ancestor Abraham; 1:74 he granted
that we would be rescued from the
clutches of our enemies, so we could
offer divine service without fear 1:75 and
in devoutness and justice before him all
the days of our lives.

1:76 “Now as for you, little one, you will
be called a prophet of the Highest. For
you will lead the way before the Master,
to prepare his paths, 1:77 and to impart
the knowledge of salvation to his
people, the pardon of their sins 1:78
through the deep compassion of our
God. The sun will rise high to visit us,
1:79 to appear to those who sit in
darkness and the shadow of death, and

to light the way for our feet on the road to peace.” 1:80 So the little boy grew and became spiritually powerful, and he lived in the desert until he presented himself to Israel.

The birth of Jesus

2:1 Those were the days in which Caesar Augustus issued a decree to take a census of the whole inhabited world. 2:2 This registration took place when Quirinius was governor of Syria. 2:3 So everyone traveled to their hometown. 2:4 One of them was Joseph. He went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee into Judea, to the City of David which is called Bethlehem, since he was of the house and lineage of David. 2:5 He registered together with

his fiancée Mary, who was pregnant. 2:6 And it so happened that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 2:7 She had a son, her firstborn, whom she wrapped in baby clothes. But she had to lay him in a feeding trough due to the fact that there was not a single room available for them in the inn.

2:8 There were shepherds camping out in the area to watch over their flocks throughout the night.

Shepherds only watched their flocks all night during breeding seasons, in fall and spring. Since Elizabeth was in her sixth month when Jesus was conceived, and Zacharias was serving in the temple during the course of Abia in mid-June, September was the likely time of Jesus' birth.

2:9 Suddenly an angel of the Master stood beside them! The majesty of the Master shone around them as well, and they were extremely terrified. 2:10 "Don't be afraid," the angel said to them, "because I'm here to announce good news to you, of great happiness which extends to all the people. 2:11 For today a Savior, the Anointed One Master, was born to you in the City of David. 2:12 And here is a sign for you: you will find

the infant wrapped in baby clothes and lying in a feeding trough.”

2:13 Suddenly the angel was joined by the whole celestial army! They were praising God and saying, 2:14 “The highest honor to God, and peace on earth to the people with whom he is pleased!” 2:15 While the angels were leaving them and returning to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “By all means, let’s go over to Bethlehem to see what the Master told us has happened!”

2:16 So they hurried along and discovered Mary and Joseph, and the infant was lying in the feeding trough. 2:17 Having seen this, they told everyone about the declaration that had

been given to them concerning this little one. 2:18 Everyone who heard it was amazed about what the shepherds told them, 2:19 but Mary mulled over in her mind what all these things could mean. 2:20 Then the shepherds returned, honoring and praising God on account of everything they had heard and seen, just as they had been told.

Jesus is presented at the temple

2:21 When the eighth day arrived for him to be circumcised, he was given the name Jesus, which was the name given by the angel before he was conceived. 2:22 And when the days of cleansing required by the law of Moses were completed, they took him into

Jerusalem to present to the Master. 2:23 (It is written in the law of the Master that every first-born male is to be consecrated to the Master, 2:24 and this requires the sacrifice stipulated in the law of the Master: a pair of doves or two young pigeons.)

2:25 Now there happened to be someone in Jerusalem by the name of Simon. He was a righteous and conscientious person who was expecting the Comfort of Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him 2:26 and had revealed to him that he would not die without first seeing the Master's Anointed One. 2:27 The Spirit prompted him to go into the temple compound, where the parents of little Jesus were

admitting him in order to fulfill the custom of the law concerning him.

2:28 Simon picked up Jesus and held him in his arms, then praised God and said, 2:29 “Your servant can now be released in peace, my Owner, in accordance with what you declared. 2:30 For my eyes have seen the salvation 2:31 you prepared in the presence of all the people, 2:32 a light of revelation to the other nations and honor to your people, Israel.” 2:33 These things spoken about Jesus took his father and mother by surprise. 2:34 Then Simon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “Look! This one is set to cause the downfall and arising of many in Israel— and to be a controversial sign. 2:35 But a

broadsword will be thrust through your soul, so that the thoughts in many minds will be exposed.”

2:36 Now there was another prophet, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher. She was well-advanced in age, having lived with her husband for seven years of their marriage 2:37 and then being a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple compound, and night and day she offered impassioned prayer and performed divine service. 2:38 At that very day and hour she came near and praised God, and she spoke about him to all those who were expecting the redemption of Jerusalem.

2:39 After they had fulfilled everything according to the requirements of the law of the Master, they returned to Galilee, to their home town of Nazareth. 2:40 Then the little one grew strong and became very wise, and the favor of God was upon him.

Young Jesus challenges the temple teachers

2:41 Jesus' parents took him to Jerusalem for the Passover festival each year. 2:42 They went again as usual when he was twelve years old, 2:43 and then they returned home, but they were unaware that the boy Jesus had stayed behind in Jerusalem. 2:44 They presumed he was somewhere among their travelling companions, but

after a day's travel they began to search for him among their relatives and good friends. 2:45 When they couldn't find him they went back to Jerusalem to keep searching.

2:46 It was three days later when they found him. He was sitting among the teachers, listening and asking them questions, 2:47 and impressing everyone who heard him with his mental prowess and responses. 2:48 His parents were dumbfounded! But his mother demanded, "Child, look at what you have done to us! Your father and I have been searching frantically for you!"

2:49 "Why were you looking for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I had to attend to my Father's affairs?" 2:50 But

they had no idea what he was talking about. 2:51 Then he went down with them to Nazareth and supported them. His mother carefully noted everything that was said and kept it in mind. 2:52 Jesus advanced in wisdom and maturity, earning the favor of God and people.

John the Immerser

3:1 In the fifteenth year of the governorship of Tiberias Caesar, Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea, Herod was ruler over one-fourth of Galilee, his brother Philip was ruler over one-fourth of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was ruler over one-fourth of Abilene. 3:2 It was then, during the high priesthood of

Annas and Caiaphas, that a declaration from God came upon John, the son of Zacharias, while he was in the desert. 3:3 So he went into the whole area around the Jordan River, proclaiming immersion to symbolize a complete turning to God that would lead to being acquitted of sins. 3:4 As it has been written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah,

“There is someone calling out in the desert: ‘Prepare the way of the Master and straighten its paths! 3:5 Its ravines will be filled in, every hill will be lowered, every crooked thing will be straightened, and every rocky place will be smoothed. 3:6 Then everyone will clearly see the deliverance of God.’”

3:7 But to the crowd coming to him to be immersed he said, “You hatchlings of snakes! Who showed you how to escape the fury to come? 3:8 You must produce results to match your turning to God, rather than smugly assuming that being descendants of Abraham is enough. For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones! 3:9 The ax is already aimed at the root of the trees, so every tree that does not produce acceptable fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire.”

3:10 So the crowd asked him, “What are we to do then?”

3:11 “The one with two tunics should share with someone who has none,” he

replied. “Do the same with food.”

3:12 Then some tax contractors came to be immersed, and they asked him, “Teacher, what are we to do?”

Tax contractors were individuals making a profit by collecting taxes on behalf of the Roman government.

3:13 “Do not take one bit more than you’re supposed to,” he answered.

3:14 Next some soldiers asked what they should do, and he told them, “Stop intimidating people and engaging in extortion, and be content with your pay.”

3:15 Now all the people were in anticipation, speculating among themselves whether John was actually the Anointed One. 3:16 But he

responded to them all, “I do immerse you in water, but one stronger than I is coming, whose shoelaces I am not worthy to untie! He will immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire. 3:17 He has a broom in his hand, and he’s about to sweep the threshing floor clean! He will gather the grain into his storage bins, but he will burn the chaff in fire that will never be extinguished.”

3:18 Then with many other words he encouraged the people with this good news. 3:19 But he confronted Herod, ruler over one-fourth the country, concerning the wife of his brother Philip, 3:20 so Herod added to all his other evils by locking John in prison.

Jesus is immersed

3:21 When all the people were being immersed, Jesus was immersed as well. While he was praying, the sky opened up, 3:22 the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove, and there was a voice from heaven: “You are my dear son, and I am very pleased with you.”

Genealogy of Jesus to Adam

3:23 Jesus’ activities began when he was about thirty years old. He was presumed to be the son of Joseph:

of Heli, 3:24 of Matthat, of Levi, of Melchi, of Jannai, of Joseph, 3:25 of Mattathias, of Amos, of Nahum, of Esli, of Naggai, 3:26 of Maath, of Mattathias, of Semein, of Josech, of Joda, 3:27 of

Joanan, of Rhesa, of Zorobabel, of Salathiel, of Neri, 3:28 of Melchi, of Addi, of Cosam, of Elmadam, of Er,

3:29 of Joshua, of Eliezer, of Jorim, of Matthat, of Levi, 3:30 of Simon, of Judah, of Joseph, of Jonam, of Eliakim, 3:31 of Melea, of Menna, of Mattatha, of Nathan, of David, 3:32 of Jesse, of Obed, of Boaz, of Sala, of Nahshon, 3:33 of Aminadab, of Admin, of Arni, of Hezron, of Phares, of Judah,

3:34 of Jacob, of Isaac, of Abraham, of Terah, of Nahor, 3:35 of Serug, of Reu, of Peleg, of Eber, of Sala, 3:36 of Cainan, of Arphaxad, of Shem, of Noah, of Lamech, 3:37 of Methusaleh, of Enoch, of Jared, of Mahalalel, of

Cainan, 3:38 of Enosh, of Seth, of Adam, of God.

Jesus is tested by the Slanderer

4:1 Now Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert. 4:2 For forty days the Slanderer tried to get him to fail the test. He ate nothing during that time, so by the end he was hungry. 4:3 And the Slanderer said to him, “If you’re really the God-Man, tell this stone to become bread!”

4:4 “It is written,” replied Jesus, “that a person doesn’t live on bread alone.”

4:5 Then the Slanderer brought him to the top of a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant. 4:6 And he said to him, “I will give you complete jurisdiction over all this, and the majesty that goes with it. I can give it to whomever I wish because it was all handed over to me. 4:7 It can all be yours— if you fall on your face and worship me!”

4:8 “It is written,” replied Jesus, “that you must worship the Master your God; only to him must you offer divine service.”

4:9 Then he brought him into Jerusalem and stood him on the highest point of the temple compound. And he said to him,“If you’re really the God-Man, throw

yourself down from here, 4:10 for it is written that his angels will be assigned to protect you, 4:11 and that they will lift you up in their hands so you won't strike your foot against a stone."

4:12 "It has already been stated," replied Jesus, "that you must not provoke the Master your God!" 4:13 And after all these trials were over, the Slanderer withdrew from him until another opportunity might present itself.

Jesus begins his ministry

4:14 By the power of the Spirit, Jesus then returned to Galilee, and talk about him spread out to the whole surrounding area. 4:15 He taught in their synagogues and was well-esteemed by

everyone. 4:16 He went into Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as was his custom he went into the synagogue on the Day of Sabbaths. He stood up to read 4:17 and was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, which he unrolled to the spot where this was written:

4:18 “The Spirit of the Master is upon me, because he has anointed me to announce good news to the destitute; he has commissioned me to proclaim release to the prisoners of war and recovery of sight to the blind; he has dispatched me to cancel charges against the oppressed 4:19 and to herald the acceptable time of the Master.”

4:20 Rolling up the scroll, he handed it to the attendant and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue were watching him intently, 4:21 and he started to say to them, “Today, in your hearing, this scripture has been fulfilled.”

Jesus is belittled by his hometown

4:22 Everyone was impressed with him and marveled at the favorable things he said. But they also said, “Isn’t this the son of Joseph?”

4:23 And Jesus replied, “Surely you will quote this saying to me: ‘Physician, cure yourself!’; ‘Do here at home what we heard you did in Capernaum.’ ”

4:24 And then he added, “I tell you very truly that no prophet is ever accepted in their hometown. 4:25 There were in fact many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky gave no rain for three-and-a-half years and caused a severe famine to come over the whole land. 4:26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them but to a widow in Sarepta in the province of Sidon. 4:27 And there were many lepers in Israel in the days of the prophet Elisha, yet he didn’t heal one of them but only Naaman the Syrian.”

4:28 When the synagogue heard this they were infuriated, 4:29 so they picked him up and ejected him from the city. They took him to the edge of the mountain the city had been built upon, with the intention of pushing him over

the edge. 4:30 But he walked right through the crowd and went away.

Jesus evicts a demon

4:31 He went down to Capernaum in Galilee and was teaching them on one of the Sabbaths. 4:32 They were awestruck with his teachings because he spoke with authority. 4:33 But in that synagogue was someone with a demonic, unclean spirit, and it shouted out, 4:34 “Aaah! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to wipe us out? I know who you are—you are the Holy One of God!”

4:35 “Silence!” Jesus rebuked it. “Get out of him!” The demon hurled the person down in front of them and then

left without doing him any harm. 4:36 They were all shocked and said to each other, “What kind of speech is this, that has jurisdiction and power to exorcise unclean spirits?” 4:37 And reports of this spread rapidly to every spot in the surrounding area.

Jesus heals many

4:38 Now Jesus went up from the synagogue and entered the home of Simon, whose mother-in-law was gripped with a high fever. They asked him about her, 4:39 and he bent over above her and rebuked the fever. Instantly the fever left her, and she got up to wait on them.

4:40 At sunset, people brought to Jesus everyone who was disabled or had various diseases, and he placed his hands on each of them and healed them. 4:41 Demons came out of many of them, shouting out, “You are the God-Man!” But he rebuked them and did not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Anointed One.

4:42 At daybreak he left and went to a solitary location. But the crowd searched diligently for him, and when they found him they tried to keep him from leaving. 4:43 Then he told them, “I must take the good news about the kingdom of God to other cities; this is the purpose for which I was sent.” 4:44 And he continued to proclaim it in the synagogues of Judea.

Jesus chooses his first disciples

5:1 On one occasion when the crowd was pressing in around him to hear the word of God, he was standing beside Lake Gennesaret. 5:2 He saw two ships docked at the edge, and the sailors had disembarked to wash their nets. 5:3 He got into the ship that belonged to Simon and asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down in the ship and taught the crowd.

5:4 As he finished speaking he said to Simon, “Go out to deeper waters and lower your nets for a catch.”

5:5 “Exalted One,” Simon replied, “We worked the whole night and caught

nothing. But just because you said it, I will lower the nets.” 5:6 And when they did, they caught a huge number of fish, yet the nets didn’t tear. 5:7 So they motioned to their partners in the other ship to help them. The haul filled both ships to the point that they almost sank!

5:8 When Simon Peter saw this, he dropped to his knees before Jesus and said, “Please stay away from me, Master, because I am a man of many sins!” 5:9 He and everyone with him were overawed about the huge haul of fish they had caught. 5:10 So also were his partners James and John, the sons of Zebedee. And Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t worry; from now on you’ll be catching people!” 5:11 When the ships

landed, they left everything and followed him.

Jesus heals a leper

5:12 One time when Jesus was in one of the cities, suddenly there was a man absolutely covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus he put his face to the ground and begged him, “Master, if you choose, you could make me clean!”

5:13 “I so choose!” replied Jesus as he reached out his hand and touched him. “Be clean!” And immediately the leprosy left him. 5:14 But Jesus instructed him to tell no one: “Go and show yourself to the priest, and present the offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” 5:15 Yet the

news about him spread everywhere, and a huge crowd gathered to hear him and be cured of their infirmities. 5:16 And he kept retreating to deserted areas to pray.

Jesus heals a paralyzed person

5:17 One day he was teaching, and included among those sitting there were Pharisees and lawyers from every village in Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. The power of the Master was there for healing, 5:18 when suddenly there were some men carrying a stretcher, and the person on it was paralyzed. They intended to carry the person and place them before Jesus, 5:19 but they couldn't find a way

through the crowd. So they went up to the top of the house and lowered the person on the stretcher through the roofing tiles, right in front of Jesus.

5:20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the person, “You are acquitted of your sins!”

5:21 And the scribes and Pharisees began to grumble among themselves: “Who is he to speak so irreverently?! Who but God alone can dismiss sins?”

5:22 Yet Jesus was fully aware of what they were thinking, and he responded to them, “What are you going on about? 5:23 Which is easier: to say ‘You are acquitted of your sins’ or ‘Get up and walk around’? 5:24 But just so you can

see that the Human has jurisdiction on earth to release sins…”

Jesus turned to the paralyzed person: “I tell you, get up, pick up your stretcher and go home!” 5:25 Instantly the person got up in front of them, picked up the stretcher they had been put upon, and went home praising God. 5:26 Everyone was completely amazed and gave honor to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen extraordinary things today!”

Jesus chooses Levi as a disciple

5:27 After all that, Jesus went out and spotted a tax contractor by the name of Levi sitting in his office.

Levi is better known as Matthew. He said to him, “Follow me!” 5:28 and he left everything behind and followed him. 5:29 Levi also threw a big party for him in his home, and among the guests reclining at the table were many other tax contractors.

5:30 But the Pharisees and their scribes complained to Jesus’ disciples, “Why are you eating and drinking with tax contractors and scoundrels?”

5:31 “It isn’t the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick,” Jesus replied. 5:32 “I didn’t come to tell the righteous to change their minds, but the unrighteous.”

The old and new cannot be mixed

5:33 But they went on: “The disciples of John frequently go without food and pray earnestly, just as those of the Pharisees. Yet yours eat and drink.”

5:34 “You can’t expect the groom’s guests to fast while they’re with the groom,” Jesus replied. 5:35 “But the time will come when the groom is taken away from them, and when that time comes they will fast.”

5:36 Then he gave them a parable: “No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and uses it to patch an old one. In that case the new one will be torn and the old one will be

mismatched. 5:37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the new wine will burst the old wineskins and spill out, and the wineskins will be ruined. 5:38 Rather, they put new wine into new wineskins. 5:39 And no one who has drunk old wine would choose new; they'd say that the old wine is better."

Jesus explains the Sabbath

6:1 Now it happened that on the Sabbath after the annual one, he and his disciples were passing through some fields, picking some of the heads of grain and rubbing them in their hands so they could eat them . 6:2 But some of the Pharisees said, "What you're doing is forbidden on the Sabbaths." 6:3 And

Jesus responded, “Have you never read about what David did when he and those with him were hungry? 6:4 He entered the house of God and ate the bread that had been presented as offerings, sharing it also with those with him. Yet only the priests are allowed to eat it.” 6:5 And then he added, “The Human is Master of the Sabbath.”

Jesus heals a man with a deformed hand

6:6 On yet another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and taught. There was someone there with a deformed right hand. 6:7 The scribes and Pharisees were watching Jesus like a hawk, to see if he’d heal on the Sabbath so they could have grounds to accuse him. 6:8

But he knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the withered hand, “Stand up here in front.” And he did so.

6:9 And Jesus said to them, "I ask you: is it permitted on the Sabbaths to do good or to do malice, to save a life or to destroy it?" 6:10 He looked around at them all and said to the man, “Hold out your hand!” He did so, and it was suddenly restored just like the other hand. 6:11 But they completely lost their minds and discussed among themselves what they could do to Jesus.

Jesus chooses The Twelve

6:12 It was in those days that Jesus retreated up into the mountain to pray, and he spent the entire night in prayer to God. 6:13 The next day he summoned his disciples and chose twelve from among them, designating them Ambassadors:

6:14 Simon, whom he named Peter; Andrew, his brother; James; John; Philip; Bartholomew; 6:15 Matthew; Thomas; James, son of Alpheus; Simon the Zealot; 6:16 Judas, son of James; and Judas from Kerioth, who would become a traitor

Jesus teaches and heals the crowds

6:17 Jesus came down from the mountain with them, and he stood in a low-lying place. A huge crowd of his disciples was there, along with innumerable people from all over Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. 6:18 They came to hear him and to be miraculously healed of their diseases, and all who had been oppressed by unclean spirits were cured. 6:19 The whole crowd wanted to touch him because power was coming out of him, and he healed them all.

Blessings and woes

6:20 Then Jesus looked at his disciples and said,

“Happy are the destitute, because the Kingdom of God is yours.

6:21 “Happy are those who hunger for now, because you will be satisfied.

“Happy are those who weep for now, because you will laugh.

6:22 “Be happy when people despise you, shun you, disgrace you, reject you, and ruin your reputation, just because of the Human. 6:23 Be happy about that day and jump for joy; just look at the wages you’ve earned in heaven! For this is what your ancestors did to the prophets.

6:24 “In contrast, woe to you who are rich, because you’ve already received your comfort.

6:25 “Woe to you who are satisfied for
now, because you will hunger.

“Woe to you who laugh for now,
because you will grieve and sob.

6:26 “Woe to you if everyone speaks
highly of you, because their ancestors
also spoke well of the false prophets.

Compassion for all

6:27 “To those who hear, I say this: Love
your enemies. Do good to those who
despise you; 6:28 bless those who call
down curses on you; pray for those who
insult you. 6:29 If someone hits you on
one side of your jaw, present to them
the other side; if someone confiscates
your outer clothing, don’t stop them
from taking your inner clothing as well.

6:30 Give people what they ask of you, and don’t demand that they return what they take from you. 6:31 In other words, treat people the way you want them to treat you.

The last sentence gives the purpose and explanation for the preceding sentences. Jesus is not telling people to become doormats or punching bags, but to practice empathy.

6:32 “If you only love those who love you, what credit is that to you? After all, scoundrels only love those who love them. 6:33 If you only do good to those who return the favor, what credit is that to you? After all, scoundrels do the same thing. 6:34 And if you only lend to those who can pay you back, what credit is that to you? After all, sinners

lend to each other and expect to be repaid.

Again, Jesus is not telling people to never make loans, but to make gifts instead to those who cannot repay; this is a reinforcement of the command to practice empathy.

6:35 So then, love your enemies; be good to others and lend without expecting anything return. Then you will earn generous wages and you will be called Children of the Highest, because he is good to the ungrateful and the wicked. 6:36 Become compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.

Double standards and discernment

6:37 “Don’t be judgmental, and you will certainly not be so judged; don’t condemn, and you will certainly not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven. 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you— filled up, packed solid, and spilling over! This is what they will give to you personally, because the level of generosity you show to others will be shown to you in return.”

6:39 And then he gave them a parable: “The blind cannot lead the blind; both will certainly fall into a ditch. 6:40 Neither is the student superior to the teacher, though after completing the training they may reach the same level. 6:41 So how is it that you can notice the splinter in someone else’s eye, yet completely ignore the plank in your own

eye? 6:42 How can you say to them, ‘Here, let me get that splinter out of your eye’, when you have a plank in your own eye? You are using a double standard! First get the plank out of your own eye before you try to remove the splinter in someone else’s eye.

6:43 “You know that a good tree doesn’t produce rotten fruit, and that a bad tree doesn’t produce good fruit, 6:44 because each tree is identified by what it actually produces. You don’t pick figs or grapes from thorn bushes. 6:45 So also, someone who treasures up good things within them will produce good things, while someone with evil inside of them will produce evil things. Both express what is in their minds.

Practicing what Jesus preaches

6:46 “Now how can you call me ‘Master, Master’ yet don’t do what I say? 6:47 Let me tell you what all who come to me and hear and practice my sayings are like: 6:48 Such a person is like someone who built a house and dug a deep foundation on rock. Though a flood came and the river pounded against the house, it was not strong enough to shake it because of how well it was built. 6:49 But the one who hears and yet doesn’t put it into practice is like someone who built a house on soil without any foundation. The river pounded against it and it collapsed right away into a huge pile.”

Jesus and the Roman officer

7:1 After Jesus finished saying all this to them, he went into Capernaum. 7:2 And there was a certain Roman army captain, whose highly-esteemed assistant was sick and about to die. 7:3 When he heard about Jesus, he sent out Judean elders to ask him to come and restore his assistant to health. 7:4 When they approached Jesus they petitioned passionately, “This person is worthy of your assistance, 7:5 because he loves our nation and built us a synagogue.”

7:6 So Jesus went along with them. But when he was only a short distance from the house, the Roman army captain sent friends to him to say, “Sir, don’t go

to all this trouble, because I am unworthy to have you come under my roof. 7:7 This is why I didn't come to you myself. All you need to do is say the word and my assistant will be miraculously healed. 7:8 After all, I am under someone else's authority and have soldiers under me as well. I tell one of them to go and he goes; I tell another to come and he comes; I tell my servant to do something and he does it."

7:9 When Jesus heard all of this, he was very impressed. He turned to the crowd following him and said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith in Israel!" 7:10 Then the ones who had been dispatched to him went back to the

house, where they found the assistant in good health.

Jesus raises a widow’s son

7:11 The next day Jesus happened to go into a city called Nain. He was accompanied by his disciples and a large crowd. 7:12 And as he approached the city gate, there was a funeral procession for the only son of his mother, who was a widow. A large number of people from the city were with her.

7:13 The sight of her moved the Master to compassion, and he said to her, “Don’t cry.” 7:14 Then he went up to the coffin and touched it, and the ones carrying it stood still. Then Jesus said,

“Young one, I tell you to awaken!” 7:15 and the dead one sat up and began to talk! Then Jesus presented him to his mother. 7:16 They all were gripped with fear and honored God: “A great prophet has been raised up among us!” and “God has visited his people!” 7:17 Word about him spread throughout Judea and the surrounding area.

John the Immerser

7:18 Now John’s disciples told him about all this, and he gathered his disciples and sent two of them 7:19 to say to the Master, “Are you the Coming One, or should we expect someone else?” 7:20 So the men came to Jesus and said, “John the Immerser sent us to you to ask whether you’re the Coming One or

we should expect someone else.” 7:21 And in that very hour Jesus cured many who were diseased or flogged, or who had evil spirits, and he restored sight to the blind.

7:22 Then Jesus responded to them, “Go and report to John the things you’ve seen and heard: The blind now see, the lame now walk, the lepers are now clean, the deaf now hear, the dead are being raised, and the destitute are hearing the good news. 7:23 Happy is the one who isn’t put off by what I’m doing.”

7:24 When John’s messengers had left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed being shaken by

the wind? 7:25 Or did you go to see someone wearing fine clothing? Of course not; those who wear fashionable clothing and live in luxury are found among the royals. 7:26 So what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, and I tell you, more than just a prophet! 7:27 He is the one about whom it has been written, ‘Look! I am dispatching my angel to stand before you, and he will build the road ahead of you’.

The ‘you’ of the quotation of scripture is singular, so it refers to the Messiah and not the people.

7:28 I tell you, not one person born of women is greater than John. Yet the least significant in the Kingdom of God is greater than he!”

7:29 When all the people heard this, even the tax contractors considered God righteous and were immersed via John's immersion. 7:30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected what God had intended for them and refused John's immersion.

7:31 "To whom shall I compare the people of this generation?" Jesus asked. "Who are they like? 7:32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other, 'We played the flute for you but you didn't dance; we mourned but you didn't cry'. 7:33 For John the Immerser didn't eat bread or drink wine, and you say 'He's demon-possessed!'. 7:34 But now that the Human has come along, eating and drinking, you say 'Look at

that glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax contractors and scoundrels!’ 7:35 There is just no pleasing such people.”

Jesus gives a lesson in gratitude

7:36 Now a certain Pharisee invited him to dinner, so he entered the his house and reclined at the table. 7:37 But a very sinful woman who lived in that city found out that he was reclining at the table there, so she brought in an alabaster flask of perfumed oil. 7:38 She stood at his feet crying, and her tears dropped down on his feet. She wiped his feet with her hair, massaging and kissing them, and rubbing them with the oil.

7:39 Upon seeing this, the Pharisee said to himself, “Some prophet! He should already know what kind of woman this is who is touching him— a very sinful woman!”

7:40 “Simon, I have something to tell you,” said Jesus. And he replied, “Speak, teacher.”

7:41 “Two people owed money to a certain creditor. One owed five hundred days’ wages, and the other owed fifty. 7:42 But since they had no way to repay it, the creditor forgave both debts. Now who do you suppose will love him more?”

7:43 “I’d assume it’s the one who had the bigger debt forgiven,” Simon replied.

“Correct,” answered Jesus. 7:44 Then Jesus turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “See this woman? I came into your home but you offered no water for my feet, yet she has rained down tears on them and wiped them with her hair. 7:45 You did not greet me with a kiss, but the whole time I’ve been here she has not stopped kissing my feet. 7:46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has rubbed my feet with perfumed oil. 7:47 For this reason, I tell you that she is acquitted of her many sins, for she loved much. In contrast, the one who is forgiven little, loves little.”

7:48 Then he said to her, “You are acquitted of all your sins!” 7:49 But the others reclining there began to say to

each other, “Who is he to forgive sins?” 7:50 But he told the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Jesus’ supporters

8:1 A short while later he started going through one city or town after another, proclaiming and announcing the good news about the kingdom of God. He was accompanied by the Twelve, 8:2 as well as some women who were cured from evil spirits and diseases: Mary of Magdala from whom seven demons had come out, 8:3 Joanna the wife of Chuza (the legal guardian under Herod), Susanna, and many others who supported them from their own means.

The parable of the sower

8:4 Now a huge crowd began to form due to his going from city to city, and he told them this parable:

8:5 “The farmer went out to scatter his seed. As he did so, some of it actually landed along the path, where it was trampled on and then the birds ate it. 8:6 Other seeds fell on rocky ground, but when they sprouted they quickly withered, because they couldn’t get any moisture. 8:7 Still other seeds fell among thorns, but when they sprouted together the thorns choked them. 8:8 Yet some seeds landed on good soil, and when they sprouted they produced a crop that was a hundred times more than the number of seeds.” Then he added, “If you have hears, listen!”

8:9 Then his disciples asked him to explain the parable. 8:10 And he replied, “It has been granted to you to know the secrets of the kingdom of God. But to the rest I give parables, so that ‘Though they see, they don’t really see; though they hear, they don’t understand’. 8:11 Now about the parable: The seed is the Word of God. 8:12 Where the seeds fell on the path represents those who hear, but then the Slanderer comes along and takes the Word from their hearts to prevent them from believing it and being saved.

8:13 “Where the seeds fell on rocky ground represents those who hear the Word and accept it with joy. But they have no root and only believe until a

time when they are put to the test, and they desert the faith.

8:14 “Where the seeds fell among thorns represents those who hear, but they are choked by concerns and wealth and the pleasures of life, so they don’t mature.

8:15 “But where the seeds fell in good soil represents those with good, virtuous hearts. They hear the Word and keep it, producing a crop that endures.

Use it or lose it

8:16 “No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so that those coming in can see the

light. 8:17 For nothing is concealed that won’t be put out in the open, and nothing is cloaked that won’t surely be made known. 8:18 So listen very carefully! If you have, you will be given even more, but if you do not have, what you think you have will be taken away from you.”

Jesus defines the family

8:19 Now his mother and siblings came to see him, but they couldn’t get close to him because of the crowd. 8:20 So someone told him, “Your mother and siblings are standing outside and want to see you.” 8:21 But Jesus replied, “The ones who hear and act on the Word of God are my mother and siblings.”

Jesus calms the storm

8:22 One day he and his disciples
boarded a ship, and he said to them,
“Let’s go over to the other side of the
lake.” 8:23 So they set sail, and he fell
asleep. Now a windstorm came down
on the lake, and they were almost to the
point of sinking. 8:24 They went to
Jesus to wake him up and said,
“Exalted One, Exalted One, we’re going
to die!” But when he was fully awake he
rebuked the wind and the surging water,
and they stopped and became calm.
8:25 “Where is your faith?” he asked
them. But they were amazed and said
to each other, “Who can this be, that he
gives directives to the wind and water,
and they listen to him?!”

Jesus frees the man possessed by Legion

8:26 Then they sailed down into the region of the Gerasenes, which is across from Galilee. 8:27 As soon as Jesus got off the ship he was met by a demonized man from the city. For a long time he had not worn any clothing nor lived in any house, but he stayed instead among the graves. 8:28 When he saw Jesus he shouted loudly and fell down before him. “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Highest God?” he shouted. “I beg you not to torture me!” 8:29 (Jesus had ordered the unclean spirit to get out of the person, because on many occasions it had taken control of him. He had been

bound with chains and ankle irons, but he broke through them and was driven by the demon into deserted areas.)

8:30 “What is your name?” Jesus asked him. And he said “Legion,” since so many demons had entered into him. 8:31 And they kept begged Jesus not to order them to go into the Abyss. 8:32 Now there was a fairly large herd of hogs grazing on the mountain, and they begged permission to enter into them. He granted it 8:33 and they entered the hogs. Immediately the herd stampeded off the cliff and into the lake, where they drowned.

8:34 When the ones herding the hogs saw what happened, they ran away and reported it both in the city and the

farms, 8:35 and everyone came to see what this was all about. When they reached Jesus they found the person from whom the demons had left, sitting there at Jesus' feet, fully clothed and in his right mind. They were afraid, 8:36 but those who had seen it told of how the demonized man was restored.

8:37 Then the whole crowd from the area around the Gerasenes asked Jesus to go away from them, because they were gripped with fear. So he boarded a ship and left. 8:38 Now the man from whom the demons had come out pleaded to go along with him, but he sent him back and said, 8:39 "Return to your home and tell the whole story of all that God has done for you." And off he

went, telling everyone in the city what Jesus had done for him.

Jesus heals a woman and raises a girl from the dead

8:40 Upon Jesus‘ return, he was greeted by a large crowd that was expecting him. 8:41 Suddenly there came a man by the name of Jairus who was in charge of the synagogue. Falling at Jesus’ feet, he begged him to enter his house 8:42 because his only daughter, who was twelve years old, was dying. And as Jesus went along, the crowd pressed in all around him.

8:43 In the crowd was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhaging for twelve years. She had spent her

entire livelihood on physicians, but none of them could cure her. 8:44 So she approached Jesus from behind and touched the hem of his garment, and instantly the flow of blood stopped. 8:45 And Jesus said, “Who touched me?”

Everyone denied it, and Peter said to him, “Exalted One, the crowd is pressing in on you on all sides, and you wonder who touched you?”

8:46 But Jesus replied, “Someone touched me, because I know that power went out of me.”

8:47 Now the woman, seeing that she could not escape notice, began to shake and fell before him. In front of the whole crowd she told why she had touched him, and that she had been

healed instantly. 8:48 And he said to her,
“Daughter, your faith has healed you;
go in peace.”

8:49 While he was still speaking,
someone from the household of the
synagogue ruler came and said, “Your
daughter has died; there is no more
need to bother the teacher.” 8:50 But
when Jesus heard this he replied to
him, “Don’t be afraid, just believe, and
she will be restored to life.” 8:51 And
when he entered the house, he let no
one else in except Peter, John, James,
and the girl’s father and mother.

8:52 They were all sobbing and grieving
for her, but he said, “Don’t cry, because
she is not dead but only sleeping.” 8:53
And they laughed at him, since they

knew very well that she had died. 8:54 But taking her firmly by the hand, he called to the girl, “Wake up!.” 8:55 Instantly her spirit returned and she got up, and he told them to give her something to eat. 8:56 Her parents were beside themselves, but he instructed them not to tell anyone what happened.

Jesus sends out The Twelve

9:1 Now Jesus called the Twelve together and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to cure diseases. 9:2 He dispatched them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to restore the weak to health. 9:3 And he said to them, “Take nothing with you on the trip: not a walking stick, not a money pouch, no bread, no money, and

no extra clothing. 9:4 Stay in whichever house you enter until you leave that area. 9:5 If anyone refuses to accept you, leave that city and shake the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.” 9:6 So they went off through all the villages, announcing the good news and healing people everywhere.

9:7 Now Herod, the ruler over one-fourth the country, heard about all this and was baffled; some said that John had been raised from the dead, 9:8 while others said that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the ancient prophets had been raised up. 9:9 And Herod said, “I beheaded John, so who is this that I’m hearing about?” And he tried to see him.

9:10 When the Ambassadors returned, they gave Jesus a complete report of all they had done. Then he took them off by themselves to a city called Bethsaida, 9:11 but the crowd found out and followed him. So he talked to them about the kingdom of God, and he miraculously healed all who needed it.

Jesus feeds five thousand

9:12 As daylight began to fade, the Twelve came to Jesus and said, “Dismiss the crowd, so they can go to the surrounding villages and farms to spend the night and get a meal, because we’re out in the middle of nowhere.”

9:13 “You give them something to eat,” Jesus replied.

“But all we have is five loaves of bread and two fish,” they said, “unless we go and buy food for all these people.” 9:14 (There were about five thousand men there.)

“Have them recline for dinner, and divide them into groups of fifty each,” he told his disciples. 9:15 So they did as he said, and everyone reclined.

9:16 Taking the five loaves and two fish, Jesus looked up into the sky and blessed them. Then he broke them in pieces and gave them to his disciples to put before the crowd. 9:17 They all ate and were satisfied, and it took twelve wicker baskets to hold the leftovers.

Peter identifies Jesus as the Anointed One

9:18 Once when Jesus was praying
alone, the disciples came to him, so he
asked them, “Who are all the people
saying I am?”

9:19 “Some say John the Immerser,”
they replied, “Others say Elijah, and still
others say one of the ancient prophets
has come back.”

9:20 “And who do you say I am?” he
asked.

And Peter responded, “You are the
Anointed One of God.” 9:21 Then Jesus
warned them and instructed them to
say nothing about this, 9:22 and he

added, “The Human must suffer many things. He will be rejected by the elders, high priests, and scribes, and then he is to be killed but arise on the third day.”

The cost of following Jesus

9:23 Then he said to them all, “If anyone decides to follow me, they must renounce themselves, pick up their cross each day, and follow me. 9:24 Those who decide to save themselves will lose themselves, but those who lose themselves on my account will save themselves. 9:25 What good is it for people to gain the whole world but destroy or forfeit themselves? 9:26 For whoever is ashamed of me and what I say, the Human will be ashamed of them when he comes in his majesty

and in the majesty of the Father and the holy angels. 9:27 I tell you truly, there are some who have stood here who will absolutely not face death before they see the kingdom of God.”

The Transfiguration

9:28 About eight days after he said these things, he took Peter, James, and John with him up into the mountain to pray. 9:29 And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed and his clothing became a dazzling white. 9:30 Suddenly two men appeared in the majestic scene: Moses and Elijah! 9:31 They were talking with him about his leaving the world, which was about to take place in Jerusalem.

9:32 Now Peter and the others had been in a deep sleep, but when they fully awakened they saw Jesus' majesty and the two men with him. 9:33 After those two left, Peter said to Jesus, "Exalted One, it's great to be here! We should put up three temporary sanctuaries: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (he didn't know what he was saying).

9:34 As he was saying this, a cloud appeared and overshadowed them, but they were afraid as they entered into it. 9:35 Then a voice came out from the cloud and said, "This is my chosen Son; hear him!" 9:36 And at that point they saw that Jesus was alone. But they said nothing about this to anyone at that time.

Jesus evicts a demon from a boy

9:37 Now the next day as they were going down the mountain, they were met by a large crowd. 9:38 Suddenly a man in the crowd cried out, “Teacher, I beg you, please take notice of my son, my only son! 9:39 A spirit takes him without warning, making him shout and convulse and foam at the mouth. When it leaves it does so with great difficulty and it bruises him. 9:40 I begged your disciples to throw it out but they couldn’t.”

9:41 So Jesus responded, “You faithless, twisted generation! How long must I stay and put up with you? Bring your son here.” 9:42 Yet while he was

coming, the demon tore into him and made him convulse violently. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and miraculously healed the boy, and he gave him back to his father. 9:43 And they were all awestruck at the magnificence of God.

While they were all still marveling at what Jesus did, he said to his disciples, 9:44 “Keep these sayings in mind, because the Human is about to be handed over into people’s clutches.” 9:45 But they had no idea what he was talking about, because it was completely hidden from them so that they wouldn’t understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about it.

Humility is greatness

9:46 Now a dispute broke out among the disciples over which of them was greater. 9:47 Jesus perceived what they were considering, so he got hold of a small child to stand beside him. 9:48 And he said to them, “Whoever will accept this little one in my name is actually accepting me, and whoever will accept me is actually accepting the one who sent me. For the one who is less esteemed among you is actually important.”

For and against

9:49 Then John responded, “Exalted One, we saw someone throwing out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us who follow you.” 9:50 But Jesus replied,

“Don’t stop anyone, because whoever is not opposing you is on your side.”

The desire to play God

9:51 As the time drew near for Jesus to be taken up, he was determined to go to Jerusalem. 9:52 He sent messengers ahead to go into a Samaritan village, to prepare for his arrival. 9:53 But they did not accept him because he was on his way to Jerusalem. 9:54 When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Master, do you want us to call fire down from the sky to consume them?” 9:55 But Jesus turned around and rebuked them, 9:56 and they went on to another village.

The cost of following Jesus

9:57 As they went along the road,
someone said to Jesus, “I will follow
you wherever you go,” 9:58 and he
replied, “Foxes have burrows and the
birds of the sky have nests, but the
Human has no place to lay his head.”

9:59 To another person Jesus said,
“Follow me.” But he replied, “Master,
first let me go and bury my father.” 9:60
And Jesus replied, “Let the dead bury
their own dead, but you should
publicize the kingdom of God.”

9:61 Yet another person said to Jesus,
“Master, first let me say goodbye to the
people in my household.” 9:62 But he
replied, “No one who puts their hand to
the plow while looking back is fit for the
kingdom of God.”

Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples

10:1 After that, the Master appointed seventy-two others, and he sent them out two-by-two as forerunners to every city and place he intended to visit. 10:2 And he said to them, “The harvest is truly vast but the workers are few in number. So plead with the Master of the harvest, to urgently send workers out to his harvest. 10:3 Now, off you go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

10:4 “Don’t take a money pouch with you, nor an extra bag or pair of sandals. Don’t stop to greet people along the way. 10:5 When you enter a house, give it your blessing. 10:6 If it is a house of

peace, your peace will be upon it; if not, take it back. 10:7 Stay only in one house to eat and drink what they offer, because the worker deserves their pay; do not go from house to house.

10:8 “If you enter a city and they welcome you, eat what they offer you 10:9 and heal the sick, and tell them that ‘the kingdom of God has come near to you’. 10:10 But if the city you enter does not welcome you, stand in the city square and proclaim, 10:11 ‘We hereby wipe the dust from your city off of our feet! But understand this: that the kingdom of God has come near to you’. 10:12 And I tell you, it will be more bearable on Judgment Day for Sodom than for that city!

10:13 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the powerful things that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have sat down and covered themselves with sackcloth and ashes as a sign of remorse a long time ago. 10:14 Tyre and Sidon will fare better at the Judgment than you will! 10:15 And you, Capernaum… you will not be lifted to heaven, you will descend into Hades! 10:16 Those who listen to you disciples, listen to me, and those who reject you, reject me. And those who reject me, reject the one who sent me.”

10:17 Then the seventy-two returned and happily reported, “Master, even the demons defer to us because of your name!”

10:18 And he replied, “I watched the Adversary fall like lightning from the sky. 10:19 So now I have given you the jurisdiction to trample serpents and scorpions, and over all the forces of the enemy, and not one of you will be harmed. 10:20 But don’t be so happy that the spirits defer to you; be happier that your names have been written down in the heavens.”

10:21 At that very moment Jesus was filled with happiness by the Holy Spirit, and he said, “I acknowledge you, my Father and Master of heaven and earth, because you concealed these things from the wise and educated, and instead you revealed them to the innocent. Yes, Father, this is what you were pleased to do.” 10:22 To his

disciples he said, “Everything has been handed over to me from my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son decides to reveal him.” 10:23 And he added, “You are very privileged to see what you have seen! 10:24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see and hear what you’ve seen and heard.”

The parable of the Good Samaritan

10:25 Suddenly a lawyer stood up to provoke him and said, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

10:26 “What is written in the law?” he replied. “How do you understand it?”

10:27 And his answer was, “You must love the Master your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

10:28 “Correct,” Jesus replied. “If you do this, you will live.”

10:29 But he wanted to upstage the teacher, so he asked, “And exactly who is my neighbor?”

10:30 Accepting the challenge, Jesus said, “A certain person went down from Jerusalem into Jericho. But he was attacked by muggers, who stripped off his clothes, beat him up, and left him there half dead. 10:31 By coincidence a certain priest went down that same road, but he passed by on the other side. 10:32 Likewise, a Levite came to

that same spot and saw him, but he too passed by on the other side.

10:33 “But when a Samaritan came along and saw him, he was moved with pity. 10:34 He went over to him and applied ointment and bandages to his wounds. Then he put him on his own animal and took him to an inn to be cared for. 10:35 As he left the next day he gave two days’ wages to the innkeeper and said to him, ‘Take care of him, and if you incur additional expenses, I will compensate you when I return.’ 10:36 So which of these three do you suppose was being a neighbor to the one who was mugged?”

10:37 “The one who had pity on him,” the lawyer replied.

And Jesus said, “Now go and do likewise!”

Jesus visits Mary and Martha

10:38 After they left, Jesus entered into a village where a certain woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.
10:39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Master’s feet and listened to what he was saying.

Mary was doing what any student of a rabbi would do, and for a lone woman to do this was quite scandalous. It’s possible that Martha was really more upset with this than with needing help in the kitchen.

10:40 But Martha was distracted by all the meal preparations, so she said,

“Master, don’t you care that my sister has left me to serve all alone? Tell her to get busy and help me!”

10:41 “Martha, Martha,” the Master replied, “You’re distracted and frazzled about many things, 10:42 but only one thing really matters. Mary has chosen the good part, and it will not be taken from her.”

Prayer and persistence

11:1 Now it happened that he was in a certain place praying. And when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, “Master, teach us how to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

11:2 “Whenever you pray, say something like this,” Jesus answered. “

‘Father, may your name be considered sacred, and may your kingdom come!
11:3 Give us the bread we need each day, 11:4 and pardon our sins just as we pardon the sins committed against us. Please don’t bring us to trial.’ ”

11:5 Then Jesus continued: “Which of you would go to see a friend at midnight and say, ‘Friend, I need three loaves of bread, 11:6 because a travelling friend of mine has arrived and I have nothing to feed him’? 11:7 Then the one inside will respond, ‘Don’t bother me! The door is locked and my children are here in bed with me. I’m not getting up to give you anything!’ 11:8 I tell you, though, that while he won’t get up because the person is his friend, he will get up

anyway and give him what he needs, because of his sheer audacity!

11:9 “So I tell you: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. 11:10 For the one who asks is the one who receives, the one who seeks is the one who finds, and the one who knocks is the one to whom the door is opened. 11:11 What parent among you would give your child a serpent if they ask for a fish? 11:12 Or who would give your child a scorpion if they asked for an egg? 11:13 So if you, evil though you are, will give good gifts to your children, then how much more will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

Jesus is accused of using the power of Beelzeboul

11:14 Now Jesus was throwing out a demon, the kind that makes a person unable to speak. But when it came out, the person began to speak, and the crowd was amazed. 11:15 Yet some of them said, “It’s only by the power of Beelzeboul, the ruler of demons, that he throws them out!” 11:16 Others wanted to harass him by demanding a sign from heaven.

11:17 But Jesus knew what they were thinking about and said to them, “Every kingdom that is divided against itself is destroying itself; a house against itself is collapsing. 11:18 So if the Adversary is divided against himself, how will his

kingdom stand, since you say that I throw out demons by the power of Beelzeboul? 11:19 And if that's true, then by what power to your own people drive them out? Therefore, they will be your judges! 11:20 But if I'm throwing them out by the power of God, then the kingdom of God has surely come upon you.

11:21 "As long as a strong person is fully armed and guards their property, their possessions are safe. 11:22 But if a stronger person comes along to conquer them, they take away the protections that had been counted on and hand out the loot. 11:23 The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me is scattering.

11:24 “If an unclean spirit leaves a person, it goes through very dry areas looking for rest but doesn’t find it. Then it says, ‘I will go back to the house I left’. 11:25 And when it finds the person swept clean and set in order, 11:26 it goes off to get seven other spirits more evil than itself to live there. So the person is much worse off at the end than the beginning.”

11:27 Now at this point a woman shouted out from the crowd, “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts that nursed you!” 11:28 And he replied, “Yes, but even more blessed is the one who hears the Word of God and protects it!”

The sign of Jonah

11:29 Now the crowd was packed, and he began to speak to them: “This generation is evil! It looks for a sign, but none will be given except that of Jonah. 11:30 Just as Jonah was a sign to the people of Nineva, so also the Human will be a sign to this generation. 11:31 The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and now someone more important than Solomon is here. 11:32 The Ninevites will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they changed their minds based on what Jonah proclaimed, and now someone more important than Jonah is here.

The lamp and the eye

11:33 “No one lights a small lamp and
then conceals it or puts it under a
container; instead, they place it on a
lampstand to provide light so people
can see. 11:34 Your eye is the light of
your body. And if your eye is innocent
your whole body is illuminated, but if
your eye is evil, your whole body is
dark. 11:35 So be sure that the light
within you is not darkness. 11:36 If your
whole body is luminous and no part of it
is in darkness, then it is completely
light, as when a lamp shines on you.”

Woes to Pharisees

11:37 Now after he spoke, a Pharisee
asked Jesus to have lunch with him. So

he went and reclined at the table, 11:38 but the Pharisee was surprised to see that Jesus did not perform ritual cleansing before the meal. 11:39 So the Master said to him, “You Pharisees wash the outside of the cup and plate, but on the inside you are crammed full with greed and evil. 11:40 Dimwits! Didn’t the One who made the outside also make the inside? 11:41 But should you give charitably from within, then you will be clean everywhere.

11:42 “But woe to you, you Pharisees! You collect a tenth of your mint, rue, and every vegetable, but you abandon justice and the love of God. You should do both! 11:43 And woe to you, you Pharisees! You love the best seat in the synagogue and to be greeted in the

marketplaces. 11:44 Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves that people walk on unawares!”

11:45 Now one of the lawyers responded by saying to him, “Teacher, these things you’re saying are insulting us too!” 11:46 But he replied, “And to you lawyers, woe! You put unbearable loads on people yet won’t lift a finger to help them. 11:47 Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, though it was your ancestors who killed them! 11:48 So then, you admit that you consented to the actions of your ancestors, since you built the tombs for the ones they killed. 11:49 This is the reason God wisely said, ‘I will send them prophets and ambassadors, but

they will kill some and persecute others!’

11:50 “So the blood of all the prophets that has been spilled from the beginning of the world will be demanded of this generation: 11:51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, who was murdered between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be demanded of this generation! 11:52 Woe to you lawyers, because you stole the key of knowledge. You yourselves will not enter, and you make sure no one else does, either!”

11:53 After Jesus left, the scribes and Pharisees began to put intense pressure on him. They fired many

questions at him, 11:54 trying to ambush him with something he might say.

Beware of the Pharisees

12:1 As the crowd grew to tens of thousands, to the point that they were stepping on each other, Jesus turned to speak only to his disciples: “Beware of the ‘yeast’ of the Pharisees, which is their fakeness. 12:2 Everything that has been covered up will surely be revealed, and everything that has been concealed will surely be made known. 12:3 For whatever you say in the dark will be heard in the light, and whatever you whisper in the back rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.

Fear God, not anyone or anything else

12:4 ”Now I say to you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body but can do no more beyond that. 12:5 Let me show you who you should fear: the One who, after killing the body, has the authority to throw you into Gehenna!

Gehenna was the literal trash dump that was always burning due to a constant supply of material. But clearly the context in which Jesus is using it is metaphorical, with the eternal fire they could see representing the one they could not see.

Yes, I tell you, fear this One!

12:6 “Aren’t five sparrows sold for dirt cheap? Yet not one of them passes

from God’s sight. 12:7 In fact, even the hairs on your head are counted! So don’t be afraid; you are worth so much more than many sparrows.

12:8 “Now I say this to you all: Whoever acknowledges me in front of other people is the one the Human will acknowledge in front of the angels of God. 12:9 Yet whoever renounces me in front of other people will be completely renounced in front of the angels of God. 12:10 Everyone who speaks against the Human will be forgiven, but everyone who slanders the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. 12:11 So whenever they may bring you before the synagogues and their rulers and authorities, don’t worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you should say, 12:12 because the

Holy Spirit will teach you what to say at that time.”

The parable of the rich fool

12:13 Now someone from the crowd said, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the estate with me!” 12:14 But Jesus replied, “You there— who appointed me as the judge or executor of your estate?” 12:15 And then he said to them, “Watch and be on your guard against all kinds of greed, because your life is not found in the abundance of your possessions.”

12:16 Then he gave them this parable: “There was a rich person whose farm produced a bumper crop. 12:17 And he began to think to himself, ‘What will I do

with all this? I have no place to put it.’
12:18 Then he said, ‘I know… I’ll
demolish the existing barns and build
bigger ones! Then I will fill them with all
my grain and possessions, 12:19 and
say to myself, “Man, you have it made
for many years to come. Let the party
begin!”’ 12:20 But God said to him,
‘Dimwit! This very night your life will be
demanded back from you; then who will
benefit from all your preparations?’
12:21 And so it will also be for those who
store up only for themselves but are not
rich with the things of God.”

Worry helps no one

12:22 Then he turned back toward his
disciples and said, “This is why I tell you
not to worry about your life and what

you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear. 12:23 For your life is more than its food, and your body is more than its clothing. 12:24 Take a good look at the ravens; they don't plant or harvest, and they have no barns. But God feeds them, and you are so much more valuable than birds! 12:25 Yet which of you by worrying can add an hour to your life? 12:26 So if you can't do such a little thing as that, then why worry about the rest?

12:27 "Consider how the lilies grow; they don't toil or weave cloth, yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his majesty was as nicely dressed as one of these! 12:28 And if God so clothes the grass of the field which is here one day and burned up the next, then how much

more will he also clothe you, you skeptics? 12:29 So don’t focus on what you will eat or drink; don’t keep in suspense about these things. 12:30 All the other people in the world do this, but your Father is aware that you need them. 12:31 Focus instead on his kingdom, and all these other things will be added to you.

Treasures in heaven

12:32 “Don’t be afraid, little flock, for your Father delighted in giving you the kingdom. 12:33 Sell your possessions and donate them to the poor. Make for yourselves money pouches that don’t wear out, a limitless treasure in the heavens where the thief cannot come near and the moth cannot cause decay.

12:34 For wherever your treasure is,
that’s where your thoughts will be.

Keep watch for Jesus to return

12:35 “Prepare yourselves for travel,
light your lamps! 12:36 Be like people
who are anticipating their master after
he leaves a wedding, so that when he
comes and knocks they can quickly
open the door for him. 12:37 Happy are
those servants the master finds in a
state of alertness! I tell you truly that he
will dress himself like a servant and wait
on them at the table. 12:38 Those
servants will be happy if he finds them
ready, even if he doesn’t come until the
middle of the night or the early morning
hours.

12:39 “But understand this: if the homeowner knew what time the thief would arrive, he wouldn’t let his house be broken into. 12:40 So you too must be ready, because the Human will come when you’re not expecting him.” 12:41 Then Peter asked him, “Master, are you giving this parable to us or to everyone?” 12:42 But Jesus continued: “So then, who is the trustworthy and thoughtful house manager, the one the master sets over the rest of the household help to give them their regular meals? 12:43 Blessed is that servant if the master comes and finds them doing their job! 12:44 I tell you truly that they will be put in charge of all the master’s possessions.

12:45 “But suppose the servant takes the attitude ‘my master is not coming for a long time’, and begins to beat the household help, eat all the food, and get drunk? 12:46 Then the master will come on a day the servant didn’t expect and couldn’t anticipate— and that servant will be cut in two and suffer the same fate as the unfaithful! 12:47 A servant who knows what their master wants but doesn’t prepare or perform their assigned duties will be severely beaten. 12:48 On the other hand, a servant who does not know what their master wants only deserves a light beating. Much will be required from those to whom much is given; much will be expected from those of whom much was asked.

Truth divides people

12:49 “I have come to throw fire on the
earth, and oh how I wish it were already
kindled! 12:50 But there is an immersion
I must undergo, and oh the pressure I’m
under until it is completed! 12:51 You
assume that I came to bring peace to
the earth; yet I tell you, it is not peace
but division. 12:52 From now on, five
people in one household will be divided
three against two and two against three;
12:53 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.”

Discerning the times

12:54 Then he said to the crowd,
“Whenever you see the clouds
accumulating in the west, you
instinctively know that a thunderstorm is
coming. 12:55 Likewise, whenever the
south wind blows, you know that the
day will be a scorcher. 12:56 Pretenders!
You know how to interpret the earth and
sky, so how can you not interpret this
era?

12:57 “Why do you not judge for
yourselves what is right? 12:58 If
someone is pressing charges against
you and is taking you to court, try to
settle the dispute along the way.
Otherwise they may drag you in front of
the judge, the judge will hand you over
to the police, and the police will throw
you into prison. 12:59 I tell you, you will

certainly not be released until you have paid the last little bit!”

The danger of self-righteousness

13:1 Now there were some in attendance at that time who told him about the Galileans Pilate had killed and whose blood he mingled with their own sacrifices. 13:2 And Jesus responded, “Do you think that those Galileans must have been more wicked than everyone else, to have this happen to them? 13:3 Not at all, I tell you! But unless you turn to God, you too will be destroyed. 13:4 Or how about the eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them; do you think they were more guilty than

everyone else in Jerusalem? 13:5 Not at all, I tell you! But unless you turn to God, you too will be destroyed.”

The parable of the patient gardener

13:6 Then he gave them this parable: “Someone had a fig tree planted in their vineyard, but when they went to check on its fruit there was none. 13:7 So he said to the gardener, ‘Enough! I waited three years for this tree to produce figs and found nothing. Chop it down, because it’s wasting good soil.’ 13:8 But the gardener replied, ‘Master, give it one more year. I’ll dig around it and fertilize it, 13:9 and if there’s still no fruit, then cut it down’ .”

Jesus heals a crippled woman

13:10 On one of the Sabbaths when Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, 13:11 suddenly there was a woman who had suffered from a spirit of frailty for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not stand up straight at all. 13:12 When Jesus saw her he said to her, “Dear woman, you are fully released from your infirmities!” 13:13 He put his hands on her and instantly she straightened up and gave honor to God.

13:14 But the synagogue ruler reacted with indignation to Jesus’ healing on the Sabbath. So he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which people

can work, so come for healing on those days rather than the Sabbath Day.”
13:15 Yet the Master responded,
“Pretenders! Any of you would, on the Sabbath, untie your ox or donkey from the feeding trough and lead it away to get a drink of water. 13:16 Yet this daughter of Abraham— whom the Adversary had imprisoned for eighteen years!— was not to be set free from her confinement on the Sabbath Day?!”
13:17 These words shamed all who were opposing him. The whole crowd, though, was delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

The parables of the mustard seed and yeast

13:18 Then he said to them, “What is like the kingdom of God? To what can I compare it? 13:19 It’s like a mustard seed that someone planted in their garden, that grew to become a tree in whose branches the birds built their nests. 13:20 To what else can I compare the kingdom of God? 13:21 It’s like yeast that a woman combined with three measures of flour until the whole batch rose.”

Fake followers

13:22 Then he went through cities and villages, teaching along his way to Jerusalem, 13:23 and someone said to him, “Master, are only a few to be saved?”

13:24 “Compete to enter through the narrow door,” he replied. “For I tell you that many who try to enter will not be strong enough. 13:25 Once the homeowner gets up and locks the doors, you will stand outside knocking on the doors and saying, ‘Master, open up the door for us!’ But he will reply to you, ‘I don’t know you or where you’re from’.

13:26 “Then you’ll start to say, ‘We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our city squares!’ 13:27 But he will retort, ‘I’ve never seen you before. Where did you come from? Get out of here, you outlaws!’ 13:28 There will be much crying and teeth grinding when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, while

you are expelled. 13:29 People will come from east and west, from north and south, and be seated at the table in the kingdom of God. 13:30 But take note of this! The last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Jesus laments over Jerusalem

13:31 At that time some Pharisees approached him and said, “Get away from here and go someplace else, because Herod intends to kill you!”

13:32 Jesus replied. “You go and tell that fox, ‘Watch this: I am driving out demons and performing healings today and tomorrow, and the third day I’m done’. 13:33 After all, I must go on

today, tomorrow, and the day after, because it just isn't right for a prophet to be done away with outside of Jerusalem!

13:34 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem… you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you! So many times I've wanted to gather your children the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing! 13:35 And now look; your temple is to be taken away from you. But I say to you, you will not recognize me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one coming in the name of the Master'."

Jesus dines with a Pharisee

14:1 One day on a Sabbath, he went to have lunch in the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees, where he was closely watched. 14:2 Suddenly, there before him was someone whose body was very swollen. 14:3 And Jesus challenged the lawyers and Pharisees by saying, “Is it permissible to heal on the Sabbath, or not?” 14:4 But they said nothing. So he took hold of the person, healed them, and sent them on their way. 14:5 Then he turned toward the others and said, “Which of you would not immediately help your child or even an ox if they fell into a well on the Sabbath Day?” 14:6 But they were unable to refute what he was saying.

14:7 Then Jesus noticed that the other guests all selected the best seats

possible, so he turned to them and gave them a parable: 14:8 “Whenever you happen to be invited to weddings, don’t take the most prominent seats for yourselves. What if someone more important than you has been invited, 14:9 and you are asked to give up your seat for them? Then, in humiliation, you will have to take the worst seat. 14:10 Instead, when you’re invited, take the seat farthest back. Then the one who invited you may say to you, ‘Friend, come and sit farther up’, and you will be honored in front of everyone else. 14:11 For all who promote themselves will be humiliated, but all who humble themselves will be promoted.”

14:12 Then he said to the host, “Whenever you host a luncheon or

dinner, don’t invite your friends, siblings, relatives, and rich neighbors, because they may invite you to theirs and pay you back. 14:13 Instead, invite the destitute, the disabled, the lame, and the blind. 14:14 Then you will be blessed, because though they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The parable of the banquet

14:15 Upon hearing this, one of the guests said to him, “Blessed is the one who eats at the luncheon in the kingdom of God!” 14:16 Then Jesus said this:

“A certain person prepared a lavish banquet and invited many guests. 14:17

So when dinner time came, a servant was sent to all the invited guests to say, ‘Come! The banquet is ready.’ 14:18 But one after another began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I’m sorry, but I just bought a field and must go to inspect it.’ 14:19 Another said, ‘I’m sorry, but I just bought five pairs of oxen and must try them out.’ 14:20 And another said, ‘I just got married and cannot come.’

14:21 “So the servant returned and reported this to the master. Then the homeowner became angry and said to the servant, ‘Go out quickly to the city square and into the streets, and invite the destitute, the disabled, the blind, and the crippled to my banquet!’

14:22 “ ‘I’ve done what you said’, the servant reported, ‘but there is still room for more’.

14:23 “So the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the lanes and outskirts of town and urge them to come in, so my house will be completely filled. 14:24 I tell you, not one of those original invited guests will get a taste of my dinner!’ ”

The cost of following Jesus

14:25 A large crowd was traveling with Jesus, and he turned to speak to them: 14:26 “Anyone who wants to be my disciple must be prepared to break ties with their father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and even their own life. 14:27 And anyone who wants to be

my disciple must be willing to carry their own cross and follow me.

14:28 “If one of you intended to build a tower, would you not first of all sit down and calculate the cost to see if you have the funds to complete it? 14:29 Otherwise, you may lay the foundation but be unable to afford to finish the job, and then everyone would jeer 14:30 and say, ‘This person started construction but ran out of money!’ 14:31 Or what king would engage another king in battle without first sitting down to determine whether his own army of ten thousand can meet the twenty thousand coming toward him? 14:32 If not, then he will surely send a peace delegation while there is still time.

14:33 “This all illustrates what it takes to be my disciple. You must be willing to part with everything you have. 14:34 Salt is good, but once it loses its flavor it can’t get it back. 14:35 And since it cannot be used for seasoning, nor even for fertilizing the soil, it is thrown outside. If you have ears, listen!”

The parable of the lost sheep

15:1 Now all the tax contractors and scoundrels were coming to hear him. 15:2 And the Pharisees and scribes grumbled, “This one welcomes scoundrels and even eats with them!” 15:3 But he replied to them with a parable:

15:4 “If you had a hundred sheep but lost one, which of you would not leave the 99 others out in the open and go after the lost one until you found it? 15:5 And when you did, you would put it on your shoulders 15:6 and go home happy. Then you’d call together your friends and neighbors and say, ‘Celebrate with me, because I found my lost sheep!’ 15:7 But I tell you, this is the kind of happiness there will be in heaven whenever one scoundrel turns to God, rather than the 99 who have no such need.

The parable of the lost coin

15:8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins. If she loses one, won’t she light a lamp and sweep the house,

looking carefully until she finds it? 15:9 And when she does, she will call together her friends and neighbors and say, ‘Celebrate with me, because I found the silver coin I lost!’ 15:10 Likewise, I tell you, there is happiness in the presence of the angels of God on account of one scoundrel who turns to God.”

The parable of the lost son

15:11 Then he continued: “A certain person had two sons. 15:12 The younger one said to him, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate’. So he divided the property between them. 15:13 Shortly thereafter the younger son packed all his belongings and went abroad to a far-away land. He

squandered his property in extravagant living, 15:14 spending everything he had. But then a severe famine came upon the land, and he began to be in need.

15:15 “So he got in touch with one of the local citizens, who sent him into his fields to tend hogs. 15:16 And he longed to be filled with the husks the pigs were fed, but no one gave him anything. 15:17 He finally came to his senses and said to himself, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands get plenty of food, yet here I am starving to death! 15:18 I will get up and go to my father and say, “Father, I have failed both heaven and you. 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son, so please make me like one of your hired hands.”’

15:20 “So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still some distance away, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran toward him and greeted him fondly. 15:21 And the son started to say to him, ‘Father, I have failed both heaven and you an am no longer worthy to be called your son…’ 15:22 But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Get the finest robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 15:23 Get the fattened calf and kill it so we can have a party! 15:24 For my son was dead but now lives; he was lost but now is found!’ And so the party began.

15:25 “Now the older son was in the field, and as he came near the house he heard music and dancing. 15:26 So

he called for one of the household help to find out what all this was about. 15:27 And they replied, ‘It’s because your brother has returned. Your father had the fattened calf killed, because your brother came back safe and sound.’ 15:28 But the older brother was angry and refused to enter the house, so his father came out to comfort him.

15:29 “But the son said to him, ‘Look, in all the years I slaved for you, I never disobeyed a single order you gave me. Yet you never even gave me a young goat for a party with my friends. 15:30 But when this son of yours comes back after wasting your property on hookers, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

15:31 “But the father replied, ‘My child, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 15:32 But we must celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead but now lives; he was lost and now is found!’ ”

The parable of the devious manager

16:1 Now Jesus said to his disciples, “A certain rich person had a house manager who was accused of being wasteful with the rich person’s assets. 16:2 So he called him in and said, ‘What is this I’m hearing about you? Give your final report, because you are no longer my administrator.’

16:3 “Then the house manager said to himself, ‘What am I going to do, now that my master is firing me? I don’t have the strength to dig and I’m too proud to beg. 16:4 I know what I’ll do! And when I’m let go, people will welcome me into their homes.’ 16:5 So he summoned each one who owed his master money. And he said to the first one, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

16:6 “ ‘A hundred measures of olive oil’, he replied.

“ ‘Quick, get your invoice,’ he said, ‘Sit down and write fifty instead.’

16:7 “He then asked another how much they owed, and they said ‘A hundred bags of grain.’

“And he said, ‘Get your invoice and change it to eighty.’

16:8 “The master had to commend the crooked house manager for his cleverness, because the people of this age are more savvy in their dealings with each other than are the people of light. 16:9 So I say to you, you’d better make friends with those who benefitted from cheating, so that when your wealth is gone they will welcome you into

eternal dwellings.

This passage is notoriously difficult to understand. On the surface it could appear that Jesus is condoning lying and cheating, which of course cannot be true. But clearly ‘you’ (the disciples) are mapped to the house manager here, not the debtors who cheated their creditor. So then it would appear that Jesus is telling his disciples to think ahead, to plan for what follows this life. And in the context of responding to the Pharisees about their loathing of tax contractors, Jesus may also be telling the disciples to be careful how they treat them.

16:10 “Whoever is trustworthy with the least is also trustworthy with the most, and whoever is unjust in the smallest

matters is also unjust in the greatest matters. 16:11 So if you could not be trusted with the wealth of this world, who will trust you with true wealth? 16:12 And if you could not be trusted with someone else's belongings, who will give you belongings of your own? 16:13 No domestic can serve two masters; they will despise one and love the other, or they will defend one and scorn the other. You cannot serve both God and Wealth."

The Pharisees will not escape condemnation

16:14 Now the greedy Pharisees heard all of this and held Jesus in derision. 16:15 But he said to them, "You like to make yourselves look good in front of

other people. But God knows your hearts, and what is impressive to people is disgusting to God. 16:16 The Law and the Prophets applied until the time of John. But from then on, the kingdom of God has been proclaimed, and you all are trying to take unlawful possession of it. 16:17 Yet it is easier for the sky and earth to pass away than for one tiny stroke of a letter in the Law to be dropped.

Jesus is saying that as incredibly difficult as it is for the tiniest part of the Law to end, the coming of the kingdom of God accomplishes that.

Jesus against no-fault divorce

16:18 “All who send away their wives in order to marry others are committing adultery, and the ones who are sent away and remarry are committing adultery.

This is a very abbreviated version of the account in Mt. 19:3-14. The question the Pharisees raised was a very specific matter of a dispute between two rabbinical schools, and they wanted Jesus to take sides. They wanted to divorce a wife just so they could easily marry someone else. This was devastating for the divorced wife, who would be shamed and impoverished. So Jesus is rebuking the Pharisees’ cold-hearted attitude toward their wives, rather than making a cold-hearted rule for all marriages of all time.

The rich man and Lazarus

16:19 “Now there was a certain rich person who dressed in purple and fine linen, living each day in happiness and luxury. 16:20 But there was also a destitute man named Lazarus who was put at the rich man’s door. He was covered with ulcers 16:21 and longed to fill himself with crumbs from the rich man’s table, and the dogs came and licked his sores. 16:22 Eventually the destitute man died, and he was carried away by the angels to the place of honor with Abraham. Then the rich man also died and was buried.

16:23 “The rich man, being tormented in Hades, looked up and saw Abraham a great distance away, with Lazarus at

the place of honor. 16:24 And he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me! Send Lazarus to dip his fingertip in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering in this inferno.’

16:25 “But Abraham replied, ‘Child, remember that you received good things in your life, while Lazarus only received bad things. Now he is being comforted and you are suffering. 16:26 And besides, there is a wide chasm set between us, so that no one can cross over from one side to the other.’

16:27 “ ‘Then I beg you, Father’, he replied, ‘that you would send him to my father’s house. 16:28 For I have five brothers, and he could warn them not to come to this place of torment.’

16:29 “But Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to them.’

16:30 “ ‘Oh no, Father Abraham!’ he replied. ‘But if someone were to come to them from the dead, they would turn to God.’

16:31 “ ‘If they won’t listen to Moses and the prophets’, said Abraham, ‘they won’t be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’ ”

Jesus defends the children

17:1 Then he said to his disciples, “Stumbling blocks are inevitable, but woe to whoever sets them up! 17:2 It would be better for such people to have a large millstone tied around their neck

and be flung into the sea, rather than to have ensnared one of these little ones. 17:3 So watch yourselves! Yet if your brother or sister does you wrong, rebuke them; and if they're sorry, forgive them. 17:4 Even if they do you wrong seven times in a day, and seven times they turn around and apologize, forgive them."

Faith like a mustard seed

17:5 Then the Ambassadors said to the Master, "Increase our faith." 17:6 And he replied, "If you have faith as tiny as a mustard seed, you could tell this mulberry tree to uproot itself and be planted in the sea instead, and it would listen to you.

Duty and respect

17:7 “Now suppose one of you had a servant doing the plowing or shepherding, and they came in from the field. Would you say to them, ‘Come, sit right down at the table’? 17:8 No, you would say, ‘Prepare my meal, then prepare to serve me my food and drink. After that, you may have your meal.’ 17:9 Does that servant expect to be thanked for doing their duty? 17:10 In the same way, when you do your duty you should say, ‘We are useless servants; we have only done our duty.’ ”

Jesus heals ten lepers

17:11 Now it happened that as he went toward Jerusalem, he passed through

the middle of Samaria and Galilee. 17:12 And when he entered a certain village, he was met by ten men with leprosy. They stood a distance away 17:13 and called out to Jesus, “Oh exalted one, have pity on us!” 17:14 Then he looked at them and said, “Off you go! Show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went on their way, they were suddenly healed.

17:15 One of them, when he realized he was healed, went back and loudly gave honor to God. 17:16 He fell to his face next to Jesus, thanking him. And he was a Samaritan. 17:17 But Jesus responded, “Weren’t there ten who were healed? So where are the other nine? 17:18 Did no one come back to give honor to God except this

foreigner?” 17:19 And he said to him, “Get up! Your faith has healed you.”

Jesus as the kingdom of God

17:20 Another time, Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come. And he replied, “The kingdom of God is not coming in a way you can watch for it. 17:21 No one will be able to say ‘Look, over here!’ or ‘Look, over there!’, for the kingdom of God is right here in front of you.”
That is, Jesus is offering it to them.

17:22 Then he said to his disciples, “The days will come when you will wish you could see just one of the days of the Human, but you won’t see it. 17:23 And

people will say to you, ‘Look, over there! ’ or ‘Look, over here!’, but don’t even go to investigate it. 17:24 For just as lightning flashes and lights up the whole sky, so it will be when the Human comes in his day. 17:25 But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

Prophecies of the end times

17:26 “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will also be in the days of the Human: 17:27 People ate, drank, and married, right up to the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and wiped them all out. 17:28 Likewise as in the days of Lot: they ate and drank, they bought and sold, they planted and built, 17:29 right up to the

day when Lot left Sodom, and fire and sulfur rained down from the sky and wiped them all out. 17:30 This is how it will be on the day the Human is revealed. 17:31 On that day, the one on the rooftop who has left tools in the house must not go down to retrieve them. Likewise, the one in the field must not turn back to what is behind them; 17:32 remember Lot's wife! 17:33 Whoever tries to preserve their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life will live. 17:34 And I tell you this: One night there will be two people in a bed; one will be accepted and the other will be abandoned. 17:35 Two will be grinding grain; one will be accepted and the other will be abandoned."

17:36 17:37 “Where, Master?” asked the disciples.

And he replied, “Where the body is, there will the eagles gather.”

In the examples of Noah and Lot, the righteous were taken away and the unrighteous left to die.

Prayer and persistence

18:1 Then he gave them another parable, to illustrate the need to always pray and not be demoralized: 18:2 “There was a judge in a certain city who had no fear of God and no regard for anyone. 18:3 There was also a widow in that city, and she came to him and told him, ‘Avenge me against my accuser!’ 18:4 For a while he ignored her, but

eventually he said to himself, ‘I have no fear of God and no regard for anyone. 18:5 But since this widow is wearing me down, I will see that she gets justice—before she gets violent!’ ”

18:6 Then Jesus added, “Notice what the unjust judge is saying. 18:7 But won’t God do even more to vindicate his chosen ones who plead for help day and night? Will he keep them waiting? 18:8 I tell you that he will vindicate them, and do it quickly. But the question is, will the Human find faith on the earth when he comes?”

The parable of the proud prayer

18:9 Jesus gave yet another parable, this time to those who are self-righteous while holding others in contempt: 18:10 “Two people went up into the temple compound to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax contractor. 18:11 The Pharisee stood there and prayed to himself, ‘I am grateful to you, God, because I am not like everyone else: extortioners, cheaters, adulterers… and especially this tax contractor! 18:12 I fast every Monday and give a tenth of everything I acquire.’

The phrase typically rendered “twice a week” may actually be a figure of speech meaning the second day after the weekly Sabbath.

18:13 “But the tax contractor stood at a distance, not even lifting his eyes to

heaven. Instead, he beat his chest and said, ‘God, please absolve me of my guilt!’ 18:14 I tell you, it was this one and not the other who went home cleared of all charges. For those who exalt themselves will be humiliated, but those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Jesus blesses the children

18:15 Now people also brought their little ones to Jesus so that he would bless them. But his disciples saw this and rebuked them. 18:16 So Jesus called them to him and said, “Let the little ones come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God is theirs. 18:17 Truly I tell you, that whoever does not accept the kingdom of God the same way

these little ones do, will not enter into it.”

Riches as an obstacle to salvation

18:18 A certain ruler asked him this: “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

18:19 “Why do you call me ‘good’?” Jesus replied. “No one is good except God.

If Jesus is called good, and only God is good, then Jesus is being called God.

18:20 And you know the commandments: Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not commit perjury, honor your father and mother.”

18:21 “But I’ve kept all those commandments since I was young,” he said.

18:22 Upon hearing this, Jesus said, “You only lack one thing: Sell everything you have and distribute it to the destitute, and you will have treasure in the heavens. Then come and follow me.”

18:23 When the ruler heard this he became very dejected, because he was extremely wealthy. 18:24 And when Jesus saw how dejected he became, he said, “How difficult is is for those with money to enter the kingdom of God! 18:25 It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.”

18:26 Those who heard this exclaimed,
“Then who could ever be saved?”

18:27 And he answered, “What people
cannot do, God can do.”

18:28 Then Peter said, “See, we’ve left
everything we owned to follow you.”
18:29 But he replied, “I tell you truly, that
whoever is willing to let go of their
house, spouse, siblings, parents, or
children for the sake of the kingdom of
God, 18:30 will certainly be repaid many
times over in this era, and receive
eternal life in the ages to come.”

Jesus predicts his death yet again

18:31 Then Jesus took the Twelve aside and said to them, “Look, we’re going up to Jerusalem, where everything the prophets wrote about the Human will be fulfilled. 18:32 For he will be handed over to the secular authorities to be jeered at, abused, spat upon, 18:33 and flogged, and finally put to death. But on the third day he will arise.” 18:34 But they had no clue what he was talking about, because it was hidden from them and they were kept from understanding.

Jesus heals a blind beggar

18:35 Now it happened that as they approached Jericho, there was a blind person sitting at the side of the road, begging. 18:36 And when he heard the crowd passing by, he asked what this

was about, 18:37 and they told him that Jesus the Nazarene was passing by. 18:38 So he cried out for help: “Jesus, descendant of David, have pity on me!” 18:39 The ones leading the way told him to be quiet, but he only shouted out louder, “Descendant of David, have pity on me!”

18:40 Jesus stood still and ordered the blind one to be led over to him. And as he got near Jesus asked him, 18:41 “What is it that you want me to do?”

“Sir,” he replied, “I want to see!”

18:42 “All right, see!” said Jesus, “Your faith has healed you.” 18:43 Instantly he could see, and he followed him, giving honor to God. And all the people who saw this praised God as well.

Jesus visits Zaccheus

19:1 Jesus then entered Jericho and was passing through. 19:2 There was a man there by the name of Zaccheus, who was a district tax contractor and quite wealthy. 19:3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but he couldn't see over the crowd because he was short. 19:4 So he ran ahead and climbed up a fig-mulberry tree so he could see him as he passed through. 19:5 As Jesus reached that spot he looked up into the tree and said, "Zaccheus, come down at once, because I will be staying at your house this very day!" 19:6 So he hurried down and welcomed him gladly.

19:7 Those who saw this grumbled about the fact that he entered the home

of a scoundrel to spend the night. 19:8 But Zaccheus stood up and said to the Master, “Look, Master, I’m going to give half of my possessions to the destitute. And if I have extorted anyone, I will pay back four times the amount.”

Paying back four times the amount was the standard penalty for extortion under Roman law.

19:9 And Jesus replied, “Today, salvation has come to this house, because after all, he is a descendant of Abraham. 19:10 For the Human came to seek out and rescue the lost.”

The parable of faithful and unfaithful servants

19:11 Then Jesus decided to give a parable to those who had heard all of this, because they presumed the kingdom of God was about to appear since he was near Jerusalem. 19:12 And he said, “There was a certain person of noble birth who was about to go to a distant place to be crowned king and then return. 19:13 So he called in ten of his servants and gave them each the amount of money one might earn in three months. Then he told them, ‘Conduct business with this while I’m gone’. 19:14 But the citizens despised him and sent out a delegation after him to say, ‘We do not want this one to reign over us!’.

19:15 “But he was made king anyway, and when he returned he called in his

servants to whom he had given the money, to see what profit had been made. 19:16 The first one said, ‘Master, your original money has earned ten times as much!’

19:17 “ ‘Well done, good servant!’ he replied, ‘And since you were trustworthy with a little, you will be given jurisdiction over ten cities.’

19:18 “Then the second one said, ‘Master, your original money has earned five times as much!’

19:19 “And to this one he said, ‘You will be over five cities.’

19:20 “Then another one said, ‘Master, here’s your money. I kept it wrapped up and stored away, 19:21 because I was

afraid of you. You are a harsh person who makes a profit from other people's labor!'

19:22 " 'I will judge you according to the words from your own mouth!' retorted the master. 'So you knew I was harsh, making a profit from from other people's labor? 19:23 Then why didn't you put my money in the bank to at least earn interest for me?'

19:24 "Then to those standing by he said, 'Take the money from this one and give it to the one who earned ten times as much!'

19:25 " 'But master', they said, 'He already has ten!'

19:26 “ ‘Now I say to you: The one who has will be given more, but the one who does not have will have more taken away. 19:27 Now as for my enemies who didn’t want me to be king, bring them here and execute them in front of me!’ ”

Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem

19:28 After he said all this, Jesus went ahead into Jerusalem. 19:29 And as he approached Bethphage and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, he sent out two of his disciples with these instructions: 19:30 “Go straight to the village in front of you. You will find a colt hitched there. one that has never been ridden. Untie it and lead it here. 19:31

And if anyone wants to know why you untied it, tell them that the Master needs it.”

19:32 So the ones who were sent off went and found it just as Jesus had said. 19:33 They untied the colt, but its owners said to them, “What are you doing?” 19:34 And they replied, “The Master needs it.” 19:35 Then they led it to Jesus, laid their outer clothing on it, and sat Jesus on it.

19:36 Now as he went along, people spread clothing on the path in front of him. 19:37 And as he was almost to the descent from the Mount of Olives, everyone in the crowd full of disciples began to celebrate and praise God loudly for all the powerful things they

had seen: 19:38 “Blessed is the king bearing the name of the Master! Peace and honor in the presence of God!”

19:39 Then some of the Pharisees among the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

19:40 But Jesus replied, “I say to you, that if these people are silent, the stones themselves will shout!”

19:41 Then as he came closer and saw the city, he began to sob over it: 19:42 “If only you realized that in this day you could have had peace, yet now it is hidden from your eyes! 19:43 The day will come when your enemies will throw siege ramps all around you and press in on you from all sides. 19:44 They will destroy you along with your children,

and they will not leave one stone on top of another, all because you did not recognize the era in which you were to be set free!”

Jesus throws merchants out of the temple

19:45 Upon entering the temple compound, Jesus began to throw out the merchants 19:46 and said, “It is written: ‘My house will be a house of prayer, but you have turned it into a robbers’ hideout!’”

19:47 He was teaching every day in the temple compound. The high priests, scribes, and prominent people looked for a way to get rid of him, 19:48 but they

couldn’t figure out how, since the people were hanging on his every word.

Jesus’ authority challenged

20:1 So one day while Jesus was teaching the people in the temple compound and proclaiming the good news, the high priests, scribes, and elders were standing by. 20:2 And they said to him, “Tell us what gives you the right to do these things! Who gave you the authority?”

20:3 “I’ll answer your question if you’ll answer mine,” Jesus replied. 20:4 “John’s immersion— was it authorized by heaven or by people?”

20:5 Then they huddled together and said among themselves, “If we say ‘By

heaven', he will say 'Then why didn't you believe him?' 20:6 But if we say 'By people', then they will all lynch us since they are convinced that John is a prophet." 20:7 So they answered, "We don't know who authorized it."

20:8 And Jesus replied, "Then I'm not telling you who authorized me to do these things!"

The parable of the tenants

20:9 Then Jesus told the people a parable: "There was a person who planted a vineyard, who then leased it to tenant farmers and went traveling abroad for an extended period of time. 20:10 After he had been gone for a while, he dispatched a servant to the

tenants to collect produce from the vineyard. But the tenants beat up the servant and sent him back empty-handed. 20:11 So another servant was sent, but as with the first one, the tenants sent him away after beating and insulting him. 20:12 Then a third servant was sent, but they injured him and threw him out.

20:13 “So the vineyard owner said, ‘What can I do? I will send my own dear son; maybe they’ll show him some respect!’ 20:14 But when the tenants saw him, they huddled together and said, ‘This is the heir; let’s kill him so we will inherit the vineyard!’ 20:15 And they threw him outside of the vineyard and killed him. So what do you think the vineyard owner will do to them? 20:16

He will go there and put the tenants to death, and then lease the vineyard to others.“ And when the people heard this, they exclaimed, “May this never happen!”

20:17 Then Jesus looked at them and said, “What does this scripture mean? ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 20:18 All who trip over it will be shattered, and all upon whom it falls will be pulverized!’”

20:19 At that moment the scribes and high priests wanted to seize him and put him under arrest because they knew that the parable was aimed at them, but they feared the people.

Paying taxes to the government

20:20 So they put Jesus under surveillance and sent out spies posing as honest people, so that they could arrest him over something he might say and hand him over to the jurisdiction of the governor. 20:21 And they asked him, “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach accurately, and that you look beneath the surface to expose the truth, teaching the ways of God. 20:22 So is it all right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

20:23 But Jesus saw right through their ploy and said to them, 20:24 “Show me a coin, and tell me whose image and inscription are on it.”

“Caesar’s,” they answered.

20:25 Then Jesus replied, “So repay Caesar with what belongs to him, and repay God with what belongs to him.” 20:26 They were unable to get him to say anything justifying arrest in front of everyone, and his ingenious response silenced them.

For Jesus to answer ‘yes’ would anger the people for supporting Rome, and ‘no’ would make him guilty of sedition against Rome. A possible implication of Jesus’ answer would be, “If paying taxes to Caesar makes someone a friend of Rome, then why do you use and benefit from his money?”

Marriage and the resurrection

20:27 Next the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came up to Jesus with a question: 20:28 “Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if someone’s brother dies and leaves a widow but no children, he must marry the widow to produce children for him. 20:29 Now there were seven brothers, and the oldest died and left a widow but no children. 20:30 The same happened with the second brother, 20:31 then the third, and so on through all seven brothers. 20:32 Then finally the woman herself also died. 20:33 So in the resurrection, whose wife will she be, since she had been married to all seven?”

20:34 And Jesus replied, “In this life, people marry and are given in marriage. 20:35 But those deemed worthy of

eternal life and the resurrection of the dead do not marry and are not given in marriage. 20:36 Nor can they die, since they are like the angels; they are part of the resurrection because they belong to God.

20:37 “As for the rising of the dead, Moses alluded to it at the burning bush incident when he described the Master as ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’. 20:38 God is not the God of the dead but of the living, because everyone is alive from his perspective.”

20:39 “Well said, Teacher!” exclaimed some of the scribes. 20:40 And they dared not ask him any more questions.

Who is the Anointed One?

20:41 Then he said to them, “How can
they say that the Anointed One is the
descendant of David? 20:42 David said
himself in the book of praise songs, ‘My
Master said to my Master, “Sit here at
my right 20:43 until I make your enemies
your footstool.”’ 20:44 But how can
David call him ‘Master’ if he’s his
descendant?”

Warnings against hypocrisy and conceit

20:45 Now while all the people were
listening, Jesus said to his disciples,
20:46 “Beware of the scribes! They want
to walk around in long robes, and they
love to be greeted in the marketplaces,

to take the best seats in the synagogues, and to take the most prominent seats at banquets. 20:47 They confiscate the property of widows and make a big show of their long prayers. They will be judged severely!”

True giving

21:1 Then Jesus looked up and saw the rich tossing their offerings into the treasury. 21:2 But then he saw a poor widow toss in two tiny coins, 21:3 and he said, “Truly I tell you that this destitute widow has tossed in the greatest amount of all. 21:4 The others gave out of their abundance, but she gave out of her insufficiency, giving all she had to live on.”

The end times

21:5 Some of them were talking about the temple compound with its beautiful stonework and donated ornaments. 21:6 And Jesus said, “Everything you see here… the days will come when there won’t be one stone left on top of another; they will all be demolished!”

21:7 “Teacher,” they asked, “When will this happen, and what will be the sign to tell us when it’s about to begin?”

21:8 And he replied, “Stay sharp so that you are not mislead. For many will come in my name and say, ‘I am!’ and ‘The end is near!’, but don’t follow them. 21:9 Even when you start to hear about wars and chaos, don’t be afraid. These

things must happen first, but the end is not yet.” 21:10 And he added, “Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 21:11 There will be strong earthquakes, famines and plagues in various places, terrifying things, and significant signs in the heavens.

21:12 “But before all of this, they will arrest you and persecute you. They will hand you over to face tribunals and jail, and you will be led away to stand trial before kings and governors on my account. 21:13 Yet it will actually be an opportunity for you to give your testimony! 21:14 But the way to prepare yourself is not by rehearsing your defense, 21:15 for I will give you wise words that your opponents will not be

able to refute. 21:16 Even your parents, siblings, relatives, and friends will hand you over to be put to death; 21:17 everyone will hate you because of me. 21:18 But not a single hair on your head will be lost; 21:19 by your endurance you will secure your lives.

21:20 “Now when you see Jerusalem surrounded by military encampments, you will know that its ruin is near. 21:21 Then those in Judea must run away into the mountains: those in the city must evacuate, and those in the country must not go back to the city, 21:22 for this will be the fulfillment of what was written about the days of retribution. 21:23 But how awful it will be for women who are pregnant or nursing in those days! For there will be terrible stress on the world,

and great rage against the Judean people. 21:24 They will be killed in battle and taken captive to all the other nations. Then Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations until their time is up.

21:25 “Then there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. And on the earth, the nations will be filled with anguish and perplexity due to the roaring and turbulence of the sea. 21:26 People will be deathly afraid and apprehensive of what is coming upon the whole world, for the forces of the heavens will be shaken. 21:27 And then they will see the Human coming in a cloud with great power and majesty. 21:28 But when you see this all coming to pass, stand up

and raise your heads, for your rescue is coming!”

21:29 Then he gave them this parable: “Observe the fig tree, and all the other trees; 21:30 when they bud you know for sure that summer is near. 21:31 Likewise, when you see all these things happening, you can know that the kingdom of God is near. 21:32 I tell you truly that this generation will not pass away until all of this has happened. 21:33 The sky and earth may pass away, but my words will not. 21:34 But take care that your hearts are not weighed down with drunkenness and hangovers and the anxieties of daily life, so that this Day doesn’t spring like a trap on you, 21:35 as it will on everyone else on the earth. 21:36

Always be alert, praying that you will prevail and escape all that is about to happen, so you will be able to stand before the Human.”

21:37 Jesus taught in the temple compound each day, and he spent each night on the Mount of Olives. 21:38 People came to the temple compound early every morning to hear him.

Judas plots to betray Jesus

22:1 Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, also called the Passover, was approaching. 22:2 And the high priests and scribes were looking for a safe way to get Jesus killed, because they feared the people. 22:3 Then the Adversary entered into Judas of Kerioth (one of

the Twelve), 22:4 and he went out to confer with the high priests and commanders on how to hand Jesus over. 22:5 This pleased them immensely, so they all agreed to pay him. 22:6 He accepted the money and then watched for an opportunity to hand him over while the crowd was away.

The Last Supper

22:7 The day before the Feast arrived (when they were to sacrifice the Passover lamb), 22:8 Jesus sent out Peter and John with this task: “Go and prepare for us to eat the Passover meal.”

22:9 “Where should we prepare it?” they asked.

22:10 “As you enter the city you will meet someone carrying a pitcher of water,” he replied. “Follow that person to the house they enter. 22:11 Then say to the homeowner, ‘The Teacher wants to know where the reception room is, so he can eat the Passover meal with his disciples’. 22:12 That person will show you a large, furnished, upper-story room; prepare it there.” 22:13 And they went out and found everything as he had told them, so they prepared the Passover meal.

22:14 When the hour came, he reclined at the table along with his Ambassadors. 22:15 And he said to them, “I have greatly desired to eat this Passover meal with you before my time of suffering. 22:16 I tell you that I will not

eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

There is no indication that Jesus actually drank the wine or ate the bread.

22:17 When he received the cup he gave thanks and said, “Accept this and share it among yourselves. 22:18 I tell you that I will certainly not drink the fruit of the vine from now until the kingdom of God comes.” 22:19 And then he took bread and gave thanks and said, “This is my body being given up for you; do this to remember me.” 22:20 After dinner he did the same with the cup and said, “This is the cup of the new covenant, signed in my own blood, which is poured out on your behalf.

22:21 “But look! The hand of the one who will betray me is on the table with me. 22:22 For the Human will indeed go according to plan, but woe to the person by whom he is betrayed!” 22:23 Then they all began to argue among themselves as to which of them would turn out to commit this act.

22:24 Then a rivalry broke out among them, as to which of them was greater. 22:25 And Jesus said to them, “The kings of the other nations exercise mastery over them, and those wielding authority are called ‘benefactors’. 22:26 But you must not be like that. For the greater among you must become like the lesser, and the leader like the assistant. 22:27 Who is greater, the one reclining at the table or the one waiting

tables? Is it not the one reclining? Yet here I am among you as the one waiting tables.

22:28 “You are the ones who stood with me during my trials. 22:29 I now bequeath the kingdom to you, just as my Father bequeathed it to me, 22:30 so that you will eat and drink at my table in the kingdom, and you will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

22:31 “Simon, Simon, look! The Adversary had demanded that you be brought to trial to see what you’re made of, 22:32 but I have pleaded for you, that your faith will not fail. And when you turn back, reinforce your siblings.”

22:33 “Master,” objected Peter, “I am willing to go to jail or even be put to death with you!”

22:34 But Jesus replied, “I tell you, Peter, that the rooster will not crow today before you have completely renounced me three times!”

22:35 Then he said to them, “When I sent you out without wallet or luggage or an extra pair of sandals, did you lack anything?”

“Not a thing,” they replied.

22:36 “But now,” he said, “whoever has a wallet or luggage should use it. And if you need a sword, sell some clothing and buy it. 22:37 For I tell you that what is written must be fulfilled in me: ‘He

was considered to be among the lawless’. Yes, that which refers to me has reached its end.”

22:38 So they said, “Look, Master, we have two swords here!”

“That will do,” he replied.

Jesus prays before his arrest

22:39 Then he went out to the Mount of Olives as usual, and his disciples followed him. 22:40 When they reached their destination he said to them, “Pray that you will not be put to the test!” 22:41 Then he went about a stone’s throw away from them and knelt down to pray: 22:42 “Father, if you’re willing, take this

cup away from me. But do what you want, not what I want.” 22:43 22:44

Verses 43 and 44 (about an angel coming to help Jesus and him sweating profusely) are ancient but not authentic to Luke; see Bruce Metzger’s Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, p. 151.

22:45 Jesus got up from praying, and when he went back to where his disciples were, he found them asleep because of their great sorrow. 22:46 And he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray, so that you will not be put to the test!”

Jesus is arrested

22:47 But while he was still speaking, suddenly there was a crowd. One of the Twelve, called Judas, went ahead of them and approached Jesus to greet him warmly, 22:48 but Jesus said to him, “Will you really betray the Human with a kiss?”

22:49 When those around him saw what was about to happen, they said, “Master, should we attack them with swords?” 22:50 And one of them struck the high priest’s deputy, cutting off his right ear. 22:51 But Jesus said, “Enough of this!” Then he touched the ear and instantly healed him. 22:52 And he said to the high priests and temple compound officers and elders, “Am I a robber, that you come at me with swords and clubs? 22:53 Every day I

was with you in the temple compound, and you never arrested me. But this hour belongs to you, and to the jurisdiction of Darkness.”

Peter disowns Jesus

22:54 So they arrested him and took him into the house of the high priest, and Peter followed at a distance. 22:55 Someone had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard, and Peter sat with the others around it. 22:56 But a servant girl saw him sitting near the fire, and after watching him for a while she said, “This one was with him too!”

22:57 But Peter denied it: “Miss, I don’t know him.”

22:58 Then someone else saw him and said, “I swear, you are one of them!”

Again Peter denied it: “No, I am not!”

22:59 About an hour later yet another person said, “I’m telling you, he was with him, because he’s a Galilean!”

22:60 And Peter said again, “Listen, man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!”

As the words left his mouth, a rooster crowed. 22:61 Then Jesus turned around and looked at Peter, and he remembered what the Master had said: “Before the rooster crows today, you will completely renounce me three times!” 22:62 Peter then went outside, sobbing bitterly.

Jesus is beaten by the police

22:63 Then the men holding Jesus in
custody jeered at him and beat him up.
22:64 They blindfolded him and taunted
him, “Prophesy! Tell us who hit you!”
22:65 And they said many other
slanderous things to him.

Jesus testifies before the Sanhedrin

22:66 At daybreak the council of elders
of the people gathered, along with the
high priests and scribes, and they led
him away to the Sanhedrin.

22:67 “If you are the Anointed One,” they
said to him, “Tell us now.”

“No matter what I say, you will never believe me,” he replied. 22:68 “If I were the one asking you questions, you’d never respond. 22:69 But from now on, the Human will be seated at the right hand of the power of God!”

22:70 “So then, you are the God-Man?” they all said.

“Yes, you’ve said it yourself,” he replied.

22:71 Then they all said, “What need is there for any additional testimony? We have heard it ourselves from his own mouth!”

Jesus testifies before Pilate

23:1 So the whole crowd got up and took him to Pilate, 23:2 where they

began to accuse him: “We found this person subverting our nation and agitating against paying taxes to Caesar, and he says he is an anointed king.”

23:3 So Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Judeans?”

“Yes,” replied Jesus, “you’ve said it yourself.”

Pilate argues with the religious rulers about Jesus

23:4 Then Pilate said to the high priests and the crowd, “I find nothing incriminating against this person.”

23:5 But they were insistent: “He agitates the people with his teachings

all over Judea, from here to Galilee!”

23:6 When Pilate heard this, he wanted to find out if this person were a Galilean. 23:7 And once he found out that he was under the jurisdiction of Herod, he sent him to him, since he was in Jerusalem at the time.

Jesus is silent before Herod

23:8 Now when Herod found out about this he was very pleased, because for a long time he had wanted to meet Jesus, since he had heard so much about him. He especially wanted to see him perform a miracle. 23:9 But though he asked him many questions, Jesus did not respond. 23:10 Then the high priests and scribes who were standing there

began to accuse him vigorously. 23:11 Even Herod and his troops joined in the jeering, and then they dressed him up in fancy clothes and sent him back to Pilate. 23:12 (On that very day, Herod and Pilate became friends, though before this they were bitter enemies.)

Pilate argues with the mob about Jesus

23:13 Pilate then called together the high priests and rulers of the people, 23:14 and he said to them, “You brought this person to me under the charge of subversion, but let it be known that I examined him in your presence and found no basis for the charge. 23:15 In fact, neither did Herod, seeing that he sent him back to me. So my finding is

that he has done nothing worthy of the death penalty. 23:16 I will have him punished and then released." 23:17 Verse 17 (similar content to Matt. 27:15 and Mark 15:6) was a much later addition and thus not authentic to Luke.

23:18 Yet as one they all kept saying, "Away with this one! Release Bar-Abbas to us instead!" 23:19 (Bar-Abbas was in jail for rioting and murder.) 23:20 So Pilate informed them again that he wanted to release Jesus, 23:21 but they shouted back, "Crucify! Crucify him!" 23:22 Then for the third time Pilate said to them, "What crime has he committed? I have found no reason to charge him with a capital offense! I will punish him and then release him."

23:23 But they only shouted all the louder for him to be crucified, and they finally wore Pilate down. 23:24 So he granted their demand; 23:25 he released the one they asked for who had been in jail for rioting and murder, but handed Jesus over to them to do as they wished. 23:26 And as they led him away, they seized Simon the Cyrenian who was coming in from the fields, forcing him to carry the cross behind Jesus.

Jesus is crucified

23:27 There was a large crowd of people following Jesus, including women who grieved and mourned for him. 23:28 But Jesus turned around to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t weep for me but for yourselves and your

children. 23:29 For the days are coming when people will say, ‘Blessed are the infertile, the wombs that have never given birth, the breasts that have never nursed!’ 23:30 Then they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’, and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ 23:31 For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will they do when it dries up?”

23:32 Now two criminals were also taken away with him. 23:33 And when they reached the place called The Skull they crucified him, putting one criminal to his left and the other to his right. 23:34 Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t realize what they’re doing.” And they divided up his clothes and gambled for them.

23:35 The people stood and watched, and they as well as the rulers mocked him viciously: “He saved others, so let him save himself, if he is the Anointed One of God, the Chosen One!” 23:36 The soldiers jeered too, offering him their cheap wine 23:37 and saying, “If you are the king of the Judeans, save yourself!” 23:38 (There was an inscription above him with the words, “This is the King of the Judeans.”)

23:39 Even one of the criminals hanging there slandered him and said, “Aren’t you the Anointed One? Save yourself and us too!”

23:40 But the other one rebuked him and said, “Even now, do you not fear God, since you are under the same

judgment? 23:41 We are only getting what we deserved for our deeds, but this one has done nothing wrong.” 23:42 And he said to Jesus, “Remember me when you acquire your kingdom!”

23:43 “I tell you truly,” Jesus replied, “Today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Jesus dies

23:44 Now it was already around noon, and darkness covered the whole earth until three in the afternoon, 23:45 because the sun had gone dark. Then the curtain in the temple was ripped down the center, 23:46 and Jesus shouted out loudly, “Father, into your hands I present my spirit!” And with that, he breathed his last. 23:47 Now

when the Roman army captain saw all this, he gave honor to God and said, “This person had to have been righteous!” 23:48 And the crowd that had gathered to watch saw this too, and they turned away in shame. 23:49 But his close friends, including the women who followed him from Galilee, all stood at a distance observing all this.

Jesus is buried

23:50 Then came a man named Joseph, a member of the Council with a reputation as a fair civic benefactor, 23:51 who had not consented to the Council’s motives and deeds. He was from Arimathea, a city in Judea, and he had been anticipating the kingdom of God. 23:52 He approached Pilate and

asked for Jesus' body. 23:53 He took it down and wrapped it in linen, then placed it a new tomb carved out of rock.

23:54 It was Preparation Day and a sabbath was about to start. 23:55 The women who had come together from Galilee with Jesus had been following along, and they noted the tomb and how his body was placed in it. 23:56 Then they returned and prepared aromatic spices and perfumed oils.

Luke 23:56 and Mark 16:1 appear on the surface to contradict each other. But Luke does not say exactly when the spices were purchased and prepared, neither activity of which could be done on either the Passover Sabbath or the weekly Sabbath. It is clear in Luke that the women observed the burial on the

Preparation Day, but highly doubtful that they would have had time to purchase and prepare the spices in the very short time from then to the start of the Passover Sabbath. So since Mark's account has the women buying and preparing spices after the Sabbath, it appears that this happened between the Passover Sabbath (Wed. eve. to Thurs. eve.) and the weekly Sabbath (Fri. eve. to Sat. eve). The remainder of this verse has been moved to the beginning of the next chapter, for reasons explained in the footnote there.

24:1 At the earliest light of dawn on one of the sabbaths they carried their prepared aromatic spices to the tomb. 24:2 But the stone had been rolled away from it, 24:3 and when they entered they

did not find the body of Master Jesus. 24:4 While they stood there perplexed, suddenly two men in shining attire were standing there! 24:5 The women became terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. And the men said to them, “Why are you looking for the living among the dead? 24:6 He is not here but is risen! Remember how he told you this while you were all still in Galilee? 24:7 ‘The Human must be handed over to scoundrels and crucified, but on the third day he will arise.’ ” 24:8 And then they remembered what he had said.

24:9 So the women returned from the tomb and announced all these things to the Eleven and everyone else. 24:10 (Those who told these things to the

Ambassadors were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and their companions.) 24:11 But they dismissed it all as nonsense and didn't believe them. 24:12 Nevertheless, Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He bent over to look inside, and seeing only bandages there, he went away wondering what could have happened.

Jesus walks with two disciples to Emmaus

24:13 Now on that very same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. 24:14 They were talking to each other about all that had happened. 24:15 And while they were talking and arguing, Jesus himself

came near and went along with them, 24:16 but they were kept from recognizing him. 24:17 Then he said to them, “What is all this conversation about as you walk along?”

They stood still and looked down in deep disappointment. 24:18 One of them, named Cleopas, replied, “You must have just arrived in Jerusalem to not know what has been going on here in the last few days.”

24:19 “What happened?” Jesus asked.

“It’s all about Jesus of Nazareth,” they answered. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 24:20 But the high priests and our rulers handed him over to receive the death penalty, and they

crucified him. 24:21 We had hoped that he was to be the one to liberate Israel. And now we're into the third day since this all happened. 24:22 But some of our women told us something amazing. They went to the tomb at dawn 24:23 but found no body there, so they came and told us they had seen a vision of angels, who told them that he is alive! 24:24 So some of us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, though they did not see him."

24:25 And Jesus said to them, "You're clueless! You are reluctant to believe all that the prophets said. 24:26 Didn't the Anointed One have to suffer all these things before entering into his majesty?" 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all

the Prophets, he interpreted all the scriptures that wrote about him.

24:28 When they were about to enter the village, Jesus acted as though he would continue on his way. 24:29 But they twisted his arm and said, “We insist that you stay with us! It’s getting dark and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. 24:30 But as he reclined at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, and handed it to them. 24:31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight.

Jesus appears to the rest of the disciples

24:32 Then they exclaimed to each other, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us as he spoke with us along the way and shed light on the scriptures?” 24:33 So they got up at that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. The Eleven had convened a meeting with the others, 24:34 and they told them, “The Master has indeed arisen and appeared to Simon Peter!” 24:35 Then the two told what happened to them along the way, and how he revealed himself to them as he broke the bread.

24:36 While they were still saying these things, there was Jesus standing among them! “Greetings!” he said. 24:37 But in their fear and terror they presumed they were seeing a ghost. 24:38 So he said to them, “Why are you

so shaken up? And why do you jump to such conclusions? 24:39 Observe my hands and feet; it's me! Touch and examine me; a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, as you can clearly see that I have." 24:40 And having said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

24:41 But they still couldn't believe it because it seemed too good to be true. So he said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" 24:42 And they handed him some grilled fish, 24:43 which he took and ate in front of them. 24:44 Then he said to them, "This is what I was talking about when I was still with you; everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Praise Songs had to be fulfilled."

24:45 Then he opened their minds to
understand the scriptures, 24:46 and he
said to them, “It is written that the
Anointed One must suffer and then rise
up from the dead the third day. 24:47
Then proclamation is to be made on his
behalf, starting in Jerusalem, for people
of all nations to turn to God so they can
be cleared of all charges against them.
24:48 You are witnesses of these things.
24:49 Now I will certainly send you what
my Father promised, but you must stay
in the city until you are clothed with
power from above.”

Jesus ascends to heaven

24:50 When he had led them out as far
as Bethany, he raised his hands and
blessed them. 24:51 And while he was

doing this he put some distance between himself and them, and then he was lifted up into the sky. 24:52 They worshiped him and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 24:53 and they praised God every day in the temple compound.

John

The Word becomes human

1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and
the Word resided with God, and the
Word was God; 1:2 he was there all
along. 1:3 Everything that exists is
because of him, and not one thing
exists that he didn't make. 1:4 That
which came into being in him was life,
and this life was the light of people. 1:5
This light is shining into the darkness,
and the darkness did not grasp it.

1:6 Along came someone named John,
who was commissioned by God. 1:7 His

assignment was to serve as a witness to the Light so that everyone could believe through his testimony. 1:8 He was not the Light himself, but only came as a witness to it.

1:9 This was the true Light which illuminates every person coming into the world. 1:10 But even though he came into the world he made, it didn't recognize him; 1:11 he came to his own, but they didn't accept him. 1:12 Yet to those who accepted him by putting their trust in him, he granted the privilege of becoming children of God.

Lit. "putting their trust in his name," is to accept all that is true about him.

1:13 These were not children born of a woman, or the will of the flesh or a husband, but generated by God. 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his home among us, and we observed his majesty— the majesty of the Unique One who is with the Father, full of favor and truth.

The Forerunner’s message

1:15 John testified about him and has shouted out, “This is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘The one coming after me is really in front of me, because he existed before me.’ ” 1:16 So we all received limitless favor from him, 1:17 since though the law was given through Moses, favor and truth came through Jesus the Anointed One. 1:18 Though no one has ever seen God, he is now disclosed by the Unique God, who is the closest to the Father.

1:19 This is the testimony John gave when the Judeans in Jerusalem sent out priests and Levites to interrogate him:

“Who are you?”

1:20 And he freely admitted: “I am not the Anointed One.”

1:21 So they asked him: “Then who are you— Elijah?”

And he says, “I am not.”

“Are you The Prophet?”

And he answered, “No.”

1:22 So they said, “Then who are you? Tell us what you say about yourself, so we have something to report to those

who sent us.” 1:23 He replied, “I am ‘the voice of one shouting in the desert, “Straighten the road of the Master”’, according to what the prophet Isaiah said.”

1:24 Now those who had been sent to him were Pharisees. 1:25 And they asked him, “Then why are you immersing, if you are not the Anointed One, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” 1:26 John replied, “I immerse with water, but you don’t realize that 1:27 the one coming after me has been standing among you. I am not even worthy to untie his shoes!” 1:28 All this happened in Bethany, on the other side of the Jordan River where John was immersing.

The Forerunner identifies the Lamb of God

1:29 The next day John saw Jesus
coming toward him and said, “Look!
The Lamb of God, the one taking away
the sin of the whole world! 1:30 This is
the one I was talking about when I said,
‘After me will come a man who has
surpassed me, because he preceded
me.’ 1:31 And though I didn’t even
recognize him, the very purpose I came
immersing in water was to make him
known to Israel.”

1:32 John continued his testimony: “For
I have seen the Spirit come down from
the sky like a dove and remain on him.
1:33 And I had not recognized him, but
the one who sent me to immerse in

water told me, ‘The one you see the Spirit land on is the one who immerses in the Holy Spirit.’ 1:34 I have seen this, so I testified that this is the God-Man.”

The Forerunner’s disciples follow Jesus instead

1:35 The next day John and two of his disciples were there again, 1:36 and when they saw Jesus walking around, John said “Look, the Lamb of God!” 1:37 The two disciples heard him say this and became followers of Jesus. 1:38 Now Jesus turned around and observed them following him so he asked, “What are you looking for?”

“Rabbi” (which is translated “teacher”), they replied, “where are you staying?”

1:39 “Come and you’ll see.” said Jesus. They came and saw where he was staying, and remained with him for the day. It was about 4 p.m.

1:40 Andrew, brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. 1:41 The first thing he did was to find his own brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah!” (which is translated “Anointed One”). 1:42 He led him to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon, son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated “Peter”). Peter and Cephas mean “rock.”

More follow Jesus

1:43 The next day Jesus decided to go into Galilee, where he found Philip and told him to follow him. 1:44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the same city as Andrew and Peter. 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and said, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law and the Prophets: Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth.”

1:46 And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come from Nazareth?”

“Come and see,” replied Philip.

1:47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said, “Now there’s a genuine Israelite, in whom there is no treachery.”

1:48 “How do you know me?” asked Nathanael.

Jesus replied, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

1:49 “Rabbi, you are the God-Man!” Nathanael exclaimed. “You are the King of Israel!”

1:50 And Jesus replied, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree; you will be seeing greater things than that!” 1:51 He added, “Very truly I tell you all, you will be seeing the sky opened up and the angels of God ascending and descending to and from the Human.”

Jesus turns water into wine

2:1 Now on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, to which Jesus, his mother, 2:2 and his disciples were invited. 2:3 When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother said to him, "They are out of wine."

2:4 But Jesus said to her, "What does that have to do with me, dear woman? My time has not yet come."

2:5 But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

2:6 Now there were six stone water jars there for use in Judean cleansing rituals, each with a capacity of 16 to 27 gallons. 2:7 Jesus told them to fill up the jars to the brim with water, 2:8 and then he told them to dip some out and take it to the master of ceremonies, so they

did. 2:9 When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that had been turned into wine, not knowing its origin (though the servants who had dipped it out knew), he summoned the bridegroom 2:10 and said, “Everyone else serves the best wine first and then brings out the cheap wine after the guests are drunk, but you have saved the best for last!”

2:11 This was the first of the miracles Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. It revealed his majesty, and his disciples put their trust in him. 2:12 Afterward he went down into Capernaum, along with his mother, siblings, and disciples, where they remained for several days.

Jesus throws merchants out of the temple

2:13 It was near the Passover of the Judeans, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2:14 In the temple compound he found brokers and merchants selling oxen, sheep, and doves. 2:15 Making a whip out of ropes, he threw everyone out of the temple compound, including the animals. He upended the brokers' tables, scattering their coins, 2:16 and said to those selling doves, "Get these things out of here! Do not turn my Father's house into a merchant's house!" 2:17 Then his disciples remembered that it was written, "Passion for your house will consume me."

Jesus predicts his resurrection

2:18 Then the Judeans demanded,
“What is the meaning of this?”

2:19 Jesus responded, “You will destroy
this temple, but in three days I will put it
up again.”

2:20 The Judeans retorted, “It took forty-
six years to build this temple,
Or “This temple has stood for forty-six years”
and you are going to put it up in three
days!?” 2:21 But he was talking about
the temple of his body. 2:22 When he
was awakened from the dead, his
disciples remembered he said this, and

they believed the scripture and what Jesus said.

2:23 Now while Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Passover festival, many accepted him because of the miracles they saw him do. 2:24 But Jesus did not put much stock in them himself, knowing how people are. 2:25 He needed no one's testimony about anyone since he knew what was in a person.

Jesus teaches Nicodemus

3:1 Now there was an individual from among the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Judeans. 3:2 He came to Jesus by night and said, "Rabbi, we perceive that you are a

teacher from God, for no one could do the miracles you do unless God were with them.”

3:3 Jesus answered, “I tell you very truly that if anyone is not born from above, they are unable to recognize the kingdom of God.”

3:4 Nicodemus says, “How can an old person be born again? Surely no one is able to enter their mother’s womb a second time and be born!”

3:5 Jesus answered, “I tell you very truly, if anyone is not born of both water and the Spirit, they cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 3:6 That which is generated by the flesh is flesh, and that which is generated by the spirit is spirit. 3:7 You should not be puzzled about my

telling you that you have to be born from above. 3:8 The wind blows wherever it chooses and you hear the sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So it is with everyone generated by the Spirit."

3:9 "How can this happen?" asked Nicodemas.

3:10 Jesus replied, "How can you be a teacher of Israel and not know these things? 3:11 I tell you very truly that we speak of what we understand, and we testify of what we have seen, but none of you are accepting our testimony. 3:12 If I have spoken to you of earthly things and none of you believe, how will any of you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 3:13 And no one has ascended

into heaven except the one who descended from there: the Human.

3:14 “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so also must the Human be lifted up, 3:15 so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life. 3:16 Likewise, since God loved the world, he also gave his unique Son so that everyone who would trust in him would not be destroyed but have eternal life. 3:17 For God did not dispatch his son into the world to pass judgment on it, but to save it through him. 3:18 The one putting trust in him is not condemned, but the one not trusting is condemned already for rejecting the name of the only God-Man.

3:19 “Now this is the verdict: the Light has come into the world, but people preferred the shadows to the Light, because their actions were evil. 3:20 For everyone who practices evil hates the Light and does not come toward it or their actions would be exposed. 3:21 Yet the one with the truth comes toward the Light so their actions can be revealed, since they were performed to honor God.”

The Forerunner testifies about Jesus again

3:22 After this Jesus and his disciples came into the region of Judea, and he stayed with them and immersed people. 3:23 Now John was also immersing in Aenon near Salim, for there was plenty

of water, and people came along to be immersed. 3:24 (This was before John was thrown into prison.)

3:25 Then there was a dispute between John's disciples and a Judean about cleansing. 3:26 So they came to John and said, "Rabbi, the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan, the one you testified about… Look! He is immersing and everyone is going to him."

3:27 John replied, "No one can receive anything without it being given from heaven. 3:28 You yourselves have testified that I said I am not the Anointed One but only the one commissioned to precede him. 3:29 It is the bridegroom who has the bride, yet

the bridegroom's friend, who has been waiting, is overjoyed to hear his voice. This is the joy I have, and it is now complete. 3:30 That One must become greater, while it is my place to become lesser.

3:31 "The one coming from above is above all. The one of the earth is of the earth and speaks from the earth, but the one coming from heaven is above all. 3:32 He testifies about what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. 3:33 But the one accepting it certifies that God is true. 3:34 For the one that God commissions speaks God's declarations, because God gives the Spirit without limit. 3:35 The Father loves the Son and has given everything into his hand. 3:36 The one putting trust

in the Son has eternal life, yet the one hostile to the Son shall not see life; only the rage of God is left to that one.”

The first evangelist

4:1 Now since Jesus knew that the Pharisees heard he was confirming and immersing more disciples than John 4:2 (though it wasn’t actually Jesus doing the immersing, but his disciples), 4:3 he left Judea and returned to Galilee. 4:4 But this required him to pass through Samaria, 4:5 and he came into one of their cities called Sychar, near the parcel of land Jacob gave his son Joseph. 4:6 Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

4:7 A woman came out of Samaria to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” 4:8 (His disciples had gone into the city to buy food.)

4:9 So she said to him, “What’s with a Judean like you asking a Samaritan woman like me for a drink?” (Judeans don’t associate with Samaritans.)

4:10 Jesus answered, “If you only knew of the gift of God and who it is that is asking you for a drink! Then you would ask him and he would give you living water.”

4:11 She replied, “Sir, you don’t even have a bucket and the well is deep. Where would you get this living water? 4:12 You are not greater than our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well,

and from which he, his children, and his livestock were nourished.”

4:13 Jesus responded, “Everyone who drinks this water will thirst again. 4:14 But whoever may drink of the water I will give them will absolutely never thirst again; the water I give will be like a perpetual well filled with eternal life.”

4:15 The woman then asked him directly, “Sir, give me this kind of water so I won’t thirst again and will no longer have to come through here to draw water.”

4:16 “Go get your husband and come back here,” said Jesus.

4:17 The woman answered, “I have no husband.”

So Jesus said, “You have well said that you have no husband. 4:18 You’ve had five men, and the one you have now isn’t your husband. Your statement is quite true.”

4:19 So the woman said, “Sir, I can tell you’re a prophet. 4:20 Our ancestors worshiped in this mountain, but you Judeans say that only Jerusalem is the place to worship.”

4:21 “Trust me, dear woman,” replied Jesus. “The time is coming when none of you will worship the Father in this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 4:22 Your people worship in ignorance, but we worship in understanding, because The Rescuer comes from the Judeans. 4:23 Yet the time is coming— in fact, it’s

already upon us— when real worshipers will worship the Father genuinely and spiritually, since they are the kind the Father searches for. 4:24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must do so genuinely and spiritually."

4:25 The woman responded, "I understand that the Anointed One is coming (we say Messiah, you say Christ). And when he does, he will explain everything completely."

4:26 Then Jesus said, "He's the one talking to you!"

4:27 Just then his disciples arrived, and they were surprised he was talking with a woman. But no one asked what he wanted or why he was talking with her.

4:28 Then the woman left her water jar
and went into the city to tell the people,
4:29 “Come and see someone who told
me everything I ever did! Could this be
the Anointed One?” 4:30 So they left the
city and went out to him.

4:31 In the meantime his disciples urged
him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

4:32 But he replied, “I have food to eat
that you don’t know about.”

4:33 The disciples said to each other,
“You didn’t bring him anything to eat,
did you?”

4:34 So Jesus told them, “My food is to
do the will of the one who sent me and
finish the job. 4:35 Don’t people say that
it is still four months till the harvest

comes? But look! Open your eyes and examine the countryside; the fields are ready for harvest. 4:36 The harvester is already being paid and gathering the produce of eternal life, so that both the planter and the harvester may celebrate together. 4:37 As the saying goes, 'One plants and another harvests'. 4:38 I commissioned you to harvest that which none of you worked for, so that you share in the labor of others."

4:39 Now many of the Samaritans of that city put their trust in him because of what the woman said when she testified, "He told me everything I ever did." 4:40 When the Samaritans came to him they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed for two days. 4:41 And many more believed because of what

he said. 4:42 They told the woman, “We no longer believe only because of what you told us, but also because of what we ourselves have heard him say. We can see that this really is the Savior of the world!”

Jesus heals the royal official’s son

4:43 After those two days he left there and went back into Galilee. 4:44 For Jesus himself testified that a prophet gets no respect in their hometown. 4:45 Yet when he got there the Galileans accepted him, having seen all he did in Jerusalem during the festival, where they had also come.

4:46 Jesus returned to Cana of Galilee, where he had made the water into wine. There was a certain royal official in Capernaum, whose son was sick. 4:47 Upon hearing that Jesus arrived from Judea into Galilee, the official went to him and asked that he would go down to heal his son, who was near death.

4:48 Jesus said to him, “You people have no faith unless you see amazing miracles.”

4:49 But the official pleaded, “Sir, please come before my little one dies!”

4:50 So Jesus said, “On you way! Your son lives.”

The person believed what Jesus told him and went. 4:51 On the way his

servants met up with him and said, “Your child is alive!” 4:52 He asked them what hour it was when he got better, and they told him, “The fever left him yesterday a little past noon.” 4:53 Then the father realized that this was when Jesus said “Your son lives.” And so he and his entire household believed. 4:54 This was the second miracle Jesus did when he came out of Judea into Galilee.

Jesus heals the invalid at the pool

5:1 After that there was a festival of the Judeans, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 5:2 Now there is a pool with five porticoes in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate, which in Hebrew is called

Bethzatha. 5:3 5:4

Verses 3 and 4 are a comment added by scribes, not inspired scripture.

5:5 Now a certain person was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. 5:6 Jesus, seeing this one lying down and knowing he had been there a long time, said to him, “I assume you want to be healed.”

5:7 The disabled one replied, “Sir, I have no one to help me into the water whenever it is disturbed. Before I can get in, someone else gets there first.”

5:8 Jesus told him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk!” 5:9 Then immediately the person was healed, and he picked up his mat and walked around. This was on a Sabbath day.

5:10 Then the Judeans said to the one who was healed, “This is a Sabbath, and you are not permitted to pick up your mat!”

5:11 But he answered, “The one who healed me is the one who told me to pick up my mat and walk.”

5:12 Then they asked him, “Who told you this?” 5:13 But the one who was healed didn’t see who it was, because Jesus had slipped away into the crowd.

The Judean leaders begin to oppose Jesus

5:14 After this, Jesus found him in the temple compound and said to him, “Look at you— you have been healed.

Be sure not to sin any more, or else something worse may happen to you.” 5:15 The person went away and informed the Judeans that Jesus was the one who healed him. 5:16 And for this reason the Judeans hounded Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath.

5:17 Yet Jesus answered them, “My Father is at work, and so am I.” 5:18 This made the Judeans all the more determined to kill him, since he not only violated the Sabbath but also called God his father, making himself the same as God.

The Son bears the authority of the Father

5:19 Then Jesus responded to them, “I tell you all very truly that the Son can do nothing of his own accord but only that which he sees the Father doing, because whatever the Father does is what the Son also does. 5:20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. And he will show him greater and more amazing things than these: 5:21 Just as the Father raises the dead back to life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he chooses. 5:22 The Father is not judging anyone but has instead handed it all over to the Son, 5:23 so that all might honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Conversely, those who dishonor the Son dishonor the Father who sent him.

5:24 “I tell you all very truly that the one who hears what I say and puts trust in the one sending me has eternal life; instead of coming into judgment they have moved out of death and into life. 5:25 I tell you that an hour is coming— and in fact is upon us— when the dead will hear the voice of the God-Man and come to life. 5:26 For just as the Father owns life, so also the Son owns life. 5:27 The Father gives him authority to judge, seeing that he is a human being.

5:28 “Don’t be surprised at this, since the hour is coming when all those in their graves will hear his voice; 5:29 those who do good things will be raised into life, but those practicing foul things will be raised into judgment. 5:30 I can do nothing of my own accord; I only

judge as I am told. My judgment is impartial due to the fact that I am not following my own agenda but that of the one who sent me.

5:31 “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid. 5:32 But there is another who vouches for me, and I have perceived that his testimony is true. 5:33 You sent people to John and he served as a witness to the truth. 5:34 Yet I am not getting my testimony from people, but I tell you these things so you can be saved. 5:35 John was a little candle that burned and shined, and for a short time you basked in his light. 5:36 Yet my testimony is greater than his, because the tasks the Father has given me to complete— the very things I am

doing— are evidence that the Father has commissioned me.

5:37 “And the one sending me— the Father— has testified about me, though you have neither heard his voice nor seen his appearance 5:38 and do not retain his Word, because you have not believed the one he commissioned. 5:39 You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, yet those very scriptures are a witness to me. 5:40 You refuse to come to me so you could have life.

5:41 “I don’t get my honor from people; 5:42 but I know you all, and the love of God is not in you. 5:43 I have come with the authority of my Father and you won’t accept me, but if someone comes

by their own authority you'll accept them. 5:44 How can you believe, when your honor comes from each other instead of reaching for the honor that only comes from God? 5:45 Do not suppose that I will be your accuser before the Father; your accuser will be none other than Moses, the one upon whom you've pinned all your hopes. 5:46 For if you had believed Moses you'd believe me, since I'm the one he wrote about. 5:47 So if you don't believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I declare?"

Jesus feeds five thousand

6:1 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (also called Tiberias). 6:2 Now a very large

crowd followed him there, since they had seen the miracles he had performed on the disabled. 6:3 So he went up into the mountain and sat with his disciples. 6:4 This was just prior to the Passover festival of the Judeans.

6:5 When Jesus saw the huge crowd coming toward him, he asked Philip, “Where can we buy bread for them to eat?” 6:6 (He said this to test him, since he already had in mind what he was going to do.)

6:7 “Eight month’s wages wouldn’t be enough to give each person a bite!” answered Philip.

6:8 One of his disciples (Simon Peter’s brother Andrew) said to him, 6:9 “Here is someone with five barley loaves and

two little fish, but what good are they for so many?”

6:10 But Jesus said, “Have the people seat themselves for a meal.” There was plenty of grass in that area, so the people reclined. The number of men was about five thousand. 6:11 Then he took the bread, gave thanks, and distributed it to them. It was the same with the fish; 6:12 they got as much as they wanted. When everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, “Gather up the leftover pieces so that nothing is wasted.” 6:13 They did so and were able to stuff twelve wicker baskets with the leftover pieces of the five loaves.

6:14 Seeing the miracle Jesus did, the people said, “Truly this is the Prophet,

the Coming One!” 6:15 Then Jesus, knowing that they were about to come and seize him in order to make him king, withdrew into the mountain by himself.

Jesus walks on water

6:16 Now as evening approached, his disciples went down to the sea. 6:17 They boarded a ship and went across the sea to Capernaum. Darkness had already come but Jesus had not yet joined them, 6:18 and the sea was also churned up due to a strong wind. 6:19 When they had rowed about three miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea, approaching the ship, and they were terrified. 6:20 But Jesus said, “It’s me, don’t be afraid!” 6:21 They intended

to take him on board, but suddenly they found themselves at their destination.

The crowd seeks Jesus for the wrong reasons

6:22 The next day the crowd was standing on the other side of the sea. They knew that there had only been one other boat there, and Jesus did not leave with his disciples; they had gone off alone. 6:23 But boats from Tiberias arrived near the place where they had eaten the bread for which the Master had given thanks. 6:24 So, realizing that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and set off for Capernaum to look for Jesus.

6:25 Finding him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

6:26 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, you didn’t come looking for me because of the miracles you saw, but because you filled yourselves with bread. 6:27 Don’t work for food that spoils, but food that endures into eternal life. This is what The Human will give you, the one certified by the Father.”

6:28 Then they asked him, “What can we do, so that we are performing the work God wants from us?”

6:29 Jesus answered, “This is what God wants you to do: to put your trust into the one he commissioned.”

6:30 Then they said to him, “So then, what miracle will you do, so we can see it and believe you? What will you do? 6:31 Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness just as it is written, ‘Out of the sky he gave them bread to eat.’ ”

6:32 Jesus replied, “I tell you very truly, it wasn’t Moses who gave you bread from the sky, but my Father who has given you true bread from heaven. 6:33 For the Bread of God is the one descending from heaven and giving eternal life to the world.”

6:34 So they said to him, “Sir, keep on giving us this bread!”

6:35 But Jesus responded, “I am the Bread of Life; whoever comes to me will absolutely never go hungry, and

whoever puts their trust in me will never go thirsty. 6:36 But though I told you that and you've seen what I've done, you still don't believe.

6:37 "All that the Father gives me will reach me; I will absolutely not throw out any that come toward me. 6:38 The reason I came down from heaven was not to do my own will but that of the one who sent me. 6:39 And this is what he wants: that I would not lose one of them, but raise them up in the last day. 6:40 My Father's will is that all who look to the Son and put their trust in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up in the last day."

Jesus is belittled by his hometown

6:41 Then the Judeans grumbled about him because he said “I am the Bread of Life, the one coming down from heaven.” 6:42 So they said, “Isn’t this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he say that he came down from heaven?”

6:43 Jesus replied, “Stop grumbling among yourselves! 6:44 No one can come to me without being pulled by the Father who commissioned me, and I will raise them up in the last day. 6:45 It has been written by the prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who hears and learns from the Father comes toward me. 6:46 The Father has been seen by no one except the one from God.

Jesus talks over their heads

6:47 “I tell you very truly, that the one who believes has eternal life. 6:48 I am the Bread of Life. 6:49 Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness and died, 6:50 but anyone who eats this Bread from heaven will not die. 6:51 I am the living Bread from heaven; whoever eats this Bread will live forever. Now what I mean by ’bread‘ is my flesh, which I will give up so that the world may live.”

6:52 Then the Judeans argued with each other and said, “How can he give us his flesh to eat?”

6:53 So Jesus responded, “I tell you very truly that if you do not consume the flesh and blood of the Human, you have

no life in yourselves. 6:54 The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that one up at the last day, 6:55 for my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 6:56 The one who consumes my flesh and blood remains in me, and I remain in that one.

6:57 “Just as the Father who commissioned me lives, I too live because of him. In the same way, the one consuming me will live because of me. 6:58 This is the Bread that came down from heaven; unlike our ancestors who ate and died, the one consuming this Bread will live forever.”

Some begin to reject Jesus

6:59 He said these things while teaching in a meeting place in Capernaum. 6:60 But upon hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a harsh teaching! Who can listen to it?”

6:61 Now Jesus, perceiving that his disciples were grumbling about this, asked them, “Is this tripping you up? 6:62 What if you were to watch the Human going up to where he was at first? 6:63 The Spirit is what gives life; the flesh is of no advantage. The things I have declared to you are spirit and life. 6:64 But there are some among you who do not believe.” Now Jesus knew from the beginning who the unbelievers were, as well as who would betray him. 6:65 So he continued, “Therefore I have

stated that no one could come to me without the Father granting it to them."

6:66 At this, many of his disciples turned away and no longer followed him. 6:67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Please tell me you don't want to leave too!"

6:68 Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom would we turn? You have the pronouncements of eternal life! 6:69 We trust you and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."

6:70 Jesus replied to them all, "Haven't I chosen you Twelve? Yet one of you is a slanderer!" 6:71 (He was referring to Judas, son of Simon of Kerioth. Though one of the Twelve, he intended to betray Jesus.)

Jesus goes secretly to the Festival of Tents

7:1 After that, Jesus went about in Galilee instead of Judea, since the Judeans intended to kill him. 7:2 Now the Judeans' Festival of Tents was approaching, 7:3 so his siblings said to him, "If you want to be famous, you'll have to go into Judea so your disciples can see what you're doing. 7:4 After all, people don't stay hidden if they want publicity. If you're going to do these things, show the world!" 7:5 (His own siblings didn't believe him.)

7:6 But Jesus responded, "My time has not yet come, but for you, any time will do. 7:7 The world can't hate you, but it hates me because I am testifying that it

does evil. 7:8 So you go on up to the festival; I'm not going to this one because it isn't my time." 7:9 After he said this, he remained in Galilee. 7:10 Yet after his siblings left he decided to go anyway, but secretly so no one would know.

7:11 Now the Judeans were looking for him at the festival and saying "Where is he?" 7:12 And there was disagreement about him in the crowd, with some saying "He is good" and others saying "No, he is misleading people." 7:13 Yet no one talked about him openly for fear of the Judeans.

Jesus teaches publicly at the festival

7:14 It was already midway through the festival when Jesus went up into the temple compound and began to teach. 7:15 But the Judeans were astounded and said, “How did he learn so much without an education?”

7:16 Jesus answered, “This teaching is not mine but is from the one who sent me. 7:17 Whoever chooses to do what he says will know whether my teaching is from God or only from me. 7:18 Those who only want to honor themselves speak on their own behalf, but those who want to honor the one who sent them are true; there is no injustice in them. 7:19 Hasn’t Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you obeys it! Why do you intend to kill me?”

7:20 But the crowd retorted, “You’re possessed! Who wants to kill you?”

7:21 Jesus said, “I do one miracle on a Sabbath and you all lose your minds! 7:22 Now Moses gave you the rite of circumcision (though it wasn’t actually from Moses but the ancestors), yet you will even circumcise someone on a Sabbath. 7:23 But though you will do this to avoid violating the law of Moses, you are enraged at me for healing someone on a Sabbath!

Jesus is evidently referring to the time he healed the disabled person on the Sabbath; see ch. 5.

7:24 Don’t judge by appearances; instead, reach the proper verdict.”

Growing opposition to Jesus

7:25 Then some of the residents of Jerusalem said, “Isn’t this the one they intend to kill? 7:26 But look! He speaks boldly and they say nothing to him. Have the authorities realized that this really is the Anointed One? 7:27 On the other hand, we know where this one is from, but when the Anointed One comes, no one knows for sure where he comes from.”

7:28 So then Jesus, who was teaching in the temple compound, shouted out, “Yes, you know me and where I’m from, yet I have not come of my own accord. But the one sending me is true. You do not know him, 7:29 but I do, because he

commissioned me and so I came.” 7:30 At this they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him because his time had not yet come.

7:31 Many in the crowd put their trust in him and said, “When the Anointed One comes, he will do no more miracles than this one!” 7:32 Now the Pharisees heard what the crowd was saying about him, so the high priests and Pharisees dispatched deputies to arrest him. 7:33 Then Jesus said, “I’ll only be with you for a short time now, and then I must return to the one who sent me. 7:34 You will all look for me but won’t find me, because where I am you cannot follow.”

7:35 Then the Judeans said to themselves, “Where does he intend to

go, that we cannot follow him? Surely he doesn't mean to go out to our people scattered among the Greeks and teach the Greeks! 7:36 And what does he mean by saying 'You will all look for me but won't find me, because where I am you cannot follow'?"

7:37 Now on the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood up and shouted, "Let whoever is thirsty come to me and drink! 7:38 The one who puts their trust in me will have, as scripture says, 'living waters flowing out of them'." 7:39 Yet he was speaking of the Spirit that those who would put trust in him would receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been exalted.

7:40 Some in the crowd heard these things and said, “Truly, this is the Prophet!” 7:41 Others said, “This is the Anointed One,” but some replied, “The Anointed One doesn’t come from Galilee. 7:42 Don’t the scriptures say that the he would be of the line of David, and from his city of Bethlehem?” 7:43 So a rift developed in the crowd because of him. 7:44 Some even wanted to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him.

7:45 Then the deputies returned to the high priests and Pharisees, who demanded, “Why didn’t you bring him here?”

7:46 “No one ever spoke like this person!” they answered.

7:47 “Don’t tell us you’re deceived too!”
retorted the Pharisees. 7:48 “None of
the authorities or Pharisees trusts in
him, 7:49 but this ignorant crowd is
under a curse!”

7:50 Nicodemus, the one who had come
to Jesus earlier and was one of the
Pharisees, said, 7:51 “No law of ours
judges someone before hearing their
testimony and examining the evidence.”

7:52 “Don’t tell us you’re from Galilee
too!” they retorted. “Do your own
investigation and you’ll see that no
prophet is called out of Galilee.” 7:53
Then they all went to their homes.

Jesus confronts the hypocrisy of the Pharisees

8:1 Jesus went up into the Mount of Olives, 8:2 and then at dawn the next day he returned to the temple compound. All the people came toward him, so he sat down to teach them.

8:3 Now the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery. They made her stand in front of them 8:4 and then said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the very act of adultery. 8:5 The law Moses gave us commands that such people are to be put to death by stoning. What do you say?”

8:6 Of course they only said this to test him, so they would have something to charge him with. So Jesus stooped down and wrote something in the dirt

with his finger. 8:7 Since they kept on demanding an answer, he stood up and replied, “Let the sinless one among you throw the first stone!” 8:8 He stooped down again to write on the ground. 8:9 But those listening went away one by one, beginning with the elders, and he was left alone, with the woman standing there.

8:10 Standing up again, Jesus asked her, “Dear woman, where are they? Is no one condemning you?”

8:11 “Not one, sir,” she replied.

“Neither do I condemn you,” said Jesus. “Go your way, but from now on you must stop sinning!”

Jesus is challenged about his Father

8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them: “I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will in no way walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

8:13 Then the Pharisees said to him, “You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is invalid!”

8:14 Jesus responded, “Even if I am testifying on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, because I know where I came from and where I’m going, even though you don’t. 8:15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 8:16 But even if I judge, my judgment is right, for I am not alone; I

am with the Father who sent me. 8:17 Now in this law of yours it has been written that the testimony of two people is valid. 8:18 I am the one witnessing on my own behalf, but the Father who sent me is also testifying about me.”

8:19 “So where is your father?” they demanded.

Jesus replied, “You have understood neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you’d know my Father as well.” 8:20 He said all this while he was teaching in the part of the temple compound where the treasury was. And no one arrested him because his hour had not yet come.

8:21 Then he said to them again, “I am going away and you will look for me.

Yet you will die in your sin because you cannot come where I'm going."

8:22 So the Judeans asked each other, "He won't kill himself, will he, seeing that he says 'You can't come where I'm going'?"

8:23 "You are from below, but I am from above," Jesus told them. "You are from the world but I am not. 8:24 That is what I meant by saying you will die in your sins, for if you never trust that I am, you certainly will die in your sins."

8:25 They finally asked him, "Who are you?"

"Exactly what I've been saying all along," Jesus replied. 8:26 "I have much to say to you and by which to judge

you. But the one sending me is true, and what he tells me I pass along to the world.” 8:27 They did not know that he was talking about the Father. 8:28 So Jesus said to them again, “When you have lifted up the Human to be executed , then you will know who I am. I do nothing of my own accord, but only speak as the Father instructs me. 8:29 And the one who sends me is with me. He does not leave me alone, because I’m always doing what pleases him.”

8:30 Many put their trust in him as he spoke. 8:31 So Jesus said to the Judeans who believed, “If you keep adhering to what I say, then you really are my disciples. 8:32 You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

8:33 “We are the progeny of Abraham,” the unbelievers responded. “Not once were we ever slaves. How can you say we will be set free?”

8:34 Jesus replied, “I tell you very truly, that everyone who sins is a servant of Sin. 8:35 Now it isn’t the servant who has permanent status as family, but only the child. 8:36 So if the Son liberates you, you will truly be free. 8:37 I know that you are the progeny of Abraham. But you want to kill me because there is no room in you for my sayings. 8:38 I am telling you what I have perceived from my Father. And you, too, do what you hear from your father.”

8:39 “Our father is Abraham!” they said.

“If you were children of Abraham, you would act like Abraham!” Jesus retorted. 8:40 “I am someone who has spoken the truth to you that I heard from God. Yet you want to kill me, and that’s something Abraham wouldn’t do. 8:41 But you are acting like your father!”

“We are not illegitimate children! We have one father, God!” they shot back.

8:42 Then Jesus said to them, “If God were your father, you would have loved me. For I set out from God and have arrived, not of my own accord but of the one who commissioned me. 8:43 How can you not know what I’m telling you? It’s because you refuse to hear my sayings. 8:44 You are of your father the Slanderer, and you want to carry out his

desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand by the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies he speaks his native language, for he is the father of all liars. 8:45 Yet in spite of my speaking the truth, you don't believe me. 8:46 Yet who among you is calling me out for sining? If I am telling the truth, on what grounds do you not believe me? 8:47 The one from God hears the declarations of God. So it follows that since you don't hear, you don't belong to God."

Jesus is accused of being demon-possessed

8:48 The Judeans retorted, "Weren't we right to call you a Samaritan? You're possessed!"

8:49 “I am not possessed,” Jesus replied, “but I am honoring my Father while you are dishonoring me. 8:50 Not that I seek my own honor; he is the one who seeks it and judges. 8:51 Very truly I tell you, that if anyone keeps to my sayings, under no circumstances will they ever face death.”

8:52 Then the Judeans said, “Now we’re sure you’re possessed! Abraham and all the prophets have died, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps to my sayings, under no circumstances will they ever face death.’ 8:53 You are not greater than our father Abraham or the prophets who have all died. Who do you think you are?”

8:54 Jesus answered, “If I were to honor myself, my honor would be nothing. It is my Father who honors me, the one you say is your God. 8:55 Yet you don’t know him, but I do. And if I were to say that I didn’t know him I’d be a liar like you! Yet I do know him and keep his sayings. 8:56 Your father Abraham was overjoyed to see my day coming; he saw it and was happy.”

8:57 “You haven’t yet reached the age of fifty, and you’ve seen Abraham!” scoffed the Judeans.

8:58 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am!”

“I am” is an expression of eternal existence, the same as when God described himself to Moses. So Jesus is clearly calling himself the eternal God here.

8:59 At this they picked up stones to kill him, but Jesus hid and escaped from the temple compound.

Jesus heals a blind man

9:1 As Jesus walked along he noticed someone who had been blind from birth. 9:2 And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, was it his own or his parents’ fault that this person was born blind?”

9:3 “Neither,” answered Jesus. “It was so the actions of God can be revealed in him. 9:4 We must keep performing

the actions of the one sending me while it is daytime; the night is coming, when no one can work. 9:5 But as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

9:6 Having said this, he spat on the ground and made mud out of the saliva. He smeared the mud on the person’s eyes 9:7 and said to him, “Go and wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated “Commissioned”). He went and washed, and came back seeing. 9:8 Then the neighbors and those who had seen him before (since he was a beggar) asked, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?”

9:9 Some said, “This is he,” while others said, “It can’t be! It’s only someone who

looks like him.” But he said, “I am that one.”

9:10 Then they said to him, “How were your eyes opened up?”

9:11 He answered, “The one called Jesus made mud and smeared it on my eyes, then told me to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. I did this and received my sight.”

9:12 So they asked, “Where is he?” but he replied, “I don’t know.”

The Pharisees challenge the power by which Jesus heals

9:13 So they took the one who had been blind to the Pharisees. 9:14 Now it was on a Sabbath day that Jesus made the

mud and opened up his eyes. 9:15 And the Pharisees too asked him how he received his sight. He told them, “He smeared mud on my eyes, I washed, and I see.”

9:16 Then some of the Pharisees said, “This person is not from God since he does not honor the Sabbath.” Yet others said, “How can a scoundrel do such miracles?” So a rift developed among them. 9:17 Then once again they say to the blind one, “What do you have to say about him, seeing that he opened up your eyes?” And he replied, “He is a prophet.” 9:18 Yet the Judeans still didn’t believe he was blind and then received sight till they summoned his parents.

9:19 And they asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? So how is it that he can see now?”

9:20 “We know this is our son and that he was born blind,” his parents answered. 9:21 “But we don’t know how he can see now, or who opened up his eyes. Ask him yourself, since he is of age and can speak for himself.” 9:22 (His parents said these things because they feared the Judeans, who had already agreed that anyone confirming Jesus as the Anointed One would be put out of the synagogue. 9:23 That’s why they said, “He is of age, ask him.”)

9:24 So they summoned the person born blind a second time and said to

him, “Swear to tell the truth! We know that this person is a scoundrel.”

9:25 “If he’s a scoundrel, I certainly don’t know,” he replied. “But one thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see.”

9:26 But again they asked, “What did he do to you? How did he open up your eyes?”

9:27 He answered, “I already told you but you don’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don’t want to become his disciples too, do you?”

9:28 They vilified him and said, “You’re a disciple of his, but we are disciples of Moses! 9:29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but this one— we don’t know where he comes from.”

9:30 “How shocking,” the person answered, “that you don’t know where he comes from even though he opened my eyes! 9:31 We know that God does not listen to scoundrels; he only listens to those who honor him and do as he wills. 9:32 No one has ever heard of anyone opening up the eyes of the blind, 9:33 so unless this one was from God he couldn’t do anything.”

9:34 “You were born saturated in sin, and you dare to lecture us!” they retorted. And they threw him out.

9:35 Jesus heard that they threw him out, and when he found him he asked, “Do you trust in the Human?”

9:36 He answered, “Who is he, sir, that I should put my trust in him?”

9:37 “You have seen him; he’s talking to you!” Jesus replied.

9:38 Then he declared, “I believe, sir!” And he worshiped him.

Spiritual blindness

9:39 Then Jesus said, “I have come into the world in judgment, so that those who cannot see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

9:40 The Pharisees who were with him heard this, and they said to him, “Surely we are not blind too!”

9:41 “If you were blind,” Jesus replied, “you couldn’t be charged with sin. But now, since you say that you see, your guilt remains.

The Good Shepherd

10:1 “Very truly I tell you, that anyone who does not come into the sheep pen through the gate but by some other means is a thief and a robber. 10:2 But the one entering through the gate is the shepherd. 10:3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for this one and the sheep listen to the shepherd’s voice. 10:4 Whenever the shepherd leads them out, the sheep follow because they know their own shepherd’s voice. 10:5 An outsider, on the other hand, they would not follow under any circumstances; they will run away from anyone whose voice they don’t recognize.”

10:6 Jesus gave them this illustration, yet they didn’t know what he was talking about. 10:7 So he told them again, “I tell you very truly that I am the gateway for the sheep. 10:8 All who came before me were thieves and robbers but the sheep did not listen to them. 10:9 I am the gateway; if anyone enters through me they will be saved, and will come and go freely and find pasture. 10:10 The thief only comes to steal and execute and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it to the extreme!

10:11 “I am the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. 10:12 But the hired hand, who isn’t the shepherd and doesn’t own the sheep, abandons them and runs away, leaving the wolf to

snatch them up and scatter them. 10:13 The hired hand runs away because, since it's only a job, there is no concern for the sheep. 10:14 But I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and they know me, 10:15 just as the Father knows me and I know him. So I lay down my life for the sheep.

10:16 "Also, I have other sheep that are not of this pen. I must lead them as well, and they will recognize my voice. Then there will be one flock, one shepherd. 10:17 Therefore the Father loves me because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 10:18 No one takes it from me; I lay it down of my own accord. I have the right to lay it down and the right to take it back. This is the ruling I got from my Father."

10:19 Once again a rift developed among the Judeans because of these sayings. 10:20 Now many of them said, “He’s possessed and out of his mind! Why do you listen to him?” 10:21 But others said, “These pronouncements are not what we’d expect from the demon-possessed. No demon can open up the eyes of the blind.”

Jesus is accused of blasphemy

10:22 Now it was time for the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter, 10:23 and Jesus walked in Solomon’s Portico inside the temple compound. 10:24 Then the Judeans surrounded him and said, “How long will you keep us

guessing? If you are the Anointed One, say so boldly and publicly!”

10:25 “I told you but you don’t believe me,” Jesus replied. “The things I do on behalf of my Father serve as my witnesses. 10:26 But you don’t believe me because you’re not my sheep— just as I told you. 10:27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. 10:28 And I give them eternal life, so that in no way will they ever die; no one will be able to snatch them out of my hand. 10:29 My Father who has given them to me is the greatest of all, and no one can snatch them out of his hand. 10:30 I and the Father are one!”

10:31 Once again the Judeans picked up stones in order to stone him, 10:32

but Jesus asked them, “I have shown you many good deeds from my Father. For which one are you stoning me?”

10:33 “We’re not stoning you for any good deed,” they answered, “but for maligning the name of God, because you, a mere human, equate yourself with God!”

10:34 Jesus responded, “Isn’t it written in your law, ‘I said you are gods’?

Jesus cites Ps. 82:6, whose context indicates that “gods” refers to rulers who stand in the place of God over the people. That they are not literal gods is confirmed by the fact that they will die like the mere mortals they are. Jesus’ purpose is to use the legalists’ own tactic against them by taking advantage of a legal loophole to escape their charge.

10:35 If he told those to whom the word of God came that they are gods— and the scripture cannot be undone— 10:36 then how can you say to the one the Father set apart and commissioned, ‘You are maligning the name of God’, just because I said ‘I am the God-Man’? 10:37 If I am not doing my Father’s actions then don’t believe me. 10:38 Yet if I am doing them and you still don’t

believe me, then at least believe what I do, so that you will know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

10:39 So again they tried to arrest him but he escaped. 10:40 Then he went back to the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had been immersing, and stayed there. 10:41 Many came to him and said, “John did no miracles, but everything he said about this one has come true.” 10:42 And many put their trust in him there.

The death of Lazarus

11:1 Now there was a certain ill person named Lazarus from Bethany, the same village as Mary and her sister Martha.

11:2 (This Mary was the one who rubbed the Master’s feet with perfumed oil and wiped them with her hair; the ill one Lazarus was her brother.) 11:3 So the sisters sent a message to Jesus: “Master, your good friend is very ill!” 11:4 But when Jesus heard this, he said, ”This illness will not end in death but in honor to God, so that the Human will be honored through it.”

11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 11:6 But when he heard he was ill, he actually stayed where he was for two more days. 11:7 Only then did he say to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.”

11:8 “The Judeans intend to execute you now, yet you want to go back

there!” exclaimed the disciples.

11:9 “Aren’t there twelve hours of daylight?” Jesus asked. “If anyone walks around in the daytime they don’t stumble, because they see the light of this world. 11:10 But if they walk around during the night they stumble, because there is no light in them.” 11:11 Then he added, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going to wake him up.”

11:12 “Master,” replied his disciples, “If he has fallen asleep he will recover.”

11:13 Now Jesus was actually talking about Lazarus’ death, but they had taken him literally. 11:14 So he told them plainly, “Lazarus died. 11:15 But I am happy for you, that you might believe

since I wasn’t there. But let’s get going to him.”

11:16 Then Thomas, nicknamed The Twin, said to the other disciples, “Let’s all go too, so we can die with him!”

Jesus comforts Lazarus’ sisters

11:17 Upon his arrival in Bethany, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away, 11:19 and many of the Judeans had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. 11:20 But when Martha heard that Jesus was arriving she went out to meet him, while Mary remained in the house.

11:21 Then Martha said to Jesus,
“Master, if you had been here, my
brother would not have died. 11:22 But
even now I perceive that whatever you
ask of God you will receive from God.”

11:23 Jesus told her, “Your brother will
arise.”

11:24 “I understand,” replied Martha,
“that he will rise in the resurrection at
the last day.”

11:25 Jesus told her, “I am the
Resurrection and the Life; whoever puts
their trust in me will live again even if
they die. 11:26 And everyone who lives
and puts their trust in me will definitely
not ever die.

There will be some who never experience physical death. Dying and living again is contrasted with never dying. It is inaccurate to render the phrase as “whoever lives by believing”; the Greek reads, “living and believing”.

Do you believe this?”

11:27 She replied, “Yes, Master, I have believed that you are the Anointed One, the God-Man, who is coming into the world.” 11:28 And with that, she went away and spoke privately to her sister Mary, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” 11:29 As soon as she heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 11:30 (Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still at the spot where Martha met up with him.) 11:31 Then the Judeans, who were in

the house consoling her, saw her get up quickly and leave, so they followed her because they presumed she was going to the tomb to mourn.

11:32 When Mary arrived at the place where Jesus was, she saw him and fell at his feet and said, “Master, if you had been here, my brother would not have died!”

11:33 At the sight of her sobbing, along with the Judeans, Jesus was deeply moved in spirit and very distraught. 11:34 And he asked, “Where have you all placed him?”

“Come and see, Master” they replied. 11:35 And Jesus wept, 11:36 so the Judeans said, “See how fond he was of him!”

11:37 But some scoffed, “Couldn’t this one who opened up the eyes of the blind have been able to keep this person from dying?”

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

11:38 Then Jesus, still very distraught, came to the tomb, which was a cave with a stone laid upon it. 11:39 Then he said, “Take away the stone!”

Martha, the deceased’s sister, objected, “Master! By this time he smells awful, because it is the fourth day.”

11:40 But Jesus said, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed, you would see the majesty of God?” 11:41 Then they took

the stone away. But Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I am grateful that you hear me. 11:42 I always knew you did, but I said this for the sake of the crowd around me, so they could believe that you commissioned me.”

11:43 Having said these things, he shouted, “Lazarus! Come here! Come out!” 11:44 And the one who had died came out. His feet and hands had been wrapped with strips of burial cloth, and his face had had a cloth wrapped around it. Then Jesus said to them, “Unbind him and let him go!” 11:45 Then many of the Judeans who came to Mary saw what Jesus did and put their trust in him.

The Sanhedrin plots to kill Jesus

11:46 But some went off to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus was doing. 11:47 So the high priests and Pharisees convened an official meeting and said, “What are we going to do about this person performing many miracles? 11:48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will put their trust in him, and then the Romans will come and do away with our place and our nation.”

11:49 Now one of them in particular, Caiaphas, the high priest that year, said to them, “You understand nothing! 11:50 And you haven’t figured out that one person should die for the people

instead of letting the whole nation be destroyed.”

11:51 Now he didn’t realize it, but as high priest that year, he had predicted that Jesus was about to die for the sake of the nation— 11:52 and not just the nation, but also to gather the scattered children of God into one. 11:53 So from that day on they plotted to kill him. 11:54 As a result, Jesus could no longer walk openly among the Judeans. He went away from there into the area near the desert, to a city called Ephraim, and remained there with his disciples.

11:55 Now the Passover of the Judeans was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the countryside so they could purify themselves beforehand.

11:56 Then they looked for Jesus, and as they stood together in the temple compound they said to each other, “Do you think there’s any chance he’ll come to the festival?” 11:57 (The high priests and Pharisees had issued orders that if anyone knew where he was, they were to report it so he could be arrested.)

Jesus is anointed for burial

12:1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, the place where he had raised Lazarus from the dead. 12:2 They prepared a dinner in Jesus’ honor; Lazarus was there, and Martha served. 12:3 But Mary, taking three-quarters of a pound of genuine and very expensive perfumed oil made from nard, massaged the oil into Jesus’

feet and wiped them down with her hair. The whole house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

12:4 But Judas of Kerioth, one of Jesus' disciples (the one about to betray him), said, 12:5 "Why wasn't this oil sold for a year's wages and the proceeds given to the poor?" 12:6 (Now he didn't say this because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he was trusted with the donations given to the disciples but would take what he wanted from it.)

12:7 "Leave her alone!" Jesus replied. "She is doing this for the day of my burial. 12:8 You'll always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

12:9 Most of the Judeans knew Jesus was there, and they came not only to see Jesus but also Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 12:10 But the high priests planned to kill Lazarus too, 12:11 because on account of him many of the Judeans shifted their trust to Jesus.

Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem

12:12 The next day the huge crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus came to Jerusalem, 12:13 so they got palm branches and came out to greet him. They shouted, “Celebrate! Blessed is the one bearing the name of the Master,” and, “The King of Israel!”

12:14 Now Jesus found a young colt and rode on it, in accordance with what has been written: 12:15 “Do not fear, daughter of Zion! Look, your king is coming to you, riding on a young donkey.” 12:16 His disciples didn’t know it at the time, but when Jesus was exalted they remembered that these things the people did were written about him.

12:17 The crowd that had been there when he called Lazarus out of the grave and raised him from the dead was giving their testimony. 12:18 It was on their account of this miracle he did that the huge crowd went to meet him. 12:19 So the Pharisees said to themselves, ”It’s obvious that we’re not getting

anywhere. Look, the whole world has gone after him!“

Jesus predicts his death

12:20 Meanwhile, some of the Greeks among the festival-goers 12:21 came up to Philip (of Bethsaida in Galilee) and made a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” 12:22 Philip told Andrew, and then the two of them told Jesus.

12:23 Jesus said to them, “The hour has come for the Human to be exalted. 12:24 I tell you very truly, that unless a kernel of grain falls to the ground and dies it remains a single seed, whereas if dies it will be loaded with produce. 12:25 Anyone who is too attached to their life

destroys it, but anyone who thinks nothing of their life in this world will preserve it for eternity. 12:26 Anyone who wants to serve me should follow me; where I am is where my servant will also be. And whoever serves me will be honored by the Father.

12:27 “Now I am deeply disturbed, but what will I say? ‘Father, rescue me from this hour’? But this hour is precisely why I came! 12:28 Father, exalt your name!

Then a voice came from the sky, “I have, and I will exalt it again!”

12:29 The crowd standing there heard it and said, “That was thunder,” while others said “An angel has spoken to him.”

12:30 Jesus answered, “This voice was not for my benefit but yours. 12:31 Now begins the judgment of the world; now the ruler of this world will be thrown out! 12:32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw everyone to myself.” 12:33 Now he said this to indicate the manner of his impending death.

12:34 Then the crowd responded, “We heard from the law that the Anointed One would remain forever, so how can you say that the Human must be lifted up? Who is this ‘Human’?”

12:35 So Jesus replied, “The light will remain among you for a little while. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness won’t overtake you; the one walking in darkness has no idea

where they’re going. 12:36 Trust in the light while you have it, so you can be people of the light.” With that, Jesus went away and concealed himself from them.

Disbelief and cowardice

12:37 In spite of having done so many miracles in front of them, they still did not put their trust in him. 12:38 This fulfilled the saying of the prophet Isaiah: “Master, who believed our report? To whom was the Master’s strength revealed?” 12:39 So they weren’t able to believe, and once again Isaiah said, 12:40 “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, to prevent them from seeing with their eyes or understanding with their hearts, such

that I would turn around and heal them.” 12:41 Isaiah said these things because he saw Jesus’ majesty and spoke about him. 12:42 Many of the rulers also put their trust in him. But because of the Pharisees they did not admit it, or they would be excommunicated. 12:43 They loved praise from people more than even praise from God.

12:44 Now Jesus shouted out, “Whoever puts their trust in me is really putting their trust in the one who sent me; 12:45 whoever watches me watches the one who sent me. 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that all who put their trust in me would not remain in darkness.

12:47 “And if anyone hears my declarations but doesn’t retain them, I am not judging them, because I did not come to judge the world but to save it. 12:48 Yet the one rejecting me and not retaining my declarations is judged by the things I say. That is what will judge them at the last day, 12:49 since I don’t speak of my own accord but of the Father who sent me. He has given me the official edict on what to say and what to talk about. 12:50 And I know that his edict is eternal life. So whatever I say is exactly as the Father has directed me to speak.”

Jesus washes his disciples’ feet

13:1 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus, being aware that the hour had come for him to move from this world to the Father, was filled with love for his own in this world; he loved them to the very end. 13:2 Yet by dinner time the Adversary had already put the idea into the mind of Judas (son of Simon of Kerioth) that he should betray Jesus. 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given everything into his hands, and that he had gone out from God and would soon return, 13:4 rose up from dinner. He removed his outer garments and wrapped himself in a cloth, 13:5 then filled a basin with water and began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he was wearing.

13:6 But when he came to Simon Peter, he objected, “Master, you’re washing my feet!”

13:7 Jesus answered, “Right now you don’t realize what I’m doing, but you will see it eventually.”

13:8 Peter says, “You should absolutely never wash my feet!”

“But if I don’t,” Jesus replied, “you are not in with me.”

13:9 “Master,” replied, Simon Peter, “not just my feet but also my hands and head!”

13:10 Jesus continued, “The one who has bathed only needs their feet washed since they are completely

clean. And you all are ‘clean’… well, not all.” 13:11 (He knew who was betraying him, so that’s why he said ’You are not all clean‘.)

13:12 When he finished washing their feet, he put on his outer garments again and reclined at the table. “Do you realize what I’ve done to you?” Jesus asked them. 13:13 “You address me as Teacher and Master, and rightly so. 13:14 But if I, your Master and Teacher, wash your feet, you too should wash each other’s feet. 13:15 I have given you an example to follow; you must do as I did. 13:16 I tell you very truly that a servant is not greater than their master, nor is the one commissioned greater than the one commissioning. 13:17 If

you see what I'm saying and put it into practice, you will be happy.

Jesus predicts his betrayal

13:18 "I'm not talking about all of you (for I'm well aware of those I chose), so that the scripture may be fulfilled: 'I was betrayed by the one eating bread with me'. 13:19 So I'm telling you beforehand what is to happen, so that when it comes to pass you might believe that I am who I say I am. 13:20 I tell you very truly that whoever accepts someone I send out is actually accepting me, and in turn, whoever accepts me is accepting the one who sent me."

13:21 Upon saying these things, Jesus became agitated and testified, "I tell you

very truly that one of you will betray me!”

13:22 The disciples stared at each other in shock, wondering who Jesus meant. 13:23 Now one of them, the one Jesus loved, was reclining near to him. 13:24 Then Simon Peter motioned to that one to ask what this was all about. 13:25 So that one leaned very close to Jesus and said, “Master, who is it?”

13:26 Jesus told him, “It’s the one to whom I will give the morsel of bread after dipping it.” He dipped the morsel and gave it to Judas, son of Simon of Kerioth. 13:27 Immediately the Adversary entered into Judas, and Jesus told him, “What you’re to do, do it faster!”

13:28 None of those at the table realized why Jesus said this to Judas. 13:29 Some presumed that since Judas was responsible for the group's funds, Jesus was telling him to buy what they would need for the festival, or to give something to the poor. 13:30 So as soon as he had the morsel of bread, Judas went out. It was nighttime.

Jesus predicts that Peter will disown him

13:31 After Judas left, Jesus said, "Now the Human is to be honored, and God is thereby honored. 13:32 And since God is honored then so is the Human, and he will be honored right away. 13:33 My dear little ones, I am only with you for a short time now. You will search for me,

and just as I told the Judeans that they could not follow where I'm going, so I say also to you. 13:34 I'm giving you a new precept: Love each other, and love them the way I have loved you. 13:35 This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, by your love for each other."

13:36 Simon Peter asked him, "Master, where are you going?"

"You can't follow me where I'm going right now," Jesus replied, "but you will be following eventually."

13:37 "But why can't I follow you now?" asked Peter. "I'd lay down my life for you!"

13:38 “You will lay down your life for my sake,” Jesus answered. “But very truly I tell you that before the rooster crows, you will have renounced me three times!

Jesus comforts and guides his disciples

14:1 “Don’t let disturbing thoughts fill your minds; trust in God, and trust in me. 14:2 There are many residences in my Father’s home. If there weren’t, I would not have told you that I’m going there to prepare a place for you. 14:3 Once I’ve prepare a place, I will return to you and accept you as my own, so that you can be where I am. 14:4 And you are familiar with the way to where I’m going.”

14:5 Thomas asked him, “Master, we aren’t familiar with where you’re going, so how can we see the way?”

14:6 “I am the way,” said Jesus, “and the truth and the life; no one can come to the Father except through me. 14:7 If all of you have known me you will also know my Father. And from now on you know him and have seen him.”

14:8 Philip said to him, “Master, show us the Father and we will be satisfied.”

14:9 Jesus replied, “Philip, I’ve been with you all this time, and you still don’t know me! Whoever has seem me has seen the Father, so how can you say, ’show us the Father’? 14:10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and he is in me? The declarations I have been

giving you are not of my own accord; rather, the Father who remains in me does his work. 14:11 Trust me when I tell you that I am in the Father and he is in me. But if that isn't enough, then believe me because of what I do. 14:12 I tell you very truly, that those who put their trust in me will do the same things I do— and even greater things, because I am going to the Father. 14:13 And whatever you ask as my representative, I will do it, so that the Father is honored in the Son. 14:14 Yes, anything you ever ask as my representative, I will do.

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit

14:15 “If you love me, guard my precepts. 14:16 And I will implore the Father, who will give you another advocate to console you and be with you forever: 14:17 the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot accept, whom it can neither see nor know. But you all know this Spirit, for it remains with you and will be in you. 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. 14:19 Soon the world will no longer see me, but you see me. And since I live, you also will live. 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you. 14:21 Whoever has my precepts and observes them is the one who loves me, and the one who loves me will be loved by my Father; I will love that one and reveal myself to them.”

14:22 Judas (not the one from Kerioth) asked, “Master, why is it that you intend to reveal yourself to us but not to the world?”

14:23 Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will guard my sayings, and my Father will love them; we will come to them and take up residence with them. 14:24 But anyone who does not love me doesn’t guard my sayings. This saying you are hearing is not my own but is from the Father who sends me. 14:25 I have spoken all this to you while remaining with you. 14:26 But now the Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send on my behalf, will teach you everything and remind you of everything I said to you.

14:27 “My peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you, and I don’t give as the world does. Don’t let your minds be disturbed or timid. 14:28 You heard me say ‘I am going away and coming back’, and ‘If you loved me you would be happy I’m going to the Father, for he is greater than I.’ 14:29 And now I have declared this ahead of time, so that when it does happen, you will believe. 14:30 I will not be speaking with you much longer, because the ruler of the world approaches, and he has nothing to do with me. 14:31 But I do as the Father directs me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Get up! We have to leave.

The vine and branches analogy

15:1 “I am the true vine and my Father is the cultivator. 15:2 He discards every branch that produces no fruit, but prunes the ones that produce some, so they can make even more. 15:3 You all are pruned already by means of the things I’ve said to you. 15:4 Remain in me as I remain in you. Just as the branch cannot produce fruit if it is detached from the vine, neither can you if you do not remain in me.

15:5 “I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in them produces a lot of fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing. 15:6 Whoever does not remain in me is like

a branch that is thrown out and dried up. Such branches are then collected and thrown into the fire to be burned. 15:7 But if you always remain in me and my declarations remain in you, ask for anything you want and it will be granted to you.

15:8 “If you produce a lot of fruit and become my disciples, it brings honor to my Father. 15:9 Just as the Father loves me, so also do I love you; remain in my love. 15:10 If you guard my precepts you will remain in my love, just as I have guarded my Father’s precepts and remain in his love. 15:11 I have spoken these things to you so that my happiness will remain in you and fill you up.

15:12 “This is my precept: that you love each other as I have loved you. 15:13 And there is no greater love than to lay down your life for your friends. 15:14 You are my friends if you do what I direct you to do. 15:15 I no longer call you servants, for a servant is not included in their master’s activities. But now I call you friends, for I have shared with you everything I heard from my Father. 15:16 You didn’t choose me, I chose you, and I appointed you to go out and produce a lot of fruit. If your fruit endures, ask the Father for anything you want as my representatives and he will grant it. 15:17 I am giving you these directions so that you may love each other.

The world will hate Jesus' followers

15:18 “If the world hates you,
understand that it hated me first and
most of all. 15:19 If you had belonged to
the world it would have considered you
its friends. But seeing that you are no
longer part of the world since I chose
you out of it, the world despises you for
this. 15:20 Remember what I told you?
‘A servant is not greater than their
master.’ If they persecuted me they will
also persecute you, but if they guarded
my sayings, they will guard yours too.
15:21 They will do all these things to you
because of my name, since they have
failed to recognize the one sending me.

15:22 “If I had not come and spoken to them they would not be at fault, but now they have no excuse; 15:23 whoever despises me despises my Father as well. 15:24 If I hadn’t done things among them that no one else had done, they would not be at fault. But now they have seen, and they have despised both me and my Father. 15:25 Yet this fulfills what has been written in the law about them: ‘They hated me for no reason’.

The Holy Spirit as our guide

15:26 “When the Advocate I’m sending from the Father arrives— the Spirit of Truth departing from him— he will testify about me. 15:27 And you will testify as well, seeing that you have been with me from the beginning.

16:1 “I have told you these things so that you will not walk into a trap, 16:2 for they will expel you from fellowship. Yet the time is coming when whoever kills you will think they’re serving God, 16:3 and they will do these things to you because they knew neither me nor my Father. 16:4 But I have told you these things so that when their time comes you will remember I told you, though I didn’t say them at first. 16:5 Yet now I am going back to the one who sent me, but you no longer need to ask me where I’m going.

16:6 “I see that what I’ve said to you has filled you with sorrow. 16:7 But I tell you honestly that my leaving is for your benefit; if I don’t go away, the Advocate will not come to you. 16:8 His arrival will

convict the world about sin, justice, and judgment: 16:9 about sin, since in fact they don’t put their trust in me; 16:10 about justice, since I am returning to my Father and you will no longer see me; 16:11 about judgment, since the ruler of this world has been judged.

16:12 “I still have a lot to say to you, but you cannot stand it right now. 16:13 Yet whenever the Spirit of Truth comes, it will guide you in all truth. It will not be speaking of its own accord, but only what it hears, and it will tell you about things to come. 16:14 That will honor me, because it will tell you what I tell it. 16:15 Everything the Father has is mine; that’s why I told you it will tell you what it gets from me.

Grief will become joy

16:16 “Soon you will no longer see me,
but a short time after that you will see
me again.” 16:17 Then some of his
disciples said to each other, “What does
he mean, ‘Soon you will no longer see
me, but a short time after that you will
see me again’, and, ‘I am returning to
the Father’?” 16:18 So they said, “What
is this ‘short’ time he’s talking about?
We don’t understand what he’s saying.”

16:19 Jesus knew what they wanted to
ask him, so he said, “You are
wondering what I meant when I said
you wouldn’t see me but then a short
time later you would see me. 16:20 I tell
you very truly that you will cry and
mourn while the world celebrates; you

will be upset but your sadness will turn into happiness.

16:21 “When a woman goes into labor she dreads the time that has come upon her. But when the little one is born she forgets the suffering for the joy that a person has come into the world. 16:22 Likewise, you will in fact be sad, yet I will see you again and you will be filled with happiness— a happiness no one can take away. 16:23 And in that day you will not ask me for anything; I tell you very truly that whatever you ask the Father as my representatives, he will grant it to you. 16:24 Up to this point you have not asked anything as my representatives; now ask, and you will receive, so you may be filled with happiness.

16:25 “I have told you these things in illustrations, but the time is coming when I will not speak this way but will bluntly tell you about the Father. 16:26 In that day you will ask as my representatives, but I’m not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf, 16:27 because the Father himself is fond of you for being fond of me and believing that I came out from God. 16:28 I left my dwelling with the Father and have come into the world; now I’m leaving the world and returning to the Father.”

16:29 Then his disciples said, “See? Now you’re talking bluntly instead of using illustrations. 16:30 Now we see that you know everything, and you have no need for anyone to ask you. For this,

we believe that you came out from God.”

16:31 “You believe at last!” Jesus exclaimed. 16:32 “Look! The time is coming— in fact it has arrived— for you all to be scattered, each one going your own way, leaving me alone. Of course, I’m not really alone, because the Father is with me. 16:33 I have told you these things so that in me you will have peace. You will have oppression in the world, but take courage! I have conquered the world!”

Jesus prays about himself

17:1 Having said all these things, Jesus then looked up into the sky and said, “Father, the time has come for you to

honor the Son so the Son may in turn honor you. 17:2 Just as you gave him authority over everyone, so also he will give eternal life to all those you gave him. 17:3 This is eternal life: that they may know you, the one true God, and the one you commissioned, Jesus the Anointed One. 17:4 I honored you on the earth, completing the tasks you gave me to do. 17:5 And now, Father, honor me along with yourself, with the honor I had along with you before the world was made.

Jesus prays about his present disciples

17:6 “I revealed your name to the people you gave me from the world. They were yours and you gave them to me, and

they have stayed true to your word. 17:7 Now they have understood that all you have given me is from you, 17:8 because I passed on to them the declarations you gave me. They accepted them and know for a fact that I came from you and was commissioned by you. 17:9 These are the ones I'm asking about. Now I'm not asking about the world, but about those you've given me, since they are yours; 17:10 after all, what's mine is yours, and yours is mine. And I have been honored in them.

17:11 "I am not remaining in the world, but these people are, and I am returning to you. Holy Father, protect those you've given me, who represent you, so that they may be one just as we

are. 17:12 When I was with them in the world I protected those you gave me as your representatives. I watched over them and not one of them was lost except for the doomed one, in fulfillment of the scriptures. 17:13 Yet now I am returning to you, and I'm saying these things in the world so that they may be filled with my happiness.

17:14 "I have given them your word, and the world hated them because they are not of the world, just as I'm not of the world. 17:15 I'm not asking you to take them up out of the world, but that you would protect them from the evil one. 17:16 Again, they are not of the world, just as I'm not of the world.

17:17 “Consecrate them by your truth;
your word is truth. 17:18 Just as you
commissioned me into the world, so
also I commissioned them into the
world. 17:19 And for their sakes I
consecrated myself, so that they too
would be consecrated in truth.

Jesus prays for future believers

17:20 “Yet I’m not only asking about
these, but also about the ones who will
put their trust in me through their word.
17:21 Then they may all be one, Father,
just as you are in me and I am in you,
and they too may be in us. Through this
the world may believe that you
commissioned me. 17:22 And I have
given them the honor you gave me, so

that they may be one just as we are—
17:23 I in them and you in me— that
they may be a complete unity, and that
the world may know that you
commissioned me and loved them as
you have loved me.

17:24 “Father, I would also prefer that
those you have given me would be
where I am, so they can see the honor
you have given me, because you loved
me before the world was established.
17:25 Also, Impartial Father, the world
did not know you, but I did, and these
know that you commissioned me. 17:26 I
made your name known to them, and I
will make it known that the love you
loved me with may be in them, and I in
them.”

Jesus is arrested

18:1 Having said these things, Jesus left with his disciples to the other side of the brook in Kedron, where there was a garden. Jesus and his disciples entered the garden, 18:2 a place the traitor Judas was familiar with, since Jesus took his disciples there often. 18:3 Then Judas arrived with a detachment of deputies of the high priests and Pharisees, who carried lanterns, torches, and weapons. 18:4 Then Jesus, knowing all that was about to happen to him, came out and said, “Who are you looking for?”

18:5 “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied.

He responded, “I am.” (And the traitor Judas was standing with them.) 18:6 But as Jesus said “I am,” they all drew back and fell to the ground. 18:7 So he repeated the question, “Who are you looking for?” And again they replied, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

18:8 Once again Jesus responded, “I told you that I am. And if I am the one you want, let these others go.” 18:9 He said this to fulfill what he had said before: “I will not lose one of those you have given me.”

18:10 Then Simon Peter drew the sword he had and struck at the deputy of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. (The deputy’s name was Malchos.) 18:11 But Jesus said to Peter, “Put away your

sword! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me to drink?”

18:12 Then the garrison and commander, with the Judean deputies, seized Jesus and tied him up. 18:13 They took him first to Annas because he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. 18:14 This was the Caiaphas who advised the Judeans that it would be to their advantage to let one person die for the people.

Peter’s first denial

18:15 Now following Jesus were Simon Peter and another disciple who was known to the high priest, and they went with him as far as the high priest’s courtyard. 18:16 Peter waited outside

the gate, but then the one who knew the high priest spoke to the gatekeeper, who let Peter in. 18:17 But then she said to him, “Surely you’re not one of his disciples!” and he replied, “No, I’m not.” 18:18 The deputies and servants were standing around a charcoal fire, warming themselves because it was cold. Peter stood there warming himself too.

Jesus is interrogated by the high priest

18:19 Meanwhile, the high priest asked Jesus about his disciples and teachings. 18:20 And Jesus replied, “I have spoken openly to the world, and I always taught in the synagogue and in the temple compound where the

Judeans gather. I never spoke in secret.
18:21 So why are you asking me? Ask
those who have heard what I said to
them; they know what I said."

18:22 At this, one of the deputies
standing there slapped Jesus in the
face and said, "So this is how you
answer the high priest!" 18:23 But Jesus
retorted, "If I said something improper,
prove it! Yet if I spoke properly, then
why did you strike me?" 18:24 Then
Annas sent Jesus, still tied up, to the
high priest Caiaphas.

Peter's second and third denials

18:25 Now Peter was still standing and
warming himself when they said to him,

“You’ve got to be one of his disciples!” But he denied it and said, “No, I am not!” 18:26 Then one of the deputies of the high priest, a blood relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said “I saw you in the garden with him!” 18:27 Again Peter denied it, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Jesus testifies before Pilate, who argues with the mob

18:28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor’s compound. By this time it was morning, but they did not enter into the compound because it would make them ritually unclean, and they wanted to be able to eat the Passover meal. 18:29 So Pilate came

outside to them and demanded, “What is the charge against this person?”

18:30 They replied, “If he weren’t a criminal we wouldn’t have brought him here!”

18:31 “Take him and judge him by your own law,” Pilate responded. But they said, “We are not allowed to execute anyone.” 18:32 This fulfilled what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was about to die.

18:33 Then Pilate returned to the compound and called for Jesus. “So you are the king of the Judeans,” he said.

18:34 Jesus responded, “Do you say this of your own accord, or is this what

others have told you?”

18:35 “I’m not a Judean, am I?” Pilate retorted. “Your own people and high priests handed you over to me. So what did you do?”

18:36 Jesus replied, “My kingdom is not of this world; if it had been, my servants would have fought to keep me from being handed over to the Judeans. No, my kingdom is not from here.”

18:37 “So, you are a king then, right?” Pilate asked.

“It is as you say; I’m a king,” Jesus replied. “But I was born into this and have come into the world to testify to the truth, and everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.”

18:38 “What is truth?” Pilate retorted. And having said that, he went out again to the Judeans and told them, “I can’t find a single thing to charge him with. 18:39 But you have a custom that during the Passover I should release to you the person you choose. So do you want me to release the king of the Judeans?”

18:40 “No, not this one but Bar-Abbas!” they shouted. (Bar-Abbas was a robber.)

19:1 So Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 19:2 The soldiers weaved a crown out of thorns and placed it on Jesus‘ head. They threw a purple cloak around him, 19:3 and then kept approaching him and saying “Greetings,

king of the Judeans!” And they slapped him in the face.

19:4 Pilate came out again and said to them, “Look, I’m taking him outside to you so you may know for sure that I have found no grounds for a charge against him.” 19:5 Then Jesus came outside, wearing the thorny crown and the purple cloak, and Pilate said, “Look at him!”

19:6 When the high priests and servants saw him they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”

But Pilate said, “You crucify him! I have found no reason to do so.”

19:7 The Judeans replied, “We have a law, and according to that law he must

be executed, because he equated himself with God.”

19:8 This frightened Pilate,

Pilate was afraid because the Pharisees were trapping him with technicalities. He could not release anyone who was breaking Roman law by challenging the throne of Caesar.

19:9 so he returned to the compound and asked Jesus, “Where do you come from?” But Jesus did not answer. 19:10 So Pilate said, “You won’t talk to me? Don’t you realize that I have the jurisdiction to either release you or have you crucified?”

19:11 But Jesus replied, “You’d have no jurisdiction at all unless it had been given to you from above. However, the

one turning me over to you has the greater sin.”

19:12 From then on Pilate looked for a way to release him. But the Judeans shouted, “If you ever release him you will no longer be a Friend of Caesar, because anyone claiming to be a king is challenging Caesar’s throne!”

19:13 When Pilate heard this he led Jesus outside and then sat down on the seat known as the Stone Pavement (known locally as Gabbatha). 19:14 It was still the Preparation of the Passover, almost noon, and he said to the Judeans, “Look at your king!”

19:15 But they shouted, “Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!”

Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your king?”

But they responded, “We have no king but Caesar!”

Jesus is crucified

19:16 Finally Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified, and they took him away. 19:17 Carrying his own cross, he went to the place called The Skull (or in the vernacular, Golgotha), 19:18 where they crucified him between two others. 19:19 And Pilate made a notice that was placed on the cross, which read, “Jesus, from Nazareth, the King of the Judeans.” 19:20 Many Judeans read this notice, because the location where Jesus was crucified was near the city,

and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

19:21 Then the high priests of the Judeans went to Pilate and complained about the notice. “You should not write ‘the king of the Judeans’, but ‘he said he was the king of the Judeans’.” 19:22 But Pilate retorted, “What I have written, I have written!”

At this point the Judeans had no more leverage on Pilate.

19:23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, one for each soldier. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 19:24 So they said to each other, “Let’s not split this but gamble to see who gets it.” This

was in fulfillment of the scripture, “They divided my clothes among themselves and gambled for my tunic.” The soldiers actually did these things.

19:25 Standing beside Jesus’ cross were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdela. 19:26 Seeing his mother there, along with the disciple he loved, he said to her, “Dear woman, this is your son;” 19:27 and to him, “This is your mother.” And from that time on, the disciple took her into his own home.

Evidently Jesus’ legal father had died, and as the oldest son he had the responsibility to look after his mother.

Jesus dies

19:28 After this, having seen that everything was paid in full, Jesus said “I’m thirsty” to fulfill what was written.
19:29 Now there was a jar nearby that was filled with vinegar. They soaked a sponge with the vinegar and attached it to a hyssop branch, then lifted it to his mouth.

The vinegar was a common mixture used to ease pain.

19:30 After he took it, Jesus said “It has been paid in full!” Then he bowed his head and gave up the spirit.

19:31 Since it was the Preparation, the Judeans did not want the bodies to remain on the crosses on this special Sabbath. So they asked Pilate for permission to break the victims’ legs so they could be taken away.

It is believed that the victim's breathing muscles were numb after having their arms stretched out for hours, so for each exhale they would have to push themselves up with their legs, an extremely painful action since their feet were nailed to a small platform on the upright portion of the cross. By breaking the victim's legs they would bring quick death through suffocation.

19:32 So the soldiers broke the legs of one of the victims crucified with Jesus, and then the other. 19:33 But when they came to Jesus they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs.

19:34 But one of the soldiers punctured him in the ribs with a spear, and immediately out came blood and water.

Roman soldiers charged with executing someone were to be executed themselves if the victims survived. Since Jesus was dead sooner than expected, they had to make absolutely sure he was dead, which was proved by what came out when they speared him. It indicated that the heart had ruptured. So in fact Jesus stopped his own heart; he did not die either of crucifixion or suffocation, nor of the spearing.

19:35 The one giving this testimony is an eyewitness and affirms that this is the truth. And he knows he's telling the truth so that you all can believe. 19:36 For these things happened to fulfill the scripture, "Not one of his bones will be crushed," 19:37 and in a different scripture, "they will gaze upon the one they pierced."

Jesus is buried

19:38 Now after all of this, Joseph from Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. (He was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, because he feared the Judeans.) Pilate granted his request and Joseph took it down. 19:39 Nicodemas, the one who interviewed Jesus one night early on, brought along a mixture of myrrh and aloe weighing about seventy-five pounds. 19:40 So they took Jesus' body and wrapped it in bandages with the aromatic spices, in accordance with Judean burial custom.

19:41 Now in the place of crucifixion was a garden, and in the garden was a new tomb that no one had yet used. 19:42 Since it was the Judeans' Preparation

Day and the tomb was nearby, they placed Jesus there.

Jesus rises from the dead

20:1 On one of the sabbaths, Mary of Magdala came to the grave before dawn, while it was still dark, and she saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb. 20:2 She ran and came to Simon Peter and the other disciple that Jesus was fond of, and she said, “They have taken the Master out of the grave and we didn’t see where they put him!” 20:3 So Peter and the other disciple went to the grave. 20:4 They ran together but the other disciple outran Peter and got there first. 20:5 He bent over and saw the bandages lying there, but he did not go inside.

20:6 Then Simon Peter came along and entered into the grave. He saw the bandages lying there, 20:7 and the sweat cloth that had been on Jesus' head was folded up in a separate spot. 20:8 Then the other disciple who had arrived first entered into the grave; he saw and believed. 20:9 (Up until then, they had not understood that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) 20:10 Then they returned to the other disciples.

Jesus appears to Mary of Magdala

20:11 But Mary had stood outside near the grave, sobbing. And while she continued to sob she bent over to look into the grave. 20:12 She saw two angels in white sitting where the body of

Jesus had lain, one near the head and the other near the feet. 20:13 And they said to her, “Dear woman, why are you sobbing?”

She replied, “They took my master and I don’t know where they put him.”

20:14 Having said this she turned back around and saw Jesus standing there, but she didn’t recognize him. 20:15 Jesus asked her, “Dear woman, why are you sobbing? Who is it you’re looking for?”

Presuming he was the caretaker, she replied, “Sir, if you took him away, tell me where you put him and I’ll take him.”

20:16 Then Jesus said to her, “Mary!”

She turned toward him and exclaimed “Rabboni!” which is the Aramaic word for “teacher.”

20:17 “Stop hanging on to me!” Jesus said. “I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my siblings and tell them that I am ascending now to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.”

Jesus appears to the other disciples

20:18 Mary of Magdala came to the disciples and announced, “I have seen the Master!”, and she told them the things he said to her. 20:19 It was late in the day on one of the sabbaths, and the doors where they were staying were

locked for fear of the Judeans. Suddenly Jesus came and stood in the middle of the group and said “Hello!” 20:20 Then he also showed them his hands and side. They were very happy to see the Master!

20:21 He said ‘hello’ to them again, and added, “Just as the Father commissioned me, now I am also sending you.” 20:22 Having said this he exhaled on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 20:23 If you discharge someone’s sins they are discharged, and if you retain them they are retained.”

Jesus appears to Thomas

20:24 Now Thomas, one of the Twelve (nicknamed the Twin) was not with them when Jesus came. 20:25 Then the other disciples said, “We have seen the Master!” But he responded, “Unless I see his hands and press my finger into the exact spot where the nails were, and put my hand on the exact spot in his ribs, I will refuse to believe it!”

20:26 Then in the space of eight days the disciples were inside the room again, and Thomas was with them. As before, the doors were locked when Jesus suddenly appeared in the middle of the group and said, “Hello!” 20:27 Then he said to Thomas, “Reach out with your finger and observe my hands, then reach out with your hand and

examine my side. Don’t lose faith, but believe!”

20:28 “My Master and my God!” exclaimed Thomas.

20:29 Jesus responded, “You have seen and believed; happy are those who believe without seeing!”

Belief for eternal life

20:30 Jesus did, in fact, also perform many miracles in view of the disciples, which were not recorded in this book.
20:31 But what has been written was done in order for you to believe that Jesus is the Anointed One, the God-Man, and that by putting your trust in him you can have eternal life.

The miraculous catch of fish

21:1 After all that, Jesus revealed himself to his disciples again at the Sea of Tiberias, and this is how it went. 21:2 Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other of Jesus' disciples were together. 21:3 Simon Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing." They replied, "We're coming with you" and went onto the ship. But that night they caught nothing at all.

21:4 In the morning Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples didn't recognize him. 21:5 He called out to them, "Haven't you guys caught any fish?"

"Not a thing," they replied.

21:6 “Throw the net over the right side of the ship and you will!” said Jesus. They did so, and the catch was so large they were unable to haul it in. 21:7 Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, “It’s the Master!” When Peter heard this he wrapped a garment around himself (for he had stripped for work) and dove into the sea.

21:8 Now the other disciples came in the other boat, dragging the net full of fish, because they weren’t far off-shore (about 100 yards). 21:9 As they disembarked to shore they saw fish and bread cooking over a charcoal fire. 21:10 Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you just caught!” 21:11 So Peter pulled the net up onto shore, and it was

stuffed with 153 large fish. Somehow the net didn't tear.

21:12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have dinner!" But none of the disciples dared to ask him who he was, since they knew it was the Master. 21:13 Then Jesus took the bread and passed it around, and likewise with the fish. 21:14 This was already the third time Jesus revealed himself to his disciples after he rose from the dead.

Jesus tests Peter

21:15 After dinner Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these others?" And Peter replied, "Yes Master, you know I am

fond of you.” And Jesus said, “Pasture my lambs.”

21:16 Jesus asked him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” And Peter replied, “Yes Master, you know I am fond of you.” And Jesus said, “Shepherd my sheep.”

21:17 Jesus asked him a third time, “Simon, son of John, are you fond of me?” Peter was distressed because Jesus said ‘Are you fond of me’ the third time, and he replied, “Yes Master, you know everything and you know I am fond of you.” And Jesus said, “Pasture my sheep.

21:18 “Now I tell you very truly, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went wherever you chose, but

when you are old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will dress you and take you where you don't want to go." 21:19 He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would honor God. Then he added, "Follow me."

21:20 Turning around, Peter saw the disciple Jesus loved following Jesus (the one who leaned back at dinner near Jesus' chest and asked who would betray him). 21:21 So Peter asked Jesus, "What about this one?"

21:22 "If I want him to remain until I return, what concern is that of yours?" Jesus replied. "You follow me."

21:23 Then the rumor spread among the others that this disciple would never die.

But Jesus didn’t say that; he only said “What concern is it of yours if he remains till I return?”

Epilogue

21:24 This is the disciple testifying about
these things and writing about them,
and we know that his testimony is valid.
21:25 Now there is a lot more Jesus did,
which if it were written down as well,
would certainly be too much for the
whole world to contain!

Acts

Jesus ascends to heaven

1:1 Theophilus, the first account I made
covered virtually everything that Jesus
did and taught, 1:2 right up to the day he
was taken up. He was instructing the
Ambassadors he had chosen through
the Holy Spirit. 1:3 These are the ones
to whom he presented himself alive
after his suffering, with much
indisputable evidence. They saw him at
various times over a period of forty
days, during which he told them things
about the kingdom of God.

1:4 Having brought them together he told them, “Do not leave Jerusalem; wait for what you heard me tell you that the Father promised. 1:5 Though John immersed people in water, before long you will be immersed in the Holy Spirit.”

1:6 Those that got together with him asked, “Master, is now the time for you to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

1:7 But he replied, “It is not for you to know the times or exact conditions the Father has set up by his own jurisdiction.

Jesus was not saying that the study of prophecy is unimportant, but that this was not the time for the fulfillment of that particular prophecy.

1:8 But you will receive power when the

Holy Spirit comes upon you. Then you will be my witnesses, not only in Jerusalem but also throughout Judea and Samaria— to the very ends of the earth.”

1:9 Having said this, he was lifted up before their eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 1:10 As they stared intently at the sky, suddenly two men in white clothing appeared beside them. 1:11 And they said, “You Galileans there! Why are you just standing here gazing into the sky? This very same Jesus who was lifted up from you into heaven will return the very same way you watched him go.”

Matthias replaces Judas

1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is about a mile away. 1:13 When they arrived they went into the upper room where these people were meeting: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alpheus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 1:14 They were all persisting in unified prayer, along with the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Jesus' siblings.

1:15 It was in those days that Peter stood up among the sisters and brothers (including a crowd that brought the total number to about a hundred and twenty) 1:16 and addressed them: "All of you, brothers and sisters: The scripture must be fulfilled, which the

Holy Spirit spoke via David about Judas. He was the one who led those who arrested Jesus, 1:17 though he was counted as one of us and was part of our assignment.”

1:18 (He paid the price for a field with the wages he earned from his treachery. He fell head-first there, splitting open his body and splattering his guts. 1:19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about it, so the place became known in the vernacular as “Acheldamach,” meaning “Field of

Blood.”)

The accounts of Judas’ death as described here and in Mt. 27:5 are not in conflict. The two together paint a picture of the priests buying the field after Judas apparently did a poor job of hanging himself. It was the priests who called it “blood money” and then used it to buy the land as a place to bury strangers.

1:20 “For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his living quarters be deserted; let no one live there!’, and, ‘Let his responsibility pass to someone else!’ 1:21 So we must select his replacement from among the men who were with us the whole time Master Jesus walked among us, 1:22 starting from the immersion of John till the day

Jesus was taken from us. One of them is to become a witness along with us of his resurrection.”

1:23 So they nominated two: Joseph (also known as Barsabbas and Justus) and Matthias. 1:24 They prayed, “You, Master, the one who knows everyone’s heart, show us which of these two you have chosen, 1:25 to take this place of service and commission Judas violated to go where he belongs.” 1:26 They flipped a coin and the choice went to Matthias, so he was considered a

member with the eleven Ambassadors.

The phrase “flipped a coin” is a more common term than “cast lots” and carries the same meaning. Preceded by prayer, this was the accepted method of determining the answer. It was never used again after the arrival of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit comes upon all believers

2:1 Now on the day of the Feast of Pentecost they were all in one place. 2:2 Suddenly from heaven came a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it completely filled the house where they were sitting. 2:3 What looked like tongues of fire split up and settled on each one of them, 2:4 and they were all

filled with the Holy Spirit. So they began to speak in different languages as the Spirit caused them to speak.

2:5 Now there were Judeans staying in Jerusalem, godly folk from nations all over the region. 2:6 When they heard the sound, a huge crowd gathered. But they were confused, because each one heard them speaking in their own language. 2:7 They were beside themselves and wondered aloud, “Look! Aren’t these who are speaking all Galileans? 2:8 So how are we hearing this in our native-born languages? 2:9 Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, 2:10 Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, repatriated

Romans 2:11 (both Judeans and proselytes), Cretans, Arabs… we are hearing them speak the majestic things of God in our languages!”

2:12 Still beside themselves, they were all baffled and said to each other, “What does this mean?” 2:13 But others sneered and said, “They’re just drunk on sweet wine!”

Peter speaks to the crowd

2:14 Now Peter, standing with the Eleven, was inspired to speak up: “Judeans and all residents of Jerusalem, know this, and take heed to my words! 2:15 Of course these people are not drunk, as you presume; it’s still

morning! 2:16 Rather, this is what the prophet Joel was inspired to predict:

2:17 “ ‘And it will happen in the last days,’ says God, ‘that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh: your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your youths will have visions, and your elders will have dreams. 2:18 In fact, even on my male and female servants I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 2:19 And I will give omens in the sky above, signs on the earth below: blood and fire and plumes of smoke. 2:20 The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the day of the majestic appearing of the Master. 2:21 And it will come to pass that everyone who

invokes the name of the Master will be saved.’

2:22 “People of Israel, hear these words! Jesus the Nazarene was a man proven to you to be from God by the powerful deeds, miracles, and signs God performed through him among you, as you well know. 2:23 In accordance with the deliberate plan and foresight of God, he was handed over to you, who convinced lawless people to crucify him. 2:24 But God raised him up, breaking the bonds of death that couldn’t possibly hold him. 2:25 David says about him,

‘I always saw the Master before me, seeing that he is at my right hand, so I will not be shaken. 2:26 Therefore my

heart was made glad and my tongue rejoiced, yet my flesh will pitch its tent on hope. 2:27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades. Nor will you allow your Pure One to make the acquaintance of Decay 2:28 but rather the paths of Life; you will fill me with the joy of your presence.'

2:29 "Brothers and sisters, let me speak bluntly to you regarding the patriarch David: He died and was buried, and his grave is still here today. 2:30 But he was in fact a prophet, and he knew that God swore an oath to him that one of his descendants would sit on his throne. 2:31 He foresaw this and spoke about the resurrection of the Anointed One, who was not abandoned in Hades, nor did his flesh experience decay. 2:32 This

is Jesus whom God raised, of which we are all witnesses.

2:33 “So with him being exalted to the right hand of God, as well as obtaining the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, he poured out what you now see and hear. 2:34 For David did not ascend into heaven but said, ‘The Master said to my Master, “Sit to my right 2:35 until I make your enemies your footrest.”’ 2:36 So let the whole house of Israel know for sure that God made him Master as well as the Anointed One— this Jesus you crucified!”

2:37 Upon hearing this, they were cut to the heart. So they said to Peter and the

rest of the Ambassadors, “Sisters and brothers, what are we to do?”

2:38 Peter answered, “Turn to God, each of you, and be immersed in the name of Jesus the Anointed One for the pardon of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 2:39 This promise is to you and your children, and to those far away— to whomever the Master our God invites.” 2:40 And with many more words he implored and encouraged them, saying “Be saved from this crooked generation!”

The Congregation is born

2:41 Those who affirmed and accepted what he said were immersed, and about

three thousand souls were added that day. 2:42 They continued in the Ambassadors' teachings, in the partnership of sharing meals, and in prayers. 2:43 Fear came upon everyone as the Ambassadors performed many miracles and signs.

2:44 Now all those who believed stayed close to each other and shared everything. 2:45 They sold their possessions and properties and disbursed the proceeds to others according to their needs.

This was not communism since no one was forced by any authority to share what they had.

2:46 They continued in unity day after day in the temple, and from home to home sharing meals with one joyful

heart, 2:47 praising God. They were favorable toward everyone, and the Master added more each day to the number being saved in that place.

Peter heals a lame man

3:1 Now Peter and John went up into the temple compound at the prayer hour, in mid-afternoon. 3:2 And there was a certain man who had been born lame, who was placed each day near the temple compound door called Beautiful, to beg from those who entered. 3:3 When he spotted Peter and John as they were about to enter, he asked them for money.

3:4 But Peter (with John) looked intently at him and said, “Look at us!” 3:5 So he

gave them his attention, expecting to receive something. 3:6 Instead, Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but I will give you what I do have: in the name of Jesus the Anointed One from Nazareth, get up and walk!” 3:7 Then Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up. Instantly his feet and ankle bones were made stable, 3:8 and he jumped up, stood, and walked.

He entered the temple compound with them, walking and jumping and praising God, 3:9 and all the people saw him do this. 3:10 They recognized him as the one who sat begging at the Beautiful Gate of the temple compound, and they were filled with shock and amazement at what had happened to him. 3:11 As he clung to Peter and John, the whole

crowd ran to them at Solomon’s Portico, utterly shocked.

Peter identifies Jesus as the Anointed One

3:12 Seeing this, Peter spoke to the people: “People of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Why are you staring at us as though we made him walk by our own power or godliness? 3:13 The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob— the God of our ancestors— honored his child Jesus. You actually gave him up and disowned him in front of Pilate, who wanted to release him! 3:14 You disowned the Holy and Just One, and as a favor you asked for a murderer to be granted to you. 3:15 You killed the

originator of life, whom God raised from the dead; we are witnesses of this.

3:16 “It is by faith in his Name that this person— the one you’re looking at, the one you saw made strong— his Name and the faith that is through him is how this one has been completely healed before your eyes. 3:17 Now sisters and brothers, I know that you committed this in ignorance, as also your rulers did. 3:18 Yet it is by the suffering of his Anointed One that he fulfilled what God promised ahead of time through all the prophets.

3:19 “So turn back to God! Then your sins can be erased and times of refreshing can come from the presence of the Master, 3:20 so that he may

dispatch the One already chosen for you: Anointed Jesus. 3:21 Heaven must hold him in expectation until the time comes to restore everything, which God spoke long ago through his holy prophets.

3:22 “In fact, Moses said that ‘The Master your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers and sisters. You must listen to everything he tells you. 3:23 But whoever does not listen to that prophet must be completely wiped out from among the people’. 3:24 Likewise, all the prophets from Samuel forward announced these days. 3:25 You are the offspring of the prophets and of the covenant God ratified with your ancestors, as he said to Abraham: ‘And

in your descendants all the tribes of the earth will be blessed'. 3:26 It was to you first that God, raising his child, commissioned him to bless you by turning each of you away from your evil ways."

Peter and John testify before the Sanhedrin

4:1 Now as they spoke to the people, they were opposed by the priests, the magistrate of the temple compound, and the Sadducees. 4:2 They were disturbed about what they were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 4:3 So they seized them and put them into custody overnight, since it was already dusk. 4:4 Many of those who heard what

was said believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

4:5 The next morning, the rulers, elders, and scribes convened a meeting in Jerusalem. 4:6 In attendance were Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and whoever else was part of the high priest's family. 4:7 They had Peter and John stand in front of them to be interrogated: "By what power or in what name do you do this?"

4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke to them: "Rulers of the people, and elders! 4:9 If we are on trial today because of an act of kindness to a crippled person, and by what means he was restored to health, 4:10 then let it be known to you and to all the people

of Israel: It was in the name of Jesus the Anointed One from Nazareth, the one you crucified and whom God raised from the dead— it was in this name that this one stands before you healed. 4:11 Jesus is ‘the stone that the builders discarded but which has become the cornerstone’. 4:12 And there is no restoration from anyone else; there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.”

4:13 They were surprised by the boldness of Peter and John, since they considered them to be uneducated peasants, but they noted that they had been with Jesus. 4:14 Yet they could not deny that the person who had been healed was standing right there. 4:15 So they ordered them to leave the

Sanhedrin while they discussed their strategy: 4:16 “What can we do to these people? We cannot deny that a miracle was performed through them, and everyone in Jerusalem knows it. 4:17 But we must prevent this from spreading any more among the people, so we will threaten them that they must not speak any longer about this name to anyone.”

4:18 So they called them back in and ordered them sternly to proclaim nothing and teach nothing concerning the name of Jesus. 4:19 But Peter and John retorted, “Judge for yourselves whether the right thing to do before God is to listen to you rather than to him! 4:20 We cannot help speaking about what we saw and heard.”

4:21 The ones who were threatening them released them. They couldn’t devise a way to punish them since all the people were honoring God for what had happened, 4:22 and the person who received the miracle of healing was over forty years old.

The believers pray for Peter and John

4:23 After their release they returned to their own people and reported what the high priests and elders had said to them. 4:24 Those who heard this lifted up their voices in unity to God and said, “Sovereign One— you who made the heaven, earth, sea, and all they contain — 4:25 you said by your Holy Spirit through the mouth of our ancestor

David, your servant, ‘Why do the nations snarl, and why do the peoples mutter empty rhetoric? 4:26 The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers gathered in one place, against the Master and against his Anointed One’.

4:27 “Herod and Pontius Pilate actually conspired in this city against your holy child Jesus, whom you anointed. They joined with both the other nations and people of Israel, 4:28 to do whatever your might and counsel had already decreed to happen. 4:29 So now, Master, take note of their threats and grant that your servants will speak your word boldly. 4:30 Stretch out your hand so that healings and great miracles occur through the name of your dear holy child Jesus.”

4:31 As they asked this, the place where they were gathered was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with great boldness.

The Congregation cares for its own

4:32 Now the whole believing community was one in heart and soul; not one of them said their possessions were their own but shared everything.

This is not communism, since no one was forced to sell or give, as the following account of Ananias and Sapphira will say explicitly.

4:33 And with great power the Ambassadors retold what they witnessed of the resurrection of Master

Jesus. Much favor was upon them all, 4:34 and there was not one needy person among them, because whoever owned land or houses sold them 4:35 and placed the proceeds at the Ambassadors' feet. Then the money was distributed to each according to their needs.

4:36 Take Joseph for example (the Ambassadors called him Barnabas, which means Consoling); he was a Levite and a native of Cyprus. 4:37 He sold a field that belonged to him, then took the proceeds and placed them at the Ambassadors' feet.

Ananias and Sapphira

5:1 Now there was a certain man named Ananias and his wife Sapphira who sold some property as well. 5:2 But they both conspired to present only part of the proceeds as if it were the whole amount.

5:3 Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has filled your heart to the point that you lied to the Holy Spirit and kept back part of the money you got for selling your land? 5:4 Wasn’t the land yours to dispose of in whatever way you chose? Why did you entertain such a notion? You have not lied to people but to God!” 5:5 And as Ananias heard these words, he dropped dead. Then great fear came upon all who heard about this. 5:6 The young men came in, wrapped his body, and buried him.

5:7 It just so happened that about three hours later his wife came in, unaware of what had happened. 5:8 So Peter asked her, “Tell me, is this the full price you got for your land?”

And she answered, “Yes, that is the amount.”

5:9 Then Peter confronted her, “Why is it that you conspired to test the Spirit of the Master? Look! The feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out too!”

5:10 Instantly she fell at his feet and died. When the young men came in and saw that she too was dead, they carried her out and buried her with her husband. 5:11 And so great fear came

upon the whole Congregation and on all who heard about these events.

The Ambassadors heal many

5:12 The Ambassadors performed other signs and miracles among the people. They were in the habit of meeting in Solomon's Portico, 5:13 but others didn't dare to meet with them, though they held them in high esteem. 5:14 But the number of men and women putting trust in the Master multiplied. 5:15 It got to the point where people carried the infirm into the city squares and placed them on cots and mats, in the hope that Peter's shadow would fall upon them as he went by. 5:16 A huge crowd came from the cities around Jerusalem,

bringing the infirm and the demon-possessed, and they were all cured.

The Ambassadors are arrested, tried, and released

5:17 Now the high priest and his allies among the Sadducees were filled with envy, 5:18 so they went and seized the Ambassadors, placing them under arrest. 5:19 But an angel of the Master came during the night. Opening the jail doors and leading them out, 5:20 he said, “Go, stand in the temple compound and speak to the people all about this life.” 5:21 Upon hearing this, they entered the temple compound early in the morning and taught.

Then the high priest and his allies got together and convened the Sanhedrin, including all the elders of Israel, and summoned for the prisoners to be brought before them. 5:22 But the deputies went out and could not find them in the jail. 5:23 So they returned and reported, “We found the prison locked securely and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them there was no one inside.”

5:24 This report perplexed the officer of the temple compound and the high priests, who wondered what would come of all this. 5:25 Then someone else came along and told them, “Look! The men you had put in jail are standing in the temple compound and teaching the people!” 5:26 So the

commander and the deputies came forward and escorted them away, but they didn’t use force because they were afraid that the people would stone them.

5:27 So they brought them to stand in front of the Sanhedrin, and the high priest demanded, 5:28 “Didn’t we order you in no uncertain terms to stop teaching in this Name? But look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to lay the guilt of this man’s blood upon our heads!”

5:29 But Peter and the Ambassadors replied, “We must obey God rather than people! 5:30 It was the God of our ancestors who raised Jesus, whom you seized and hung on a cross. 5:31 God

exalted him to be Ruler and Savior at his right hand, to bring Israel to turn to God so their sins can be pardoned. 5:32 We are witnesses to these declarations, along with the Holy Spirit that God gives to those who obey him.”

5:33 Those who heard this were furious and wanted to execute them. 5:34 But a certain Pharisee by the name of Gamaliel stood up before the Sanhedrin; he was a teacher of the law who had everyone’s respect and esteem. He had the accused dismissed temporarily while he addressed the group.

5:35 And he said, “People of Israel, stop and think about what you intend to do with these people. 5:36 Some time ago

Theudas rose up and claimed to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. But when he was killed, all those he had won to his cause were disbanded, and it came to nothing. 5:37 After that it was Judas of Galilee, in the days of the census. He drew people to himself, was killed, and then his followers were scattered. 5:38 So I tell you this: Leave these people alone and let them be. For if this plan or effort is of human origin it will be destroyed, 5:39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to destroy them; in fact, you'd be opposing God."

5:40 His speech persuaded them. So they called in the Ambassadors, had them beaten, and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus.

Then they released them. 5:41 But the Ambassadors exited the Sanhedrin celebrating the fact that they were deemed worthy to be despised for the sake of the Name. 5:42 Day after day, in the temple compound and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and announcing the good news of Anointed Jesus.

Addressing prejudice in the Congregation

6:1 In those days when the number of disciples was multiplying, the Greek-speaking Jews began to complain to the Hebrews that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily food distribution. 6:2 So The Twelve called everyone together for a meeting

and said, “We do not want to neglect the Word of God in order to serve food. 6:3 So, brothers and sisters, pick out seven respected men from among you, who are full of the Spirit and wisdom, for us to put in charge of this problem. 6:4 Then we can concentrate on prayer and serving the Word.”

6:5 This solution pleased the whole crowd, so they chose Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Prochoros, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas (a proselyte from Antioch). 6:6 They presented themselves to the Ambassadors, who prayed and dedicated them. 6:7 So the Word of God spread out, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied tremendously, including a

sizable number of priests who heeded the faith.

Stephen is arrested

6:8 Now Stephen, full of favor and power, performed great miracles and signs among the people. 6:9 And then came some members of the Freed Collective, with residents of Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and the province of Asia, debating with Stephen. 6:10 But they could not refute the wisdom and spirit with which he spoke. 6:11 So they planted some men in the crowd to say, “We have heard him speaking irreverent things against Moses and God!”

6:12 They stirred up the people, along with the elders and scribes who were standing nearby, and they seized him and took him to the Sanhedrin. 6:13 They also had false witnesses testify, “This person never stops speaking out against this holy place and the law. 6:14 For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us.” 6:15 And those seated in the Sanhedrin kept staring at him, because they saw that his face looked like the face of an angel.

Stephen’s speech to the Sanhedrin

7:1 The high priest said, “How do you plead to these charges?”

7:2 Stephen began his sworn testimony: “Folks, fellow believers, ancestors, hear me! The Majestic God appeared to our ancestor Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia before he settled in Haran. 7:3 And he told him, ‘Leave your land, your people, and your relatives, and move to the land I will show to you.’ 7:4 So he left the land of the Chaldeans and moved to Haran. After his father died, God moved him to this land in which you are now settled.

7:5 “But he did not give him any inheritance to enjoy, not even a place to set his foot. Yet he promised to give it to him later, to his descendants, though as yet he did not have a child. 7:6 He added that his descendants would be wanderers in a foreign land, where they

would be enslavedand abused for four hundred years. 7:7 ‘And the nation enslaving them will be judged,’ God said, ‘and afterwards the enslaved will leave there and offer divine service to me in this place.’

7:8 “He gave him the covenant of circumcision, and then Abraham fathered Isaac, whom he circumcised on the eighth day. Then Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs. 7:9 But the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph and sold him into Egypt. Yet God was with him; 7:10 he got him out of all his ordeals and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh (king of Egypt). Pharaoh made him governor over all of Egypt including his own household.

7:11 “Now a famine came upon all of Egypt and Canaan; it was severe and our ancestors could find no provisions. 7:12 Then Jacob heard that there were stores of grain in Egypt, so he dispatched our ancestors the first time. 7:13 At the second time, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers, which also revealed his nationality to Pharaoh. 7:14 So Joseph dispatched them to invite his father Jacob and all his relatives, seventy-five people in all. 7:15 Jacob then went down to Egypt, where eventually he and our ancestors died. 7:16 They were transferred to Shechem and buried in the tomb Abraham purchased for a certain amount of silver from the tribe of Hamor there.

7:17 “Now as the time drew near to fulfill the promise God had made to Abraham, the population multiplied in Egypt. 7:18 But then a different king came to power in Egypt, one who knew nothing of Joseph. 7:19 This one dealt treacherously with our ancestors and oppressed them, forcing them to let their babies die of exposure. 7:20 It was then that Moses was born (a divinely gifted child), and he stayed in his parents’ home for three months. 7:21 But when he was left to exposure, Pharaoh’s daughter took him in and raised him as her own son. 7:22 So Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was accomplished in word and deed.

7:23 “Now as he approached his forties, he decided to visit his people, the people of Israel. 7:24 He saw someone being mistreated and came to that person’s aid, avenging them by killing the Egyptian. 7:25 He presumed that his fellow Hebrews understood that God would rescue them through him, but they did not understand this.

7:26 “The next day he saw two of them fighting, and he tried to make peace between them: ‘You men are of the same nation, so why are you hurting each other?’ 7:27 But the one who was hurting the other pushed Moses away and retorted, ‘Who made you ruler and judge over us? 7:28 I suppose you intend to kill me just as you did to that Egyptian yesterday!’ 7:29 Hearing this,

Moses ran away and became a foreigner in the land of Midan, where he fathered two sons.

7:30 “Forty years later, he saw an angel in the wilderness of mount Sinai, in the flame of a thorn bush fire. 7:31 As Moses studied it he was puzzled at the sight. But as he approached to examine it he heard the voice of the Master: 7:32 ‘I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.’ Moses began to shake and didn’t dare to examine it further. 7:33 Then the Master said to him, ‘Untie your sandals and remove them from your feet, for the place upon which you are standing is holy ground. 7:34 I have indeed seen the abuse of my people in Egypt; I heard their groaning and have come

down to free them. So now, come here so I can send you back to Egypt.’

7:35 “This is the Moses they had disowned by saying, ‘Who made you ruler and judge over us?’ This is the one God commissioned, via the angel he saw in the thorn bush, to be a ruler as well as a redeemer and judge. 7:36 He led them out, performing miracles and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea, and also in the wilderness for forty years. 7:37 This is the Moses who told the people of Israel, ‘God will raise up a prophet like me from among you.‘

7:38 “This is the one who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel, who spoke to him and our

ancestors at Mount Sinai; he is the one who received the living oracles to give to you. 7:39 But our ancestors were unwilling to listen, so they pushed him away and returned to Egypt in their hearts. 7:40 They told Aaron, ‘Make us gods who will go ahead of us, because we don’t know what has become of this Moses who led us out of Egypt.’ 7:41 So they made a calf in those days, and they sacrificed to the idol, happy with the thing they had made with their hands.

7:42 “So God turned away and gave them over to offer divine service to the stars of the sky. As it is written in the book of the prophets: ‘House of Israel, was it to me that you offered slaughtered animals and sacrifices for

forty years in the wilderness? 7:43 No,
you pitched the tent of Molech and the
constellation of your god Raiphan, of
whom you made idols to worship. So I
will exile you far beyond Babylon.’ 7:44
Our ancestors had the Ark of the
Testimony in the wilderness, which the
One who spoke to Moses had him
make according to the model he was
shown. 7:45 Afterwards, our ancestors,
with Joshua, carried it as they took
possession of the lands of the nations
God drove out before them.

“This continued till the time of David,
7:46 who was favored by God. He asked
permission to build a dwelling place for
the God of Jacob, 7:47 but it was
Solomon who built it for him. 7:48 Yet
the Most High does not live in what

human hands build, as the prophet says: 7:49 ‘Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footrest. What kind of house can you build for me?’ asks the Master, ‘Or where do I stop to rest? 7:50 Is it not my hand that did all of this?’

7:51 “You stiff-necked heathen! You continually oppose the Holy Spirit, just like your ancestors! 7:52 Name a prophet they didn’t persecute! They even killed those who predicted the arrival of the Just One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered— 7:53 you who received the law mandated by angels but failed to protect!”

The Sanhedrin murders Stephen

7:54 Upon hearing this, they were furious and ground their teeth at him. 7:55 But filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, he looked intently into heaven and saw the majesty of God, with Jesus standing at God's right. 7:56 He exclaimed, "Look! I see the heavens opened up and the Human standing at God's right!"

7:57 Then, shouting loudly and covering their ears, they all rushed at him at once. 7:58 They threw him outside of the city and pelted him with rocks, and the witnesses laid their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. 7:59 So they pelted Stephen with stones as he was calling on Jesus and saying, "Master Jesus, receive my spirit." 7:60 He fell to his knees and shouted,

“Master, don’t charge them with this sin!” Upon saying this, he passed away.

The Congregation is scattered

8:1 Now Saul endorsed his execution. A great persecution against the Congregation in Jerusalem began in that day, and they were all (except the Ambassadors) scattered throughout the districts of Judea and Samaria. 8:2 Conscientious men carried Stephen away for burial, and they mourned deeply for him. 8:3 Saul, however, wreaked havoc on the Congregation, going into homes and dragging out both men and women to be jailed.

Philip spreads the good news

8:4 As a result, those who were scattered went everywhere spreading the Word, the good news. 8:5 One was Philip, who went down into the city of Samaria to proclaim the Anointed One to them. 8:6 The crowd was united in heeding the things they heard Philip say, and the miracles they saw him perform. 8:7 Many unclean spirits came out of those they had possessed, shrieking as they left; many who were paralyzed or lame were cured. 8:8 So great joy came upon that city.

Simon the Sorcerer

8:9 There was a certain man named Simon in the city, a practitioner of magic arts who was amazing the whole nation of Samaria. He claimed to be someone great, 8:10 and all of them, from peasant to prince, listened to him and said, “This one is the divine Great Power.” 8:11 They listened to him because of how long he’d been amazing them with magic arts. 8:12 But when Philip brought the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Anointed One, both men and women were immersed. 8:13 Even Simon believed and was immersed, and he stayed with Philip, watching with amazement the miracles and very powerful deeds being performed.

8:14 Now the Ambassadors in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the Word of God, and they sent Peter and John to them. 8:15 They went down and prayed about them so that they could receive the Holy Spirit, 8:16 because to that point it had not come upon any of them since they had only been immersed in the name of Master Jesus. 8:17 Then they placed their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

8:18 But when Simon saw that the Spirit was given by means of laying hands on people, he offered them money. 8:19 He said, “Give me this authority too, so that whoever I place my hands on will receive the Holy Spirit.”

8:20 But Peter told him, “May your money be destroyed along with you, because you thought you could purchase the gift of God! 8:21 You have no share or stake in this matter, since your heart is not right with God. 8:22 Turn to God, then, from this malice of yours. Pray to the Master and beg him to forgive you for this evil intent, 8:23 for I perceive that you are poisoned with bitterness and bound by injustice.” 8:24 So Simon responded, “Plead to the Master for my sake, so that nothing you said will come upon me.”

8:25 So then, those that had validated and spoken the word of the Master returned to Jerusalem, and along the way they brought the good news to many Samaritan villages.

Philip and the Ethiopian

8:26 Then an angel of the Master spoke to Philip: “Get up and go at noon to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza, the desert road.” 8:27 So Philip got up and went, and he saw a man who was an Ethiopian high official. He had considerable power under the Kandake (queen) of Ethiopia as chief finance officer. He had come to worship in Jerusalem, 8:28 and as he sat in his chariot on the return trip, he was reading words of the prophet Isaiah.

8:29 Now the Spirit said to Philip, “Approach this chariot and stay with it.” 8:30 So Philip ran toward it and heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He

asked, “Are you sure you comprehend what you’re reading?”

8:31 “How could I, unless someone guides me?” he replied. Then he invited Philip to step up and sit with him.

8:32 The place of scripture he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to slaughter; like a lamb being sheered he made no sound, he did not open his mouth. 8:33 In his humble state, justice was denied, and who will tell the story of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”

8:34 Then the official asked Philip another question: “Please tell me who the prophet is talking about here, himself or someone else?” 8:35 So

Philip began with that passage to explain the good news about Jesus.

8:36 Now as they went along the road, they came to some water, and the official said, “Is there any reason I cannot be immersed?” 8:37 8:38 So he ordered the chariot to stop, and both he and Philip went down into the water, where Philip immersed him. 8:39 As they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Master snatched Philip away! The official never saw him again, but went on his way full of joy. 8:40 Philip, meanwhile, found himself at Azotus. So as he passed through, he brought the good news to all the cities up to Caesarea.

Saul is knocked off his high horse

9:1 Meanwhile, Saul continued to breathe out murderous threats against the disciples of the Master. He approached the high priest 9:2 to request letters to the synagogues in Damascus. He wanted permission to take any who were of The Way, whether men or women, as prisoners to Jerusalem.

9:3 As he traveled and came close to Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 9:4 Dropping to the ground, he heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you hounding me?”

9:5 He replied, “Who are you, Master?”

“I am Jesus,” the voice replied, “the one you are chasing down! 9:6 But go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

9:7 The men who were traveling with him stood there speechless; they heard the sound but saw no one. 9:8 Then Saul got up from the ground but he could see nothing at all when he opened his eyes. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. 9:9 For three days he was blind, and he did not eat or drink anything.

Ananias heals Saul

9:10 Now there was a certain disciple in Damascus named Ananias, and the

Master called to him in a vision,
“Ananias!”

“Here I am, Master,” he replied.

9:11 And the Master said, “Get up and go to Straight Street, and look for the house of Judas where there is someone from Tarsus named Saul, who is praying. 9:12 He has seen a vision of a man named Ananias coming to place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

9:13 But Ananias objected, “Master, I’ve heard about him from many people, about the terrible things he did to your holy ones in Jerusalem. 9:14 And now he has permission from the high priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

9:15 But the Master replied, “Go! For he is the instrument I have chosen to carry my name before nations and kings, as well as the people of Israel. 9:16 And I will tell him exactly how much he will suffer for my name’s sake.”

9:17 So Ananias went away, and when he entered the house he placed his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, the Master Jesus whom you saw on your way here, has commissioned me so that you can receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 9:18 And immediately something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes and he could see again! So he got up and was immersed. 9:19 He took nourishment and was strengthened, and he stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days.

The hunter becomes the hunted

9:20 Then Paul abruptly went into the synagogues to proclaim that Jesus is the God-Man. 9:21 This amazed everyone who heard it, because they said, “Isn’t this the one who wreaked havoc in Jerusalem on all who called upon this name? Didn’t he come here to arrest them and take them to the high priests?”

9:22 But Saul became more and more powerful, throwing the Judeans living in Damascus into turmoil by arguing that Jesus is the Anointed One. 9:23 And after this had continued for a long time, the Judeans conspired to assassinate him, 9:24 but Saul found out about their

plot. They monitored the city gates day and night for the chance to kill him. 9:25 But one night the disciples lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

9:26 Now when he came to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples there. But they were afraid of him and didn't believe he was a disciple like them. 9:27 So Barnabas vouched for him, telling the Ambassadors how he met the Master on the road, how the Master spoke to him, and how in Damascus he was speaking boldly in the name of Jesus. 9:28 As he continued, 9:29 he debated the Greek-speaking Judeans, yet they conspired to assassinate him. 9:30 But the believers found out about it and took him to Caesarea, then sent

him on his way to Tarsus. 9:31 So then the Congregation throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace. They were encouraged and continued in the fear of the Master, and their numbers multiplied with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Peter heals one and raises another

9:32 Meanwhile, as Peter traveled about he came down to the holy ones living in Lydda. 9:33 There he found a certain paralyzed person called Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years. 9:34 So Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the Anointed One heals you! Get up and take care of your bed!” Immediately he got up, 9:35 and the news about this

caused everyone living in Lydda and Saron to turn to the Master.

9:36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (translated as Dorcas). She was always doing good deeds and charitable work. 9:37 And in those days it happened that she became ill and died. So they bathed her and placed her in an upper room. 9:38 Now Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples heard that Peter was there. So they sent two men to him to say, “Hurry and come to us!” 9:39 Then Peter went with them, and they led him to the upper room, where all the widows were crying and displaying the tunics and other clothing Dorcas had made for them.

9:40 Peter had them all leave the room. He knelt down to pray, and turning toward the body he said, “Tabitha, arise!” And she opened her eyes, looked at Peter, and sat up! 9:41 So Peter took her by the hand and helped her up. Then he summoned the holy ones and widows and presented her to them alive. 9:42 This event became known throughout all of Joppa, and many put their trust in the Master. 9:43 Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.

An angel visits Cornelius

10:1 Now there was a certain man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a Roman army captain of the Italian Division. 10:2 He and his household feared God and

performed many acts of charity to people, praying to God continually. 10:3 One afternoon he had a vision and clearly saw an angel of God coming to him and saying, “Cornelius!” 10:4 He stared at him in fright and said, “What is it, sir?”

“Your prayers and charitable acts have been noted and recorded by God,” the angel answered. 10:5 “Now send men to Joppa and have them ask for someone named Simon, who is also called Peter. 10:6 He is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea.”

10:7 When the angel who had spoken to him departed, he summoned two of his house servants and a devout soldier who was in his service. 10:8 He told

them all about this and sent them off to Joppa.

Peter is prepared to meet Cornelius

10:9 The next day, as they were approaching the city, Peter went up onto the housetop around mid-day to pray. 10:10 He became very hungry and wanted something to eat. But while the food was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 10:11 He saw heaven open, and descending from it was a container like a large sheet being lowered to the ground by its four corners.

“by its four corners” means the sheet was tied at the corners to form a bag.

10:12 In it were all kinds of four-footed

animals, reptiles of the earth and birds of the sky.

10:13 Then he heard a voice: “Get up, Peter! Slaughter and eat!”

10:14 “Absolutely not, Master!” Peter objected, “For I never ate anything lowly or unclean!”

10:15 He heard the voice again: “What God has cleansed, do not call ‘contaminated.’”

10:16 This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken up to heaven. 10:17 Peter was completely baffled about the meaning of the vision he had seen, when suddenly the men who had been sent to him by Cornelius had asked the way to the house of

Simon and were standing at the door.
10:18 They inquired as to whether
Simon, who was also known as Peter,
was staying in that place. 10:19 As Peter
continued to be engrossed in the vision,
the Spirit said to him, “Look! Three men
are looking for you. 10:20 Now get up
and go with them, without prejudice, for
I have sent them.”

10:21 So Peter went down to the men
and said, “I am the one you’re looking
for. Why are you here?”

10:22 They replied, “Cornelius, a Roman
army captain and a God-fearing,
righteous man with a good reputation
among the whole Judaic nation, was
told by a holy angel to have you come

to his house, so he could hear what you have to proclaim.”

Peter visits Cornelius

10:23 He invited them in for the night. Early the next day he went with them, accompanied by some of the fellow believers from Joppa. 10:24 The day after that he entered Caesarea, where Cornelius was waiting with the relatives and close friends he had gathered there. 10:25 As Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet to worship. 10:26 But Peter lifted him up and said, “Get up! I am only human!”

10:27 He spoke to him briefly and went inside, where he found a large gathering. 10:28 So Peter said to them,

“You know very well that it is illegal for a Judean to associate or join with another nationality. But God showed me that I must not call anyone contaminated or unclean. 10:29 For that reason I came without prejudice when I was sent for. So now I need to know why you sent for me.”

10:30 Cornelius explained: “Four days ago at about this time, in the middle of the afternoon, I was fasting and praying in my house. Suddenly a man was standing in front of me, dressed in radiant clothing. 10:31 He said, ‘Cornelius! Your prayer has been heard and your charitable deeds have been noted and recorded before God. 10:32 So send people to Joppa to call for Simon who is known as Peter. He is

staying at the house of a tanner named Simon, by the sea.’ 10:33 I sent them to you right away, and you were good enough to come. So now, here we all are before God to hear everything you were ordered by the Master to say.”

10:34 Then Peter began to speak: “Now I truly understand that God is impartial. 10:35 Regardless of the nation, it is the one who fears him and acts righteously that he accepts. 10:36 You are well aware of the word he sent to the people of Israel, bringing the good news of peace through Jesus the Anointed One, who is Master of all. 10:37 You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee after the immersion proclaimed by John. 10:38 Jesus of Nazareth, anointed by God

with the Holy Spirit and power, went around helping and healing all who were victimized by the Adversary, for God was with him.

10:39 “We are witnesses of everything he did throughout Judea and especially in Jerusalem, where they put him to death by crucifixion. 10:40 But God raised him on the third day and allowed him to be seen— 10:41 not by all the people but by us, who were selected as witnesses beforehand by God, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 10:42 He tasked us to tell people that we vouch for this One who was singled out by God to judge the living and the dead. 10:43 The prophets all testify about him, and everyone who

puts their trust in him will receive pardon for their sins through his name.”

Even Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit

10:44 While Peter was still speaking these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the message. 10:45 Seeing that the gift of the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the other nations amazed the Judean believers who had accompanied Peter, 10:46 for they heard them speaking in supernatural languages and praising God. Then Peter said, 10:47 “Can anyone prevent these people from being immersed in water, since they received the Holy Spirit just as we did?” 10:48 So he had them immersed in the

name of Jesus the Anointed One. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Peter is challenged for eating with Gentiles

11:1 Now the Ambassadors and other believers who were in Judea heard that the other nations also received the Word of God. 11:2 But when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the Judeans confronted him 11:3 and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them!”

11:4 So Peter gave them the order of events: 11:5 “I was praying in the city of Joppa, when I fell into a trance. I saw a vision of a container made of a large sheet held by its four corners coming

down to me from heaven. 11:6 I examined it closely and saw the four-footed animals of the earth, the beasts, the reptiles, and the birds of the sky. 11:7 Then I heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter! Slaughter and eat!’

11:8 “But I objected, ‘Absolutely not, Master! Nothing contaminated or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ 11:9 Yet the voice from heaven responded a second time, ‘What God has cleansed, do not call contaminated!’ 11:10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven.

11:11 “Suddenly there were three men from Caesarea waiting at the house where we were. 11:12 Then the Spirit

told me to go along with them without prejudice. These six fellow believers also came with me, and we entered the man’s house. 11:13 He reported to us how he saw the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send people to Joppa to ask for Simon who is also called Peter. 11:14 He will proclaim to you how you can be saved— you and your entire household.’

11:15 “But as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as it did on us at the beginning. 11:16 And then I remembered what the Master declared when he said, ‘John did indeed immerse you in water, but you will be immersed in the Holy Spirit’. 11:17 So since God gave them the same gift he gave to us when we put our trust in

Master Jesus the Anointed One, who was I to get in God's way?"

11:18 Upon hearing all this, they calmed down and praised God: "So God really has also granted the other nations the option to turn to God and live!"

The Congregation at Antioch

11:19 Now it happened that those who had been scattered, due to the persecution that began over Stephen, went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. But they had only spoken the Word to Judeans. 11:20 However, some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene who went into Antioch and spoke to the Greeks as well, telling them the good news about Master

Jesus. 11:21 The power of the Master was with them, and as a result a great number who believed turned toward the Master.

11:22 This report reached the Congregation in Jerusalem, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 11:23 Arriving there, he saw the favor of God and was very happy, and he passionately urged everyone to remain with the Master. 11:24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a sizable crowd was added to the Master. 11:25 Then he went away to Tarsus to look for Saul. 11:26 When he found him, he took him to Antioch. It turned out that they stayed a whole year with that Congregation, teaching a large crowd. And it was at Antioch that the disciples

were first labeled Christians.

It is believed that “Christian”, which literally means “Messiah follower”, was a pejorative term given by its opponents, but happily adopted by the believers as sharing the disgrace of Jesus. It is only used in Acts 11:26, 26:28, and 1 Peter 4:16. More common terms for the believers were Disciples and Holy Ones (trad. Saints).

The prophecy of a famine

11:27 Now in those days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. 11:28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and indicated through the Spirit that a great famine was about to come upon the whole civilized world; this occurred during the rule of Claudius. 11:29 So the

disciples, in proportion to how each had prospered, set funds aside to be distributed to the sisters and brothers living in Judea. 11:30 They chose to send it to the elders via Barnabas and Saul.

Peter escapes from prison

12:1 It was around that time that King Herod decided to use his power to mistreat some of the Congregation. 12:2 He had James, the brother of John, put to death by the sword. 12:3 And when he saw that this pleased the Judeans, he proceeded to arrest Peter as well (this was during the Feast of Unleavened Bread). 12:4 Upon his arrest he was put in jail under the guard of four groups of four soldiers each.

Herod’s intention was to make an example of him after the Passover.

12:5 But while Peter was kept in jail, the Congregation was praying intensely to God about him. 12:6 On the night before Herod was ready to lead him to be punished, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound by two chains, and there were also guards at the door of the jail. 12:7 Suddenly an angel of the Master was standing there, lighting up the room! He struck Peter on the side to wake him up and said, “Quick, get up!” And the chains fell from his wrists.

12:8 Then the angel said to him, “Get dressed and put on your sandals,” so he did. And the angel added, “Put on your cloak and follow me.” 12:9 They

came out and he followed, but he was not sure whether he was actually seeing the angel or having a vision. 12:10 They passed through the first post and then the second, then came to the iron gate that leads to the city— which opened all by itself. They went out and then up one street, when the angel suddenly left him. 12:11 Then Peter came to his senses and said, “Now I know for sure that the Master sent his angel to rescue me from Herod’s clutches and all the schemes of the Judeans!” 12:12 As this dawned on him, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John who is also called Mark, where a sufficient number of people had come for a prayer meeting.

12:13 Now as Peter knocked on the door, a servant named Rhoda came to answer it. 12:14 When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed that she forgot to open it and ran in to report that he was standing at the door. 12:15 But though they told her she was crazy, she kept insisting that it was true. So they decided maybe it was his angel. 12:16 Meanwhile, Peter kept on knocking, and they finally opened it and were shocked to see him. 12:17 But he motioned for them to be quiet, then told them how the Master led him out of the jail. And he added, "Report all of this to James and the rest of the believers." Then he went someplace else.

12:18 At daybreak there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over

what could have become of Peter. 12:19 When Herod could not find him after a search, he interrogated the guards and then had them executed. Then he went down from Judea into Caesarea and stayed there.

Herod dies

12:20 It happened that he was in a fierce fight with the people of Tyre and Sidon. But they joined together and persuaded Blastus, the king's personal attendant, to ask for peace, because their country depended upon the king's for food. 12:21 And on a set day, Herod, dressed in his royal attire, sat on his throne and made a speech to them. 12:22 But the people all shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not a human!" 12:23 So

immediately an angel of the Master struck him, because he did not give honor to God. His insides were eaten by worms, and then he died.

Paul and Barnabus begin their missionary journey

12:24 But the Word of God grew and multiplied. 12:25 Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem after they had completed their service, and they brought along John who is also called Mark.

13:1 Now in the Congregation in Antioch, there were prophets and teachers, including Barnabas, Simon who was called Black, and Lucius the Cyrenian, as well as Manaen the foster

brother of Herod the regional ruler, and Saul. 13:2 During their fasting and divine service to the Master, the Holy Spirit said, “Separate Barnabas and Saul to me for the work to which I have called them.” 13:3 So after fasting and praying, they dedicated them and dismissed them.

In Cyprus

13:4 Having been sent by the Holy Spirit, they came down into Seleucia. Then from there they sailed away to Cyprus. 13:5 Arriving at Salamis, they proclaimed the Word of God in the synagogues of the Judeans, assisted by John. 13:6 Now as they traveled throughout the whole island up to Paphos, they found a certain man, an

Official Advisor and false prophet, a Judean by the name of Bar-Jesus. 13:7 He was with the regional governor Sergius Paul, an educated man, who called for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the Word of God.

13:8 Now Elymas, the Official Advisor (that is what his name means), opposed them and intended to deflect the regional governor from the faith. 13:9 But Saul (also called Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, 13:10 “You minion of the Slanderer, full of all kinds of treachery and mischief! You will never stop twisting the straight ways of the Master! 13:11 Now look! The hand of the Master is on you, and you will be blind and not see the sun until the appointed time.”

13:12 Then suddenly, poor vision and darkness fell upon him, and he went around trying to find someone to lead him by the hand. 13:13 Setting out from Paphos, Paul and his companions came to Perga of Pamphylia. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

In Pisidian Antioch

13:14 Then they passed through Perga to Antioch in Pisidia, where they entered the synagogue on the Day of Sabbaths and sat down. 13:15 Now after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent for them and said, “Gentlemen, fellow believers, if you have any words of comfort for the people, speak up.”

13:16 So Paul got up. Gesturing with his hand he said, “People of Israel and those who fear God, hear me! 13:17 The God of Israel chose our ancestors, and lifted up the people living as foreigners in the land of Egypt. With a great show of strength he led them out of it, 13:18 and for about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. 13:19 He destroyed seven nations in Canaan and apportioned their land. 13:20 After about four hundred and fifty years, he gave them judges up to the time of the prophet Samuel. 13:21 Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years.

13:22 “After Saul was deposed, God raised up David to be their king, about

whom he said this: ‘I found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my own heart, and he will do what I say.’ 13:23 From his Descendant and according to the Promise, God brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus. 13:24 Before Jesus was first presented, what John had proclaimed to all the people of Israel was the immersion that symbolizes when someone turns to God. 13:25 But as John was finishing his ‘race’ he said, ‘I’m not what you think I am. But coming next is the One whose sandals I am unworthy to untie.’

13:26 “People of Israel, descendants of the line of Abraham, and those of you who fear God: The word of this salvation was assigned to us. 13:27 The residents of Jerusalem and their rulers

were wrong about Jesus, and by condemning him they fulfilled what was prophesied— and those prophecies are read on every Sabbath. 13:28 Though they could find no grounds for the death penalty, they asked Pilate to have him executed.

13:29 “Now when they had accomplished everything that was written about him, they took him down from the cross and placed him in a tomb. 13:30 But God raised him up from the dead; 13:31 he was seen over the course of many days by those who went up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. These are now his witnesses to the people.

13:32 “So we bring you the good news which was promised to our ancestors, 13:33 that God has completely fulfilled this to us, their children, by raising Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are my son; today I have fathered you.’ 13:34 Seeing that he has raised him from the dead and will in no way return to decay, he has thus declared, ‘I will give you the same cleansing and trustworthiness as David.’ 13:35 So also in another place he said, ‘You will not allow your clean one to experience decay.’ 13:36 But after he had served his own generation according to God’s counsel, David was laid to rest with his ancestors and did indeed experience decay. 13:37 Yet the One God raised did not experience it.

13:38 “Folks, let it be clear to you that the pardon of sins is being proclaimed through this One. 13:39 Though the Law of Moses could not acquit you of your sins, everyone who trusts in this One is acquitted. 13:40 But be careful that what was declared by the prophets will not come upon you: 13:41 ‘Look here, you mockers; be amazed and then vanish! I will achieve something in your days, the likes of which you would never believe even if someone told you.’”

13:42 As they left the synagogue the people encouraged them to speak of these things the next Sabbath. 13:43 When the gathering had broken up, many of the Judeans and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas,

who spoke to them and convinced them to remain in the favor of God.

13:44 On the next Sabbath nearly the whole city had gathered to hear the Word of the Master. 13:45 But the Judeans saw the crowd and were filled with envy, so they slandered Paul and contradicted what he said. 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas boldly retorted, “We had to speak the Word of God to you first. But now that you are pushing it away and have judged yourselves to be unworthy of eternal life, watch this! We are turning to the other nations! 13:47 For this is the command of the Master to us: ‘I have appointed you as a light to the other nations, to bring salvation to the farthest reaches of the earth.’ ”

13:48 Upon hearing this, the people of other nations were very happy and honored the Word of the Master, and whoever was aligned with eternal life believed. 13:49 So the Word of the Master was spread throughout the whole country. 13:50 But again, the Judeans goaded the devout and respected women and city dignitaries into persecuting Paul and Barnabas, who were deported beyond their borders. 13:51 So they shook the dust from their feet to insult them, then went to Iconium. 13:52 And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

In Iconium

14:1 But the same thing happened in Iconium, when they entered into the

synagogue of the Judeans and spoke to them in such a way that multitudes of both Judeans and Greeks believed. 14:2 The hostile Judeans agitated the people of other nations and provoked them into opposing the believers. 14:3 Nevertheless, they stayed a long time and spoke boldly concerning the Master, who confirmed his favorable Word by granting that they would perform signs and miracles.

14:4 The population of the city was split over this, some siding with the Judeans and others with the Ambassadors. 14:5 So the people of other nations, with the Judeans and their rulers, hatched a plot to abuse them and then execute them by stoning. 14:6 But they were made aware of the plot and ran for refuge in

the Lyconian cities Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding area, 14:7 spreading the good news.

In Lystra and Derbe

14:8 There was a certain man sitting in Lystra who was born with lame feet and had never walked. 14:9 He heard Paul speaking, who then looked directly at him and perceived that he had the faith to be restored. 14:10 Paul shouted, “Get up on your feet!” And he jumped up and walked.

14:11 The crowd saw what Paul had done, so they shouted in Lyconian, “The gods have come down to us in human form!“ 14:12 They called Barnabas ”Zeus“ and Paul ”Hermes,”

since he was the leading speaker. 14:13 In addition, the priest of Zeus for the whole city brought bulls and wreaths to the gates, intending to lead the crowd in sacrifice.

14:14 Now when the Ambassadors Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothing in despair and rushed into the crowd saying, 14:15 “Folks, why are you doing all this? We are ordinary people just like you! We bring you the good news so that you will renounce these worthless things in favor of the living God who made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything they contain. 14:16 In past generations God let the nations go their own ways. 14:17 But he never left himself without a testimony of good deeds, such as bringing rain from

the sky and crops in their seasons, filling us with food and happiness.” 14:18 But even after saying this, they could hardly stop the crowd from sacrificing to them.

14:19 When Judeans from Antioch and Iconium arrived, they persuaded the crowd to stone Paul. Presuming him dead, they dragged him outside the city. 14:20 But when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and entered the city! The next day, he left along with Barnabas for Derbe.

Back to Syrian Antioch

14:21 Having given the good news to that city and making a considerable number of disciples, they returned to

Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. 14:22 They greatly encouraged the disciples and urged them to remain in the faith: “It is through many pressures that we must enter into the kingdom of God.”

14:23 They designated elders for each Congregation. Praying and fasting, they committed them to the Master in whom they had put their faith. 14:24 Then they passed through Pisidia and into Pamphylia. 14:25 Once they had spoken the Word of the Master in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 14:26 And from there they sailed off to Antioch, where they had first been commissioned by the favor of God for the work they had now completed. 14:27 Upon their arrival they called a meeting of the Congregation and told them of all that

God had done through them, including opening the door of faith to the other nations. 14:28 And they stayed a long time with the disciples.

The Jerusalem Council

15:1 Now some people came down from Judea, who were teaching the brothers and sisters that if anyone was not circumcised according to the custom of Moses, they could not be saved. 15:2 There was a big dispute going on among them as Paul and Barnabas arrived. So those two and some others were sent to Jerusalem to see the Ambassadors and elders in Jerusalem about this matter. 15:3 Having been sent out by the Congregation, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, and as

they went along they described in great detail how the other nations were being converted. This made all the believers very happy. 15:4 When they arrived in Jerusalem they were welcomed by the Congregation, the Ambassadors, and the elders, and they gave detailed reports of all that God had done through them.

15:5 But some from the Pharisee sect who had come to faith stood up and insisted that the convernts from other nations were to be circumcised, and to keep the whole law of Moses. 15:6 So the Ambassadors and elders convened a meeting to resolve the matter. 15:7 After much discussion Peter stood up and addressed them: “Folks, fellow believers, you are well aware that early

in the beginning God chose me from among you to speak to the other nations and tell them the Word of the good news so they could believe. 15:8 And God, the one who knows people's hearts, testified on their behalf by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. 15:9 He did not draw any distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. 15:10 So why are you now provoking God by putting on their necks a harness that neither we nor our ancestors could bear? 15:11 No, it is through the favor of Master Jesus that we believe and are saved, the same way they are."

15:12 The entire crowd listened in silence as Barnabas and Paul then gave their account of all the signs and

miracles God did among the other nations through them. 15:13 When they were done, James responded: “Folks, fellow believers, hear me! 15:14 Simon informed us about how God first visited the other nations, to obtain a people belonging to him. 15:15 This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written:

15:16 “‘After this I will turn back and rebuild David’s fallen sanctuary; I will rebuild and restore its ruins 15:17 so that the rest of humanity may seek out the Master— all the nations who call on my name’, says the Master who does all of this, 15:18 whose work he had known before the ages.’

15:19 “Therefore, it is my judgment that we should not harass the people of other nations who are turning toward God. 15:20 Instead, let us write a letter to them, saying that they should abstain from ceremonial pollution with idols, with promiscuity, and with any animal that has been strangled or still has its blood. 15:21 For the laws of Moses have been proclaimed from ancient times in every city, and they are read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

The letter to the Gentiles

15:22 Then the Ambassadors and elders, along with the whole Congregation, thought it best to choose men from among them to go to Antioch along with Paul and Barnabas: Judas

(also called Bar-Sabbas), and Silas, leading men from among the believers. 15:23 Here is the text of the letter:

“From the Ambassadors, elders, and fellow believers,

“To the non-Judean fellow believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:

“Greetings!

15:24 “It has come to our attention that some people came without our sanction and disturbed you with unsettling words that troubled your souls. 15:25 So after we reached an agreement about this, we thought it best to choose men to send to you, along with our dear Barnabas and Paul— 15:26 people who have dedicated their lives for the sake

of the name of our Master Jesus the Anointed One.

15:27 “We have therefore commissioned Judas and Silas to give this report verbally as well. 15:28 It was the conclusion of the Holy Spirit and us to put no heavier burden upon you except these essentials: 15:29 to abstain from idol sacrifices, from animals that were strangled or still have their blood, and from promiscuity. You will do well to carefully observe these requirements.

“Farewell!”

15:30 After they were sent on their way, they came down to Antioch and called everyone to a meeting. They handed over the letter, 15:31 and after it was read they were all very happy and

relieved. 15:32 Then Judas and Silas, who were both prophets, spoke many words to comfort and strengthen the believers. 15:33 And after spending some time, the believers send them back in peace to those who had commissioned them. 15:34 15:35 Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch with many others to teach and spread the good news of the Word of the Master.

Paul and Barnabas have a falling out

15:36 Now after some time had passed, Paul said to Barnabas, “We really should go back to check on the believers in all the cities where we have proclaimed the Word of the Master, to see how they’re doing.” 15:37 Barnabas

wanted to take John (also called Mark) along, 15:38 but Paul saw no point in working with this one who had deserted them in Pamphylia. 15:39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they decided to part company. So Barnabas took Mark with him, sailing off to Cyprus, 15:40 while Paul chose Silas once the believers had entrusted them to the favor of the Master.

15:41 Paul passed through Syria and Cilica, strengthening the Congregations.

Timothy joins Paul and Silas

16:1 When he arrived at Derbe and then Lystra, he came across a certain disciple there by the name of Timothy,

whose mother was a Judean believer and whose father was a Greek. 16:2 He had a good reputation among the believers in Lystra and Iconium.

16:3 Paul wanted Timothy to come along with him, and he circumcised him on account of the Judeans in the area, since they all knew his father was a Greek.

Paul did not circumcise Timothy in order to obey the law of Moses, but to minimize resistance in his coming travels among the Jews.

16:4 Now as they went through the cities, they handed out the stipulations that had been agreed upon by the Ambassadors and elders in Jerusalem. 16:5 So the Congregations were firmly established in the faith, and their

numbers increased exponentially each day.

Heading for Macedonia

16:6 Then they passed through Phrygia and the province of Galatia, but they were prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the Word in the province of Asia. 16:7 They arrived in Mysia and then tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow it, 16:8 so they bypassed it and went down into Troas. 16:9 During the night, Paul had a vision of a certain man in Macedonia who was standing and pleading, “Cross over into Macedonia; help us!” 16:10 After he saw the vision, we tried to go to Macedonia immediately, since we were convinced that God had called us to

bring the good news to them.

The use of “we” after the vision indicates the point at which Luke, the narrator, has joined in the travels.

The conversion of Lydia in Philippi

16:11 We set out from Troas and made a straight run to Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis. 16:12 From there we went to Philippi, which is a Roman colony and the most prominent city in that region of Macedonia, and we stayed there for a while. 16:13 On the Day of Sabbaths we went out beyond the gate to a riverside at a place where we expected to find a prayer meeting.

The “prayer meeting” they were looking for was possibly a Jewish synagogue, as they needed water for many rituals.

We sat down and spoke to the women gathering there. 16:14 One of the listeners was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth in the city of Thyatira. She revered God, and the Master put it into her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. 16:15 Having been immersed then, along with her entire household, she pleaded with us: “If you consider me faithful to the Master, stay in my house.” She was quite adamant about it.

The python spirit

16:16 Another time as we were going out to prayer, we were met by a certain

servant girl who had a Python spirit.

The “Python spirit” was a fortune-telling spirit also known as Delphi, and was connected with the worship of Apollo. The Pythia was a girl (later, a woman over 50) who would serve as the oracle (possessed by the spirit of Apollo) to answer questions about the future.

Her divination was a great source of income for her masters. 16:17 And she kept following Paul and us, shouting, “These people are servants of the Supreme God, and they are proclaiming to you the way of salvation!” 16:18 This went on day after day, until Paul became exasperated and turned around to confront the spirit: “I command you in the name of Jesus the Anointed One to come out of her!” And it left right away.

Paul and Silas jailed

16:19 But her masters realized that their source of income had just disappeared. So they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the officials at the marketplace. 16:20 Upon arrival they said, “These people, these Judeans, have put our city into an uproar! 16:21 They are proclaiming customs that are forbidden for us Romans.”

16:22 Then the crowd united against them, and the officials had their clothes torn off and ordered them to be beaten with rods. 16:23 After they had struck them many times, they threw them into jail and solemnly charged the jailer to guard them securely. 16:24 Upon hearing this he threw them into the

innermost cell and locked their feet in the stocks.

16:25 Now around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing festive songs to God, and the other prisoners were listening. 16:26 Suddenly there was a tremendous earthquake, which shook the prison down to its foundations. Instantly all the cell doors were opened, and everyone's shackles became loose. 16:27 But when the jailer awoke and saw that all the cell doors were opened, he drew his sword with the intent to kill himself, since he presumed all the prisoners had escaped.

The jailer is saved

16:28 But Paul shouted out, “Do not harm yourself; we are all still here!” 16:29 The jailer called for lights and then, shaking, he rushed in and fell down before Paul and Silas. 16:30 He led them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 16:31 And they replied, “Put your trust in Master Jesus and you will be saved— you and your entire household!” 16:32 Then they spoke the Word of the Master to him and his whole household.

16:33 At that very hour of the night he washed their wounds, and then immediately he and his whole household were immersed. 16:34 After taking them into his house, he set a table before them. He and his

household were overjoyed due to their trust in God.

Paul uses his Roman citizenship to get justice

16:35 Now the next day the officials sent word to the jailers, “Release those people.” 16:36 So the jailer passed on the message to Paul: “The officials have sent word to have you released. Come now, go in peace.” 16:37 But Paul replied to them, “They lashed us publicly, though we are innocent Roman citizens, and threw us into jail. And now they want to release us quietly? No! Let them escort us out themselves!”

16:38 The jailers reported these words to the officials, who were alarmed to

hear that they were Romans. 16:39 So they came and placated them, led them out, and asked them to leave the city. 16:40 Leaving the jail, then, they went to Lydia’s house. They consoled the believers there and then left.

In Thessalonica

17:1 Traveling across Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came into Thessalonica, where there was a Judean synagogue. 17:2 It was Paul’s habit to join them, and for three Sabbaths he debated the scriptures with them. 17:3 He showed conclusively that the Anointed One had to suffer and then rise from the dead, and that “this Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Anointed One.” 17:4 Some of them were convinced and sided with

Paul and Silas, including a great number of devout Greeks, a significant portion of which were prominent women.

17:5 But this filled the Judeans with envy, so they collected some troublemakers and formed a mob to start a riot in the city. Then they prepared to attack Jason's house and hunt down Paul and Silas so they could be taken to a public trial. 17:6 But they couldn't find them, so they dragged Jason and some believers to the city officials and claimed, "These people who are turning the whole world upside down have now come here too, 17:7 and Jason took them into his home! They are defying the decrees of Caesar and saying there is another king called

Jesus.” 17:8 When they heard these things, the crowd and the city officials were very upset. 17:9 So they made Jason and the rest post bail, then released them.

In Berea

17:10 The believers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night into Berea, where they went to the Judean synagogue. 17:11 But these people were of more noble character than the Thessalonians. They eagerly accepted the Word and studied the scriptures each day to make sure these things were so. 17:12 In fact, many of them came to faith, including respectable Greek women and a significant number of men.

17:13 But when the Judeans in Thessalonica found out that Paul was now proclaiming the Word of God in Berea, they went there too, stirring up the crowd. 17:14 So again the believers immediately sent Paul all the way to the coast, while Silas and Timothy stayed behind. 17:15 Those who escorted Paul took him as far as Athens, and then they were instructed to tell Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible.

In Athens

17:16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he became intrigued with the opportunity presented by this idol-saturated city. 17:17 He held debates with the Judeans in the synagogue, with

devout people, and with whoever happened to show up in the markets each day. 17:18 But then some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers had discussions with him. Some said “What is this babbler trying to say?” while others said “He seems to be proclaiming foreign gods,” since he brought them the good news about Jesus and his resurrection.

17:19 So they took him to the Areopagos

The Areopagos was the legal and financial city center, and its members functioned in a leading capacity.

and said, “Tell us more about this new teaching you’ve been talking about. 17:20 It sounds very strange to us, and we really want to know more about it.” 17:21 (The residents of Athens, both

permanent and transitory, loved nothing more than to discuss new ideas.)

17:22 So Paul stood in the center of the Areopagos and addressed them: “People of Athens! I couldn’t help but notice how very focused you are on all sorts of spiritual things. 17:23 As I passed through and considered your shrines, I found a particular one with this inscription: ‘To The Unknown God’. Allow me to introduce you to the One you venerate without knowing.

17:24 “The God who made the world and all it contains is the Master of heaven and earth. So he doesn’t live in temples made by human hands 17:25 and doesn’t need their help. The One who gives life and breath to all has no

need of anything. 17:26 Further, from just one person

“Person” is implied. Many translators use “blood” instead, but there is nothing in the context to indicate this much detail.

he made every ethnic group there is, all over the world. He determined their appointed eras and boundaries 17:27 so that they might seek him out and find him— though certainly he is not far from any of us. 17:28 For it is due to him that we live and move and exist. Your own poets have said the same: ‘We too are his offspring’.

The poets Paul references are Aratois and Keleanthes. He is using the Greeks’ own literature as a “hook” or point of familiarity, rather than promoting the equality of all gods.

17:29 “So then, being the offspring of God, we should not suppose that the divine is like gold, silver, or stone, or anything crafted by human design. 17:30 Now God did in fact grant a pass to such ignorance before, but now he requires everyone everywhere to come to him. 17:31 For he has set a day in which he will fairly judge all the inhabitants of the world via the man he appointed. God vouched for him by raising him from the dead.”

17:32 Now when they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some jeered but others said, “We would like to hear more about this again sometime.” 17:33 So Paul left, 17:34 but some folks joined him because they believed. Among them were Dionysius (a member of the

Areopagos), a woman named Damaris, and various others.

In Corinth

18:1 After this Paul left Athens and came to Corinth. 18:2 There he found a certain Judean named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently arrived from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had expelled all the Judeans from Rome. 18:3 He formed a partnership to work with them because he and they were all tent makers by trade.

18:4 On every Sabbath he debated in the synagogue, and he persuaded both Judeans and those of other nations. 18:5 Now when Silas and Timothy came

down from Macedonia, Paul gave his full devotion to the Word, proving to the Judeans that Jesus was the Anointed One. 18:6 But due to their opposition and slander against God, he shook out his clothing to insult them and said, “You have condemned yourselves! I am hereby absolved of all responsibility for you. From now on I will go to the other nations!”

18:7 So he left there and entered the home of a certain Titus Justus, a man devoted to God, whose house adjoined the synagogue. 18:8 Crispus the synagogue ruler put his trust in the Master, as did his whole household. Many Corinthians heard, believed, and were immersed. 18:9 One night the Master spoke to Paul in a dream: “Do

not be afraid; speak and do not be silent, 18:10 for I am with you. No one will attack and mistreat you, because many people in this city belong to me.” 18:11 So he stayed there for a year and a half, teaching the Word of God among them.

18:12 When Gallio was the regional governor of Achaia, the Judeans banded together and assaulted Paul, then took him to the courthouse. 18:13 The charge they brought was this: “This person is convincing people to serve God in illegal ways!” 18:14 But as Paul opened his mouth to speak, Gallio retorted to the Judeans, “You Judeans, if this were a real crime or malicious mischief, I might have a reason to hear your plea. 18:15 But if these are just

matters of semantics or one of your laws, it's your problem! I will not be a judge of such things." 18:16 And he expelled them from the courtroom. 18:17 So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the courthouse. But Gallio couldn't have cared less.

Priscilla and Aquila

18:18 So Paul stayed there for many days with the believers. Then he sailed off for Syria along with Priscilla and Aquila, after he had his head shaved in Cenchrea due to a vow he had taken. 18:19 He parted company with them in Ephesus and went into the synagogues to debate the Judeans. 18:20 They asked him to stay but he was not

willing, 18:21 and he left with the promise, “I will come back to you again if God allows.”

Then he left Ephesus 18:22 and went down to Caeserea. After greeting the Congregation he then went to Antioch. 18:23 After some time he left again, passing through the province of Galatia and then Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Apollos

18:24 Now a certain Judean named Apollos, a native of Alexandria and an eloquent man with great skill in handling scripture, arrived in Ephesus. 18:25 He had been told about the way of the Master, and he passionately gave

accurate teachings about Jesus. But he only knew up to the immersion of John, 18:26 and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Upon hearing him, Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and carefully filled him in on the full account.

18:27 When the believers heard of his intention to pass through into Achaia, they wrote to the disciples and encouraged them to welcome him. Upon his arrival he discussed many things with those who had come to faith through God's favor. 18:28 And he vigorously and thoroughly refuted the Judeans in public debate, demonstrating through the scriptures that Jesus was the Anointed One.

In Ephesus

19:1 Now it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the upper districts down to Ephesus. He found some disciples 19:2 and said, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

“No,” they replied, “we have heard nothing about a Holy Spirit.”

19:3 So he asked, “Then by what name were you immersed?”

And they replied, “John’s immersion.”

19:4 “John immersed for the purpose of telling people to come to God and put their trust in the One coming after him, meaning Jesus,” Paul responded. 19:5 Upon hearing this they were immersed in the name of Master Jesus. 19:6 And

when Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they began to speak in other languages and to prophesy. 19:7 There were about twelve men in all.

19:8 Entering the synagogue, Paul spoke boldly for three months, debating and persuading on matters concerning the kingdom of God. 19:9 But some were obstinate and hostile, and they spoke abusively against the Way in front of the crowd. So Paul left them and separated the disciples from them as well, and debated each day in the hall of Tyrannos. 19:10 This went on for two years, to the point that everyone living in the province of Asia, both Judeans and other nations, heard the Word of the Master.

19:11 God performed extraordinary powers through Paul's hands. 19:12 For example, when cloths or handkerchiefs that had touched his skin were taken to the infirm, they were cured of their illnesses. Even evil spirits were exorcised. 19:13 But some of the Judeans who traveled around doing exorcisms took it upon themselves to invoke the name of Master Jesus over the possessed: "By Jesus, whom Paul is proclaiming, I solemnly charge you to come out!" 19:14 The ones doing this were seven sons of Sceva, a Judean high priest. 19:15 But the evil spirit snarled, "I do know Jesus, and I'm familiar with Paul, but who are you?" 19:16 Then the possessed person pounced on them. He was too strong for them and overpowered them, and

they ran from the house naked and wounded.

19:17 This incident became known to everyone, both Judeans and people of other nations, living in Ephesus. They were all gripped with fear, and their respect for the name of Master Jesus was intensified. 19:18 Many who had already believed now openly confessed their former practices, 19:19 including a significant number of those who had practiced divination. They collected their books and burned them where everyone could see, and the value of them was estimated to be in the millions. 19:20 So it was with great power that the Word of the Master grew and became strong.

19:21 After all of that happened, Paul was prompted in spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia, and then on to Jerusalem. “And from there,” he said, “I must see Rome as well.” 19:22 When he had sent two of his attendants (Timothy and Erastus) to Macedonia, he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

Followers of Artemis riot against Paul

19:23 Now around that same time there was a serious controversy about the Way. 19:24 A certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines to Artemis, made quite a nice income for the craftspeople. 19:25 He called a meeting of all who worked in related trades and said, “Folks, you

are well aware that our standard of living depends upon this craft. 19:26 And you have seen and heard that this Paul, not only in Ephesus but throughout almost the entire province of Asia, has convinced and drawn away a large number of people, by saying that things made by hands are not gods.

19:27 “Not only does this put our association at risk of being viewed with contempt, it also reduces the temple of the great goddess Artemis to nothing. Her Majesty is about to be demolished — she who is revered by the whole province of Asia and the entire world!” 19:28 Upon hearing this, they were all infuriated and shouted out, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” 19:29 The whole city was thrown into confusion.

They grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus who were traveling companions of Paul, and rushed as one into the theater.

19:30 Now Paul wanted to appear before the people but the disciples would not allow it. 19:31 In addition, some of his friends who were rulers in the province of Asia sent word to him, advising him not to enter the theater. 19:32 The assembly

literally “congregation”, but this context indicates a gathering of non-Christians.

was in confusion: some were shouting one thing and some another. Most of them didn’t even know why they were gathered there!

19:33 Then the Judeans got together and pushed forward Alexander out from

the crowd. He gestured with his hand to signal the crowd that he would make his defense. 19:34 But when they realized he was a Judean, they all shouted together for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” 19:35 Then the scribe got the crowd to calm down, and he addressed them: “People of Ephesus! Everyone knows that the city of Ephesus is the custodian of the temple of the great Artemis, whose image fell to us from heaven. Literally, “from Zeus” 19:36 Since these things cannot be denied, you must compose yourselves and not do anything rash.

19:37 “You brought these men here though they didn’t rob the temple or slander our goddess. 19:38 So then, if

Demetrius and his associates have a charge to bring against anyone, the courts are in session and there are regional governors. Let them bring charges against each other! 19:39 But if you have any other matter to bring up, it must be settled by legal assembly. 19:40 As it is, we are liable of being charged for today's uproar, since we have no grounds to justify it."

In Macedonia and Greece

20:1 After the disturbance ended, Paul sent for the disciples. When he had consoled and greeted them he went away to Macedonia. 20:2 Passing through those areas and encouraging them with many words, he came into Greece. 20:3 After he had spent three

months there, the Judeans plotted against him as he was about to set out for Syria. So he decided instead to return through Macedonia. 20:4 He was to be accompanied as far as the province of Asia by Sopater the son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, also Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.

20:5 These people all went on ahead and waited for us in Troas. 20:6 But we set sail from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread and met up with them at Troas five days later, where we stayed for seven days.

Paul raises a young man from the dead

20:7 Now on one of the Sabbaths when we gathered to share a meal, Paul debated with them. And since he intended to leave the next day, he extended his speech until midnight. 20:8 There were many lamps in the upper room where we had gathered, 20:9 and a certain youth named Eutychus, who was sitting in a window, sank into a deep sleep. As Paul went on and on, the still-sleeping youth fell down from the third story and was found dead. 20:10 But Paul went down, threw himself upon him and took him in his arms. “Don’t panic!” he said, “He is alive!” 20:11 Then Paul went back upstairs to

eat, and he spoke for a long time, up to daybreak, then he left. 20:12 The very-relieved people took the youth home alive.

Paul bids farewell to the elders at Ephesus

20:13 We went on ahead to the ship and set out for Assos, where we intended to pick up Paul, because it had been agreed that he would go there on foot. 20:14 When he met up with us at Assos we took him into Mitylene. 20:15 Sailing on from there, we arrived the next day across from Chios. The day after that we arrived at Samos, and the next day we came to Miletus. 20:16 Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not be detained in the province of

Asia, because if he hurried he thought it might be possible for him to reach Jerusalem by the Day of Pentecost. 20:17 Then from Miletus he sent for the elders of the Congregation in Ephesus.

20:18 When they came to him he said to them, “You are well aware of how I always behaved among you from the first day I set foot in the province of Asia. 20:19 I served the Master in humility, and through many tears and the trials I endured due to the plots of the Judeans. 20:20 Under no circumstances did I ever hold back any vital information from you. I taught you in public places and private homes, 20:21 solemnly charging both Judeans and those of other nations to turn

toward God and put their trust in our Master Jesus.

20:22 “And now, you must understand that I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem, and I don’t know what will happen to me there. 20:23 What’s more, the Holy Spirit has assured me that in every city, confinement and suffering await me. 20:24 But I have nothing to say about it, and I don’t consider my life more precious than finishing the race and fulfilling the service I was given from Master Jesus: to solemnly testify to the good news of the favor of God. 20:25 I now know that none of you among whom I have gone around proclaiming the Kingdom will see my face again. 20:26 For that reason I testify to you this day that I am not

liable for anyone's life, 20:27 because under no circumstances did I ever try to get out of telling you the whole counsel of God.

20:28 "Pay close attention to yourselves and to the whole flock of which the Holy Spirit appointed you as guardians. Shepherd the Congregation of God, which he purchased with his own blood. 20:29 I know that as soon as I'm out of reach, oppressive wolves will invade you and show no mercy to the flock. 20:30 Men will also rise up from among you and say twisted things in order to acquire disciples to follow them. 20:31 So keep your eyes open, and remember that for three years, day and night, I never stopped warning each of you, with tears. 20:32 And now I present

you to God and to the Word about his favor, which is able to build you up so you can enjoy the inheritance of all who have been set apart for divine service.

20:33 “I have not wanted to take anyone’s silver, gold, or clothing. 20:34 You know that with my own hands I have supplied my own needs as well as those of my companions. 20:35 By my example I have demonstrated to all of you how you must work and support the infirm. And remember what Master Jesus said: “There is more joy in giving than in receiving.”

20:36 Having said these things, he knelt to pray with them. 20:37 They all cried and cried, hugging and kissing Paul fondly, 20:38 and were especially

grieved at what he had said about them not seeing his face again. Then they sent him off to the ship.

The journey to Jerusalem

21:1 After we had torn ourselves away from them, we set out and made a straight run for Cos. The next day we reached Rhodes, and then went on to Patara. 21:2 We found a ship crossing all the way over to Phoenicia, so we got on board and set out. 21:3 We sighted Cyprus but passed it by on the left. We sailed on to Syria, then down to Tyre where the ship was to unload its cargo. 21:4 Discovering that there were disciples there, we stayed for seven days. But through the Spirit they told Paul not to get on board for Jerusalem.

21:5 When we were fully prepared we went away again. We were sent off by everyone, including the women and children, who accompanied us to the city limits. We all knelt on the beach and prayed, 21:6 then said our goodbyes and boarded the ship, with the others returning to their homes. 21:7 At the end of our voyage we went down from Tyre to Ptolemais, where we greeted the fellow believers and stayed with them for a day.

21:8 The next day we left again and came to Caesarea, where we entered the home of the good news proclaimer Philip, who was one of The Seven, and stayed with him. 21:9 He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. 21:10 And after we had stayed a few

days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Jerusalem. 21:11 He came to us, took Paul's belt and bound his own hands and feet with it, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says: The owner of this belt will be bound in this manner by the Judeans in Jerusalem, and they will hand him over to the secular authorities."

21:12 When we heard this, we and the locals pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. 21:13 But Paul responded, "Why are you doing this to me, crying and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound but also to die in Jerusalem, for the sake of the name of Master Jesus!" 21:14 When we could not dissuade him, we quieted down and

said, “May the will of the Master be done.”

21:15 After that we packed our bags and went to Jerusalem, 21:16 and some disciples from Caesarea came along with us. They took us to stay with Mnason, a Cyprian, who had been a disciple from the beginning. 21:17 We were warmly greeted by the believers in Jerusalem. 21:18 The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders came as well. 21:19 After greeting them, Paul retold each detail in order concerning all the things God had done among the other nations through his service.

21:20 Those who heard this gave honor to God, but then they said, “You are

aware, brother, that tens of thousands of Judeans have believed, yet they are all still very dedicated to the Law. 21:21 They have heard about you, that you teach all the Judeans in other nations to depart from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or keep the traditions. 21:22 What are we to do about this, since they will surely find out you have come? 21:23 Follow our instructions: There are four men here who have taken a vow. 21:24 Take them along and join in their purification ritual, and pay to have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that there's nothing to what they've heard about you, since you strictly observe the Law. 21:25 As for the non-Judean believers, we have written them a letter instructing them to stay away from idol sacrifice,

from eating animals with blood still in them or that had been strangled, and from promiscuity.”

Paul is falsely accused of temple desecration

21:26 So Paul took the men the next day and purified himself along with them. Then he entered the temple compound to record the completion date of the purification period, and he made an offering for each one of them. 21:27 When the seven days were nearly over, Judeans from the province of Asia spotted him in the temple compound. They agitated the crowd by taking hold of Paul 21:28 and yelling, “People of Israel, help us! This is the one who spreads teachings to everyone

everywhere against our people, the Law, and this place. And what's more, he brought people of other nations into the temple compound and has contaminated this sacred place!" 21:29 (Earlier they had seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they presumed Paul had taken him into the temple compound.)

21:30 The whole city was in an uproar, and the people formed a mob. They seized Paul and removed him from the temple compound, then quickly locked the gates. 21:31 While they were trying to kill him, a report reached the commander of the garrison that all of Jerusalem was in turmoil. 21:32 So he took soldiers and legion commanders down to them immediately. When the

mob saw them, they stopped beating Paul.

21:33 Then the legion commander approached Paul and took custody of him, having him bound with two chains. He demanded to know who he was and what he had done, 21:34 but the mob shouted conflicting things. So because he couldn't figure out what was going on, he ordered Paul to be taken to the citadel. 21:35 When he reached the stairway the soldiers had to carry him because the mob had become too violent, 21:36 and they followed along shouting, "Take him away to be executed!"

Paul attempts to calm the mob

21:37 As he was about to be taken into the citadel, Paul asked the legion commander, “May I have a word with you?”

“You speak Greek,” he responded. 21:38 “So you must not be the Egyptian who led an insurrection some time ago and took four thousand men of the Assassins into the wilderness.”

21:39 “I am in fact a Judean from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city,” Paul replied. “So please let me speak to the people.”

21:40 He granted permission, so Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. When they had completely settled down, he began his speech to them in the Hebrew dialect:

22:1 “Folks, brothers and sisters, parents, listen now to my defense!” 22:2 Now when they heard him speaking in the Hebrew dialect they became very still, and he continued.

22:3 “I am a Judean man born in Tarsus of Cilicia but raised in this city under the strict training of Gamaliel concerning the ancestral law. I was very enthusiastic for God, as all of you are today. 22:4 I persecuted this Way to the point of death, capturing both men and women to be handed over and jailed. 22:5 The high priest can attest to this, along with the group of elders from whom I received letters to their associates in Damascus, which authorized me to arrest any I found

there and take them to Jerusalem to be punished.

22:6 “Now it happened that as I came near Damascus around noon, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed all around me! 22:7 I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?’

22:8 “ ‘Who are you, sir?’ I asked.

“ ‘I am Jesus the Nazarene’, he replied, ‘the one you are persecuting!’

22:9 “Those who had accompanied me did see the light, but they didn’t hear the voice of the one speaking to me. 22:10 So I asked, ‘What must I do, sir?’

“ ‘Get up and go into Damascus’, he answered, ‘There you will be told everything you have been assigned to do.’ 22:11 Then I could see nothing because of the brilliance of the light, and my companions led me by the hand into Damascus.

22:12 “Now there was a certain Ananias, a devout observer of the Law and well-regarded by all the Judeans living there. 22:13 He came and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ And right away I could see him. 22:14 Then he added, ‘The God of our ancestors has already chosen you to know his will, to perceive the Righteous One, and to hear what he has to say, 22:15 because you will bear witness for him to all people about what you’ve seen and

heard. 22:16 So now, what are you waiting for? Get up and be immersed; wash away your sins and call on his name.’

22:17 “When I returned to Jerusalem, I was praying in the temple compound and fell into a trance. 22:18 And I saw him speaking to me: ‘Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’

22:19 “And I said, ‘Master, they know very well that I was jailing and punishing those in every synagogue who had put their trust in you. 22:20 And when the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I was standing there giving my full approval, and also guarding the clothing of those who executed him.’

22:21 “But he said to me, ‘Go! I am sending you far away to the other nations.’ ”

Paul again uses his Roman citizenship to get justice

22:22 They listened to him until he said that, then shouted, “Rid the earth of someone like that! He is not fit to live!” 22:23 Then as they were shouting, flinging off their outer clothing, and throwing dust into the air, 22:24 the legion commander ordered that he be taken into the citadel. He was to be interrogated under flogging in order to determine the reason for their reaction.

22:25 But as they were strapping him down for flogging, Paul asked the

Roman army captain standing there, “Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen without a trial?” 22:26 When the Roman army captain heard this he went to the legion commander and said, “What are you doing? This is a Roman citizen!”

22:27 So the legion commander went over to Paul and asked, “Is it true that you’re a Roman citizen?”

“Yes,” Paul replied.

22:28 “I paid a huge amount of money to become a citizen,” replied the legion commander.

“But I was born a citizen!” Paul replied.
22:29 And immediately those who were about to question him withdrew from him. And the legion commander was

afraid, because he had taken a Roman citizen into custody.

Paul splits the Sanhedrin

22:30 The next day the legion commander, determined to find out what Paul was actually being accused of by the Judeans, released him and ordered the high priests and the whole Sanhedrin to convene. Then he took Paul there to stand before them.

23:1 So Paul faced the Sanhedrin and said, “Folks, brothers and sisters, I have lived in good conscience as a citizen before God to this day.” 23:2 But the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near him to punch him in the mouth.

23:3 “God is about to beat you, you whitewashed wall!” Paul exclaimed. “You sit in judgment of me according to the law, but you broke the law by having me punched!”

23:4 But those standing nearby retorted, “That is the high priest of God you’re insulting!”

23:5 “I was not aware he was the high priest,” Paul replied. “For it is written: ‘You must not speak evil of your people’s ruler’.”

23:6 Then it occurred to Paul that one half the Sanhedrin was composed of Sadducees, and the other of Pharisees. So he shouted to the Sanhedrin, “Folks, brothers and sisters, I am a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee. I am being

judged because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead!”

Paul was using a shrewd tactic to divide the Sanhedrin so he would not be convicted of anything. His statement was technically correct (resurrection of the dead). But since the Pharisees believed in this while the Sadducees did not, he knew he could split his opposition right down the middle by not specifying exactly whose resurrection he was on trial for teaching.

23:7 When he said this, there was a great commotion among the Pharisees, and the crowd was split. 23:8 (The Sadducees say there is no resurrection or angels or spirits, but the Pharisees affirm them.) 23:9 Then it erupted into a shouting match, with some of the

scribes among the Pharisees contending, “We find no grounds for the charges against this person. What if a spirit or angel spoke to him?”

23:10 The situation became so volatile that the legion commander feared that Paul might be torn apart by the crowd. So he ordered troops to come down and snatch him away from them and take him to the citadel. 23:11 That night, the Master stood beside him and said, “Take courage! For just as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so also must you do in Rome.”

The conspiracy to kill Paul

23:12 As the next day began, the Judeans conspired together and bound

themselves with an oath, that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. 23:13 (This cabal had over forty members.) 23:14 They went to the high priests and elders and said, “We have bound ourselves with an oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. 23:15 So here is the plan: Tell the legion commander and the Sanhedrin to take him down to you under the pretext of further interrogation. But we will be ready to kill him before he gets there!”

23:16 Now the son of Paul’s sister heard about the ambush, and he went to the citadel to report it to Paul. 23:17 So Paul called for one of the Roman army captains and said to him, “Take this youngster to the legion commander; he

has information for him.” 23:18 So he escorted him to the legion commander and reported: “The prisoner Paul called me to him and asked me to take this youngster to you, because he has something to tell you.”

23:19 The legion commander took him by the hand to speak with him privately, and he asked, “What is it that you have to report to me?”

23:20 And he replied, “The Judeans have conspired to ask you to take Paul down to the Sanhedrin tomorrow, under the pretext that they want more accurate information about him. 23:21 But don’t let them talk you into it, because more than forty of their men will be waiting in ambush, and they

have bound themselves with an oath to neither eat nor drink until they have assassinated him. They are ready now in the expectation that you will agree to this.”

23:22 Then the legion commander dismissed the youngster and warned him, “Don’t tell anyone that you revealed this to me.”

Paul is transferred to Caeserea

23:23 He then summoned two Roman army captains and said, “Prepare two hundred soldiers to go as far as Caesarea, along with seventy mounted troops and two hundred guards armed with spears. They are to depart around

nine o’clock tonight. 23:24 Give Paul animals to ride as well, so he will be brought safely to governor Felix.”

23:25 He also wrote the following letter:

23:26 “From Claudius Lysias

“To the most honorable Governor Felix: Greetings!

23:27 “This man was apprehended by the Judeans and they were about to kill him. But I came along with the troops and got him out of there when I realized he was a Roman citizen.

Claudius Lysias is clearly embellishing the facts in order to impress Felix.

23:28 In the interest of determining the charges against him, I took him down to their Sanhedrin. 23:29 It turns out that

the indictment concerned questions about their law, but it was certainly nothing deserving of death or imprisonment. 23:30 Then I was informed about a plot against this man, so I sent him to you at once. I also demanded that the accusers present their case before you.”

23:31 So the soldiers followed their orders and took Paul during the night to Antipatris. 23:32 The next morning they returned to the citadel, while the mounted troops continued on. 23:33 When they reached Caesarea they handed over the letter to the governor and presented Paul to him. 23:34 After reading the letter he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that it was Cilicia 23:35 he said,

“I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive.” Then he ordered him to be kept under guard in Herod’s headquarters.

Paul’s trial before Felix

24:1 Five days later, Ananias the high priest came down with some elders and an orator by the name of Tertullus, and they presented to the governor their case against Paul. 24:2 When he was called in, Tertullus began his prosecution: “We have come into a long time of peace through you, and your foresight has brought many reforms to this nation. 24:3 In every way and everywhere, most honorable Felix, we accept this with all gratitude.

24:4 “But in the interest of not taking too much of your time, I ask that you would be so kind as to listen to us briefly. 24:5 We have found this man to be a pest and troublemaker among Judeans all over the world, as well as a ringleader in the Nazarene sect. 24:6 He even tried to desecrate the temple compound as well, so we detained him. 24:7 24:8 Upon examining him yourself, you will be able to verify every charge we are bringing against him.” 24:9 The Judeans agreed, alleging that these things were true.

24:10 Then the governor nodded to Paul to speak, and he said, “Since I know you have been judging this nation for many years, I confidently make my defense. 24:11 You can easily see that no more than twelve days have passed

since I went up to worship in Jerusalem.
24:12 But no one found me arguing with
anyone or forming a mob in the temple
compound, in the synagogues, or in the
city. 24:13 They can present no
evidence to support their accusations.

24:14 “Yet I will admit this to you: that
according to this Way, which they call a
sect, I do offer divine service to the God
of our ancestors and believe everything
written in the Law and the Prophets.
24:15 My hope in God, the same as
theirs, is in the coming resurrection of
both the righteous and the unrighteous.
24:16 It is in this hope that I continually
press on with a clear conscience before
God and people.

24:17 “When some years had passed, I came to do charitable things for my nation and bring offerings. 24:18 That’s when they found me in the temple compound— purified, not with a mob or a riot! 24:19 And there are some Judeans from the province of Asia who ought to be here to accuse me in your presence if they have any case against me. 24:20 Otherwise, let these people themselves state what crime they discovered when I stood in front of the Sanhedrin, 24:21 beyond this one thing I shouted while I stood among them: ‘It is about the resurrection of the dead for which you are judging me today’ .”

24:22 Then Felix called to adjourn the court. He was well-informed of the details about the Way, and he added,

“When Lysias the legion commander arrives, I will decide your case.” 24:23 He ordered the Roman army captain to put Paul under guard, but to allow him some comfort, including having his friends attend to his needs.

24:24 A few days later Felix arrived, along with his wife Drusilla, who was a Judean. He sent for Paul and listened to him speak about putting trust in Anointed Jesus. 24:25 But as he gave arguments about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became alarmed and said, “You may go now, and if I have time I will call for you.” 24:26 (He was hoping that Paul would bribe him, which is why he kept sending for him frequently and talking with him.) 24:27 Now when two full years

had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. But because he wanted to curry favor with the Judeans, he left Paul in custody.

Paul’s trial before Festus

25:1 Three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. 25:2 The high priests and leading Judeans there informed him of their complaint against Paul, 25:3 and they asked him a favor: to transfer Paul to Jerusalem. (They had planned to kill him in an ambush along the way.) 25:4 But Festus told them that Paul would be kept in Caesarea, though he himself was about to return there at once. 25:5 And he added, “Whoever is able may go with me, and if there is

anything about the man that doesn't add up, let them submit a charge."

25:6 After staying with them for no more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea. The next day he took his seat to hold court and summoned Paul to be brought in. 25:7 When he arrived, the Judeans who came down from Jerusalem stood around him and hurled many serious charges at him, but they could not prove any of them. 25:8 In his defense Paul stated, "I have committed no crime against the law of the Judeans, against the temple compound, or against Caesar."

25:9 Now since Festus wanted to curry favor with the Judeans, he responded to Paul by asking, "Are you willing to go

up to Jerusalem to face trial there concerning these charges?”

25:10 “I am standing in the court of Caesar where I should be judged,” Paul replied. “I have wronged none of the Judeans, which you know better than anyone. 25:11 But if I have in fact done wrong and committed something worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. Yet if there is nothing to these accusations they are bringing against me, no one can hand me over to them as a favor. I appeal to Caesar!"

25:12 Then Festus, after consulting the council, said, “You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go!”

Festus and Agrippa

25:13 After a few days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived in Caesarea and greeted Festus. 25:14 After they had been there for a few days, Festus brought Paul's case to the king's attention: "There is a certain man who was left here as a prisoner by Felix. 25:15 When I came to Jerusalem the high priests and Judean elders brought charges against him and asked for a conviction. 25:16 But I replied that Romans are not in the habit of surrendering someone as a favor, without first giving the accused a chance to face their accusers and give a defense against the charges. 25:17 So when they gathered in this place, I wasted no time but convened the court the next day and took my seat, and then I summoned him.

25:18 “But when his accusers stood around him, they did not bring up even one of the terrible charges I had expected. 25:19 Instead, it was all about violations of their own religion, and it concerned a certain Jesus who died but who Paul claimed was alive. 25:20 Now since I had no understanding of such questions, I asked whether he’d be willing to go to Jerusalem to face trial over this. 25:21 But when Paul appealed to have his case examined by the imperial court, I ordered that he be held until I can send him to Caesar.”

25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I’d like to hear this person myself.”

“You will hear him tomorrow,” he replied.

Paul’s trial before Agrippa

25:23 The next day Agrippa and Bernice arrived with much pageantry, entering the audience hall accompanied by legion commanders and prominent citizens. At Festus’ command, Paul was brought in, 25:24 and then Festus began to speak:

“King Agrippa, and all ladies and gentlemen here with us! You see before you this one about whom all the Judeans have interceded with me, both here and in Jerusalem, to be put to death. 25:25 I determined that he had done nothing worthy of death, but since he appealed to the imperial court, I decided to send him there.

25:26 “But I have nothing specific to write to the Sovereign. So I have put him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that through further examination I may find something to write. 25:27 For it seems pointless to me to send off a prisoner without listing specific charges against him.”

26:1 Then Agrippa told Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.” So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense:

26:2 “On the matter of charges made against me by the Judeans, King Agrippa, I am pleased to present my defense before you today, 26:3 especially since you are an expert on

the customs and controversies concerning Judaism. Therefore I humbly ask that you patiently listen to me.

26:4 “The manner in which I’ve lived my life, from my early youth in my nation as well as in Jerusalem, is something the Judeans are well aware of. 26:5 And having known me before from the beginning, they would have to admit that I lived as a Pharisee in the strictest sense of the word. 26:6 And now, it is because of my hope in the promise that came from God to our ancestors that I stand trial. 26:7 The twelve tribes of our people offer divine service night and day in this same hope, O King, yet here I am on trial for it! 26:8 How can you all

consider it unbelievable that God should raise the dead?

26:9 “I had considered it my duty to commit many acts against the name of Jesus the Nazarene, 26:10 including in Jerusalem. I even locked up many of the holy ones in jail, having obtained permission from the high priests, and I voted in favor of the death penalty. 26:11 I pursued them in the synagogues to punish them and force them to commit slander against God. I was in such an insane rage against them that I also persecuted them in foreign cities.

26:12 “During one such persecution I was on my way to Damascus with the authority and permission of the high priests. 26:13 While on the road around

noon, O King, a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shone all around me and my traveling companions. 26:14 When we had all dropped to the ground I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew dialect, ‘Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me? Resistance is futile!’

“Resistance is futile” is the idiomatic equivalent of “It is hard for you to kick against the goads,” as when a horse resists the spurs of the rider.

26:15 “So I said, ‘Who are you, sir?’

“ ‘I am Jesus’, he answered, ‘the one you are persecuting! 26:16 Now get up and stand on your feet, because the reason I appeared to you is that you were prepared in advance to be a servant and a witness, both of what you

have seen and of what I will show you.
26:17 I will set you apart from the
Judeans, as well as from the other
nations to whom I am commissioning
you. 26:18 You are to open their eyes, to
turn them from darkness to light and
from the jurisdiction of The Adversary to
that of God, and to obtain for them an
acquittal for their sins and an
inheritance along with those who have
been made holy by faith in me.’

26:19 “King Agrippa, I did not react to
this heavenly vision with hostility, 26:20
but went at once to the believers in
Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem,
to those throughout the province of
Judea, and to the other nations. I
proclaimed that they must change their
minds and turn back to God, and then

live accordingly. 26:21 It was on this account that the Judeans took hold of me to arrest me when I was in the temple compound.

26:22 “But because God has come to my aid to this day, I stand here testifying to both the lowly and the exalted. I have said nothing beyond what Moses and the prophets said would happen: 26:23 that the Anointed One would suffer, and that as the first to rise from the dead he would proclaim light to Judeans and other nations alike.”

26:24 As he was presenting his defense, Festus shouted, “You’re insane, Paul! Too much education has driven you mad!”

26:25 “On the contrary, great Festus,” Paul replied, “I am speaking divinely-given rational truth. 26:26 Since the king is adept at what I’ve been talking about so boldly, I’m sure that none of this has escaped his notice; this whole affair did not happen in a corner. 26:27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do!”

26:28 “Do you think that you can persuade me to become a Christian See the note on Acts 11:26. in such a short time?” Agrippa asked Paul.

26:29 “Short time or long,” Paul replied, “My intent before God is that not only you but all who have heard me today will become as I am, except for these chains!”

26:30 Then the king, the governor, Bernice, and those sitting with them stood up, 26:31 and as they left the court they said to each other, “This person has done nothing worthy of the death penalty or imprisonment.” 26:32 And Agrippa said to Festus, “He could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

Paul is sent to Rome

27:1 When it was determined that we were to sail off to Italy, they handed over Paul and some other prisoners to a Roman army captain named Julius of the Imperial Division. 27:2 We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to depart for stops along the cost of the province of Asia. Aristarchus, a

Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

27:3 On another day we were taken down to Sidon. Julius was kind to Paul and allowed him to visit friends to care for his needs. 27:4 Setting out from there, we sailed near the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. 27:5 Then we went out to the open sea off Cilicia and Pamphylia, then down to Myra of Lycia. 27:6 The Roman army captain found an Alexandrian ship there which was headed to Italy, and he put us on board.

27:7 Sailing was very slow for many days, and we were barely able to reach Cnidus. But the winds were unfavorable for us to leave there, so we sailed along

the lee of Crete across from Salome. 27:8 We sailed along the coast with great difficulty until we came to a place called Fair Harbors near the city of Lasea. 27:9 Now since so much time had passed and sailing was already hazardous, and since Paul had already missed The Fast,

“The Fast” was the Day of Atonement, celebrated in the fall.

he pleaded with them: 27:10 “Gentlemen, it seems to me that sailing is going to result in much damage and loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also of our lives.”

27:11 But the Roman army captain was persuaded by the navigator and the one who chartered the ship over what Paul had said. 27:12 The harbor was unfit for

making berth for the winter, so the majority decided to set out from there in the hope that they might be able to spend the winter at Phoenix. It was a harbor at Crete which faced both northwest and southwest. 27:13 And when a gentle south wind came up, they thought they had what they were looking for, so they weighed anchor and stayed near the coast along Crete.

The ship is wrecked in a storm

27:14 Not long afterwards a violent wind of hurricane force, called a Northeaster, slammed into the island. 27:15 The ship was caught up in it and could not face into the wind, so we just let the wind carry it along. 27:16 We came under the

lee of a small island called Cauda, but we were barely able to secure the lifeboat. 27:17 When they had hoisted it aboard they ran ropes to reinforce the ship.

Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the anchor and we were driven along. 27:18 But we were so violently tossed around by the storm that they jettisoned the cargo the next day, 27:19 and on the third day they threw the ship’s tackle overboard with their own hands. 27:20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for another four days due to the continuing storm, we were robbed of all hope of being rescued.

27:21 After they had gone without food for a long time, Paul stood among them and said, “Gentlemen, you should have listened to me when I told you not to set out from Crete, so you could have avoided this damage and loss. 27:22 But now I urge you to cheer up, because not one life among you will be lost, but only the ship. 27:23 Last night an angel of the God I belong to, and to whom I offer divine service, stood beside me 27:24 and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul! You must stand before Caesar, so God has favored you by granting you the lives of everyone sailing with you.’ 27:25 So cheer up, gentlemen! For I trust God that it will happen just as I have been told. 27:26 However, we must run aground on some island.”

27:27 On the fourteenth night we were still being driven all over the Adriatic Sea, when around midnight the sailors sensed that we were approaching land. 27:28 So they took a sounding and it measured twenty fathoms deep, and when they took another one a while later it measured fifteen fathoms. 27:29 Fearing that we might crash against the rocks, they pitched four anchors off the stern on the presumption that daylight was approaching.

27:30 Now some of the sailors tried to escape the ship by lowering the lifeboat to the sea under the pretext of dropping anchors from the bow. 27:31 But Paul warned the Roman army captain and the soldiers, “If any of these don’t stay with the ship, none of you will be

saved!” 27:32 So the soldiers cut the ropes to the lifeboat and let it drop.

27:33 When it was almost dawn the next day, Paul encouraged everyone to eat something: “Today marks the fourteenth day that you’ve eaten nothing because of worry. 27:34 So I urge you all to eat something in order to preserve yourselves, for not a hair on your heads will be lost!” 27:35 Having said this, Paul took some bread and thanked God for it in front of them, then broke it and began to eat. 27:36 This made them all take heart and eat. 27:37 (The total number of people on board the ship was two hundred seventy-six.) 27:38 And when they were full, they lightened the ship further by tossing the grain into the sea.

27:39 When it was light enough to see the land, they did not recognize it. But they noticed a bay with a beach and thought they might be able to run the ship aground there. 27:40 So they let the anchors slip while also loosening the ropes on the rudders, then hoisted the foresail to catch the wind and head for the beach. 27:41 But when they got to a channel where two seas met, the bow ran aground and was stuck firmly while the stern was being broken apart by the force of the waves.

27:42 Now the soldiers decided that they should kill the prisoners so that no one could swim out and escape. 27:43 But the Roman army captain was determined to bring Paul safely through and he thwarted their plans. In addition,

he ordered that those who could swim were to dive off first and go to land, 27:44 while others would use planks or other parts of the ship. So everyone made it safely to land.

Stranded on the island of Melita

28:1 When we had all reached safety, we found out that the island was called Melita. 28:2 The people there showed us unusual kindness, kindling a fire and taking us in due to the rain and cold. 28:3 But as Paul twisted together a bundle of kindling and put it on the fire, a poisonous snake came away from the heat and fastened itself to his hand.

28:4 Now when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand they said to each other, “This person must certainly be a murderer. Though he came safely out of the sea, Justice will not let him live.” 28:5 But he shook it off and into the fire without suffering any harm. 28:6 They were expecting him to swell up or drop dead, but after waiting quite a while without incident, they decided instead that he was a god.

28:7 The land nearby belonged to the leader of the island, Publius. He welcomed us kindly and lodged us for three days. 28:8 Now it happened that Publius’ father was bedridden with fever and dysentery. But Paul came to him, and after praying and placing his hand on him, miraculously healed him. 28:9

After this happened, the rest of the islanders with infirmities came and were cured. 28:10 They gave us many honors, and when it came time to set sail they supplied our needs.

Paul arrives in Rome

28:11 After three months we set out on an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of Castor and Pollux, which had wintered at the island.

Castor and Pollux were the sons of Zeus (Rom. Jupiter).

28:12 After landing at Syracuse we stayed for three days, 28:13 then circled around to arrive at Rhegium. When the south wind came up the next day, we reached Puteoli the day after. 28:14 We found some believers there, who invited

us to stay with them for seven days. Then finally we came to Rome. 28:15 The believers there had heard about us and came to meet us as far as the Appii Forum and Three Taverns. When Paul saw them he thanked God and took courage. 28:16 And when we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live on his own, along with the soldier assigned to guard him.

Paul under house arrest

28:17 Now it happened that three days later he called together the leaders of the Judeans. When they arrived he said to them, “Folks and fellow believers, though I have done nothing contrary to our people or traditions, I was taken prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands

of the Romans. 28:18 They tried me and intended to release me since there was no basis for the death penalty against me. 28:19 But when the Judeans spoke against me I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had any complaint against my people. 28:20 This is the reason I called you here, to see you and speak to you, because I am in chains due to the hope of Israel."

28:21 But they responded, "We have not received any letters about you from Judea, and none of the believers that have come along have said anything good or bad about you. 28:22 But we still want to hear your thoughts about this sect which is being spoken against everywhere." 28:23 A day was set for a meeting, and even more people came

to where he was staying. He expounded and testified about the kingdom of God from morning to evening, persuading them about Jesus from both the law of Moses and the prophets.

28:24 Some were indeed convinced by what he said, while others were not. 28:25 They disagreed among themselves and were dismissed after Paul made this one declaration: “The Holy Spirit truly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your ancestors: 28:26 ‘Go to this people and say, “You will always hear but never understand; you will always see but never perceive. 28:27 For these people’s minds are calloused; their ears are plugged; they squint with their eyes. Otherwise they might see

clearly, listen intently, and understand completely. Then I would turn around and heal them.” 28:28 Let it be known to you, then, that this salvation of God was sent to the other nations, and they will listen!”

28:30 He stayed there for two whole years in his own rented house. He welcomed all who came to him 28:31 and proclaimed the kingdom of God, teaching about Master Jesus the Anointed One, unhindered and with great boldness.

Romans

Greeting

1:1 Paul, a servant of Anointed Jesus, called as an Ambassador and set apart for the good news of God 1:2 (which he promised before through his prophets in the holy scriptures) 1:3 concerning his Son (who as far as the flesh is concerned was of the ancestry of David, 1:4 and is the One powerfully identified as the God-Man, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead), Jesus the Anointed One, our Master. 1:5 Through Him we obtained favor and a commission into

compliant faith among all the other nations for the sake of his Name, 1:6 along with you who are also called by Jesus the Anointed One.

1:7 To all who are in Rome, loved by God and called holy ones: Favor and peace to you from God our Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One!

Paul wants to see them in person

1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus the Anointed One concerning all of you, because your faith is being announced all over the world. 1:9 God, to whom I offer divine spiritual service for the good news of his Son, is my witness of how I never stop mentioning you 1:10 in all my

prayers, pleading that somehow, sometime, in some way, the will of God would permit me to come visit you. 1:11 I very much want to see you so I can share some spiritual gift with you, to anchor you. 1:12 In this way you can all be a comfort to each other through your faith and mine.

1:13 Now I don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the fact that I wanted to visit you many times but was prevented until now, so that I would have some of the same results among you as among the rest of the other nations. 1:14 I am indebted to both Greeks and barbarians, the wise and the foolish; 1:15 that is why I was eager to bring the good news to those of you in Rome as well. 1:16 I am not

ashamed of this good news, because it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe— first to the Judean and then to the Greek. 1:17 This good news is revealing God's justice, beginning and ending in faith. As it is written, "The just will live by faith."

God's anger toward sinful Gentiles

1:18 God's rage is being revealed from heaven against every kind of irreverence and injustice committed by people who unjustly suppress the truth. 1:19 And it's because what can be known about God is obvious among them, since God has shown it to them. 1:20 For his invisible qualities can be seen by means of the creation of the

world; we catch a glimpse of them— as well as his unknowable power and divinity— by his achievements, so that people are without excuse. 1:21 They know God but give him no honor and show him no gratitude.

So their thinking became futile and their stupid minds were darkened. 1:22 Claiming to be wise they were made fools instead, 1:23 and they traded the honor of the incorruptible God for things made in the images of people, flying creatures, four-legged creatures, and reptiles. 1:24 For that reason God handed them over to the desires of their hearts, into the filth of polluting their bodies among themselves. 1:25 They turned the truth about God into a lie and worshiped the creation instead of the

Creator— who is blessed forever, absolutely!

1:26 So God handed them over to their disgusting passions: Women traded natural intimate relations for unnatural, 1:27 and men abandoned natural intimate relations with women to be inflamed with lust for other men, spawning indecency. They were then directly paid back as they deserved for their perversion. 1:28 Since they did not see a reason to give God recognition, God saw a reason to hand them over to an unreasoning mind so that they would do inappropriate things. 1:29 They have been filled with all kinds of injustice, evil, greed, and malice; they are saturated with envy, murder, rivalry, treachery, and depravity; they gossip

1:30 and trash talk; they hate God; they are arrogant, contemptuous impostors; they invent new forms of evil; they set themselves against their parents; 1:31 they are stupid and honor no agreements; they are devoid of natural feelings and have no mercy. 1:32 Since they know what is right, those who make a habit of such things are deserving of God's death sentence. Yet they not only do these things, they also approve of everyone else who makes a habit of them.

God's anger toward sinful Jews

2:1 But you— what is your defense? For in judging others you condemn yourself, because you practice the same things!

2:2 Now we know that the judgment of God is right against those who do such things, 2:3 but do you actually think that even though you do the same things, that somehow you will escape God's justice? 2:4 Ridiculous! You think nothing of his abundant kindness and restraint and patience; do you not understand that God's kindness is supposed to lead to a change of your mind?

2:5 So in keeping with your hard heart and unchanged mind, you are storing up God's rage for yourself toward the day God hands down his judgment. 2:6 He will repay everyone for what they did: 2:7 eternal life to those who persist in doing good and look for honor, value, and immortality, 2:8 but anger and rage

to the unjust who are rebellious and hostile to the truth and welcome injustice. 2:9 There will be oppression and constriction for everyone who practices evil, first to the Judean and then to the Greek; 2:10 yet there will be honor and value and peace to everyone who does good things, first to the Judean and then to the Greek. 2:11 God will show no favoritism in this!

2:12 Whoever sinned without law will die without law, and whoever sinned under law will be judged by law. 2:13 For it isn't those who only hear law that are justified before God, but those who also act accordingly. 2:14 So whenever the other nations who have no law naturally do what law requires, they are acting under their own law. 2:15 They show by

their actions that there is a law written on their hearts; their reasoning and conscience work together to either acquit or condemn them, 2:16 on the Day when God will judge what is hidden in people according to my good news through Jesus the Anointed One.

2:17 Now if you who call yourself a Judean rely on law and brag about belonging to God 2:18 and knowing his will, then you have been trained to test whether something is according to law. 2:19 You think of yourself as a guide for the blind and a light in the darkness, 2:20 a correcter of the reckless and a teacher of babies; you think you have a lock on the knowledge of truth through the law. 2:21 But if that's the case, teacher, then teach yourself! You tell

others not to steal but do it yourself;
2:22 you speak out against adultery but
commit it yourself; you detest idols but
violate the sanctuary; 2:23 you brag
about the law but you sin and dishonor
God! 2:24 It is because of you that “the
name of God is being slandered among
the other nations,” just as it is written.

2:25 Now don’t get me wrong;
circumcision is of value— as long as
you keep practicing the law and never
break it, because then your
circumcision would be nullified. 2:26 So
if the uncircumcised do what the law
requires, shouldn’t they be considered
circumcised? 2:27 Not only that, these
uncircumcised people who naturally do
what the law requires will be your
judges, since you broke the law even

though you knew it and were circumcised! 2:28 In fact, it isn't the external that makes one a Judean; it isn't what's apparent in the flesh via circumcision. 2:29 A true Judean is one on the inside, who is circumcised in spirit and not the letter of law; their praise will not come from people but from God.

3:1 So what is the advantage in being a Judean, or what is the benefit of circumcision? 3:2 Much in every way! Above all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3:3 But what if some didn't believe; wouldn't that nullify the faithfulness of God? 3:4 Absolutely not! God is always true, so everyone who opposes is a liar; as it has been written, "So that you were justified in your words

and will be awarded the verdict when you go to court.” 3:5 But if our injustice makes God’s justice look even better, can’t we say that it is wrong for God to release his rage on us? (I’m using a human argument.) 3:6 Absolutely not! How else would God judge the world? 3:7 Yet if my falsehood made the truth of God even clearer, why am I still being judged as a sinner? 3:8 And why not say (as some falsely accuse us of saying) that we should do evil so that good will come of it? They will get the judgment they deserve!

No double standard allowed

3:9 So then, does this mean we are exempt? Of course not, because we have already shown that both Judeans

and Greeks are all sinners 3:10 just as it is written:

“No one is righteous, not even one. 3:11 Not one understands, not one seeks out God. 3:12 They all turned away from him and became useless; no one shows kindness; not even one! 3:13 Their throats are open graves; with their tongues they deceive. The venom of asps is behind their lips; 3:14 Their mouths are crammed full of curses and bitterness; 3:15 Their feet are quick to shed blood; 3:16 bone-crushing labor is in their paths, 3:17 and they do not know the way of peace. 3:18 “There is no respect for God in their eyes.”

3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under

it, so that every mouth will be silenced and the entire world will stand trial before God. 3:20 After all, no one will be justified in his sight by keeping the law, since its purpose is to expose sins. 3:21 Instead, a justice outside of law has appeared, to which the Law and the Prophets attest. 3:22 This justice from God comes through faith in Jesus the Anointed One and is for all believers, with no exceptions. 3:23 For all have sinned and lack God's honor, 3:24 and all are justified by his generous gift, being ransomed by Anointed Jesus. 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice to remove our sins by means of faith in his spilled blood. This demonstrated his justice, because he had written off the penalty for sins committed beforehand. 3:26 This happened in order to

demonstrate his justice at the right time, the current age, showing him to be fair and making things right with those who put their trust in Jesus.

Faith and Law

3:27 So then, what basis is there for bragging? It was thrown out of court! And by what law, of good deeds? No! It was excluded by the law of faith. 3:28 For we argue that a person is justified by faith apart from legal performance. 3:29 It is ridiculous to think God is only the God of the Judeans! Is he not also the God of the other nations? Yes, also of the other nations! 3:30 There is but one God, and he will justify both the circumcised and the uncircumcised by faith. 3:31 Then do we nullify law by

means of faith? Absolutely not! Rather, we uphold law.

4:1 Now what can we say that Abraham, our biological founder, discovered? 4:2 If he was justified by his actions he had something to brag about— but not before God. 4:3 For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and for that reason he was cleared of all charges.” 4:4 Now a worker’s wages are not considered a gift but a debt. 4:5 In contrast, the one who does not work but instead trusts in the One who justifies the ungodly, is cleared of all charges because of faith. 4:6 Even David says this about the happiness of the person whose charges have been cleared by God apart from actions: 4:7 “Happy are they whose lawlessness

was pardoned, and whose sins were covered over. 4:8 Happy is the one the Master does not charge with sin.”

4:9 Is this happiness only for the circumcision or also for the uncircumcision? We say that innocence was assigned to Abraham because of his faith. 4:10 Did circumcision have anything to do with it? No. 4:11 And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the faith that justified him before he was circumcised. So he is considered the ancestor of all who believe without circumcision. 4:12 Yet he is also the ancestor of the circumcised — and not just of those with physical circumcision but also of those who continue to live out the same quality of faith as Abraham.

4:13 Now the promise to Abraham (or to his Descendant)— that he would inherit the world— did not come by legalistic means, but by his being declared innocent due to his faith. 4:14 For if those under law can enjoy the inheritance, then faith has been emptied and the promise has been nullified. 4:15 After all, law brings a guilty verdict, but where there is no law there can be no way to break it.

4:16 Therefore, the promise is from faith, making it a matter of favor. In that way the promise was guaranteed as valid to all the descendants— not just to those under the law but also to those with the faith of Abraham. And he is the ancestor of all of us, 4:17 as the scriptures say: “I have appointed you

the ancestor of many nations.” He believed this because it came from the God who makes the dead live again and calls into existence that which does not exist. 4:18 He who was long past hope confidently expected that he would become the ancestor of many nations, just as the promise was stated: “This is how your descendants will be.” 4:19 And his faith was not weak, even though he realized that his body, which was about a hundred years old, was as good as dead, as also was Sarah’s womb. 4:20 Yet Abraham’s faith in God never wavered; instead it was given new life, for which he exalted God. 4:21 He was fully assured that God was able to do what was promised. 4:22 That is the reason he was cleared of all charges.

4:23 Now these words were not only written for his benefit 4:24 but also for ours. We who put our trust in the One who raised Jesus our Master from the dead will also have all charges against us dropped. 4:25 He was handed over because of our sins and raised to justify us.

5:1 So then, seeing that we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Master Jesus the Anointed One, 5:2 through whom we also have access by faith into this favor in which we stand. We can take pride in our confident expectation of God's favor— 5:3 and in our oppressions, which we know result in endurance; 5:4 and endurance makes us pass the test, which leads to hope. 5:5 And this hope

does not fade, because of the love God has poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit he gave us.

Sin and redemption

5:6 While we were still weak, the Anointed One died at just the right time for the sake of the ungodly. 5:7 It rarely happens that someone will die for a public benefactor, let alone an ordinary innocent person. 5:8 So God displays his love for us by virtue of the fact that the Anointed One died for our sakes while we were still sinners. 5:9 And how much more, now that his blood has cleared us of all charges, will we be saved from God's rage through him! 5:10 After all, if we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son while

we were still his enemies, how much more will we now be saved through his life! 5:11 And on top of that, we can also be proud of belonging to God by means of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, the One who accomplished that reconciliation.

5:12 Sin entered into the world by means of one person, and death by means of sin, and so death passed on to all people, seeing that all sinned. 5:13 Sin was in the world before there was law, yet sin is not taken into account where there is no law. 5:14 Even so, death was in charge from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin as did Adam— who is a type of the One to come. 5:15 But the gift of God is nothing like the sin! For if death came to

many because of one sin, how much better is the favor of God to many, granted from the one person: Jesus the Anointed One!

5:16 Again, the gift is nothing like the sin. In the first case, the verdict pronounced on the one led to condemnation, while in the second, favor came after many sins and resulted in acquittal. 5:17 For if death reigned because of one sin, how much better will be the reign of life through the One— Jesus the Anointed One— for those who take hold of God's overflowing favor and the gift of innocence! 5:18 Then it follows that just as one sin brought condemnation to all people, so also one act of justice brought acquittal and life to all people.

5:19 Through the disobedience of the one person many were brought into a state of sin; likewise, through the obedience of the One, many were brought into a state of innocence.

5:20 But when law was introduced, sins increased; yet when sin increased, favor abounded even more. 5:21 So just as Sin

Sin and Favor are capitalized here to show that Paul is using personification to make his point.

was put in charge because of death, so also Favor is put in charge through justice because of eternal life, by means of Jesus the Anointed One our Master.

6:1 What should we conclude from that? That we should persist in sinning so that favor will keep increasing? 6:2 Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Ridiculous!

Our death and resurrection is like Jesus’

6:3 You don’t seem to understand that those who are immersed into Anointed Jesus are immersed into his death. 6:4 And just as we were buried together with him through immersion into his death, so also, just as the Anointed One was raised from the dead through the favor of the Father, we will keep pace with him in a new life. 6:5 For if we have become united with his kind of death, then we have also become united with

his kind of resurrection. 6:6 We know that our old self was crucified along with him, so that the body of Sin would be neutralized, and we would not continue to slave for Sin. 6:7 The dead have been released from Sin.

6:8 So if we died along with the Anointed One, we believe that we will also live together with him. 6:9 After all, since the Anointed One was raised from the dead then Death no longer has control of him. 6:10 The death he died was to Sin, once and for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. 6:11 In the same way, you too should consider yourselves truly dead to Sin, yet alive to God with Anointed Jesus.

Living accordingly

6:12 So then, do not let Sin rule over your mortal body, making you obey its desires. 6:13 And do not present parts of your body as weapons of injustice in the service of Sin, but instead present yourselves to God as those who have been raised from the dead, and your body parts to God as weapons of justice. 6:14 For Sin will not have mastery over you, because you are not under Law but under Favor.

6:15 So should we therefore keep sinning since we are not under Law but under Favor? Absolutely not! 6:16 Don't you realize that you are the servants of the one to whom you offer your obedience— whether it's to Sin and then death, or to Compliance and then justice? 6:17 Now praise God that

although you were servants of Sin, now you listened from the heart to the teaching to which you were handed over. 6:18 Now that you are free from Sin, you are enslaved to Justice.

6:19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your body parts as servants to Impurity and Lawlessness (which of course led to lawless acts), so now present your body parts as servants to Justice, resulting in holiness. 6:20 When you were servants to Sin you were free from Justice. 6:21 But what did you gain by it? Only that of which you are now ashamed, whose end result was death. 6:22 In contrast, now you have been freed from Sin and enslaved to God. And what you gained

from that is holiness, whose end result is eternal life. 6:23 For Sin pays you the wages of death, but God graciously gives you eternal life through Anointed Jesus our Master.

The purpose and limitation of the law

7:1 Sisters and brothers, how can you not know— for I am talking to those who know law— that the law only has jurisdiction over a person while they are alive? 7:2 For example, a married woman is legally bound to her husband while he is alive. But if he dies, she is exempt from the law concerning her husband. 7:3 Now if she were with another man while her husband lived, she would be guilty of adultery. But if

her husband died she would not be guilty of adultery, even if she were with another man.

7:4 So then, my brothers and sisters, you too were put to death in the eyes of the law by means of the body of the Anointed One, in order to belong to Another— the One who was raised from the dead— so that we should always be productive for God. 7:5 For when we were governed by the flesh, the passions caused by the law were active in our body parts, producing death. 7:6 Yet we were discharged from the law, dying to that which held us down, so that now we are able to serve in the new way of the spirit and not the old way of the letter.

7:7 What will we do then, declare that the law is Sin? Absolutely not! But I would not have known what Sin is without law. For example, I wouldn't have been conscious of wanting what belongs to others without the law stating, "You must not want what belongs to others." 7:8 Now Sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, produced in me a desire for other people's belongings, because apart from law, Sin is dead. 7:9 I once lived apart from law, but with the arrival of the commandment, Sin came to life and I died.

7:10 So the commandment that was intended to bring life brought only death. 7:11 Sin seized the opportunity through the commandment to

completely seduce me and thereby kill me. 7:12 So in fact the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, just, and good. 7:13 So then, did that which is good become the death of me? Absolutely not! Instead, Sin, in order to be exposed as such, was producing death in me by that which is good so it could be exposed through the commandment as utter sin. 7:14 For though we know the law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly, having been disposed of under Sin.

7:15 I don’t know what I’m accomplishing, because I don’t do what I intend, and instead do what I hate. 7:16 Now if I do what I don’t want to do, I concede that the law is respectable. 7:17 But then I know it isn’t really I who

does this, but Sin which is taking up residence in me. 7:18 I am aware that nothing good makes its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for my will lies in wait for me, to accomplish that which is not respectable. 7:19 I don't do the good I want to do, but instead, I put into practice the evil I don't want to do. 7:20 Now if I do what I don't want to do, it is no longer I who am practicing it, but Sin which makes its home in me.

7:21 Consequently I discover this principle: Whenever I intend to do good, evil is lying in ambush. 7:22 I delight in the law of God in my inner person, 7:23 but in my body parts I observe a different law that makes war with the law of my mind and leads me into captivity to the law of Sin that lives in

my body parts. 7:24 Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will rescue me from this body condemned to die? 7:25 Give thanks to God through Jesus the Anointed One, our Master! In conclusion, in my mind I serve the law of God, but in the flesh I serve the law of Sin.

8:1 But now there is nothing to condemn those who belong to Anointed Jesus, 8:2 because the Spirit's law of life from Anointed Jesus freed you from the law of Sin and Death. 8:3 For what the law found to be impossible, since it was weak on account of the flesh, God accomplished by sending his own Son in the resemblance of sinful flesh. Thus he was a sin offering that condemned sin in the flesh. 8:4 That satisfied the

law for us who keep living according to the spirit instead of the flesh. 8:5 For those that are in accord with flesh are inclined to do what it wants, but those who are in accord with spirit do what is spiritual. 8:6 For the perspective of the flesh is death, but the perspective of the spirit is life and peace. 8:7 That's because the perspective of the flesh is hostile to God since it is not under God's law, and in fact is incapable of being under it.

Flesh and the Spirit

8:8 Now those who are of the flesh are not able to please God. 8:9 You, on the other hand, are not of the flesh but of spirit— if the Spirit of God has taken up residence in you. Anyone who does not

have the Anointed One does not belong to him. 8:10 But if you have the Anointed One, the body is a rotting corpse because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of justice. 8:11 Now if the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead has taken up residence in you, this same One will also raise up your mortal bodies by means of his Spirit residing in you.

Obedience to God

8:12 Consequently then, sisters and brothers, we are obligated— but not to live in accord with the flesh, 8:13 for when you do that you are in the process of dying. Yet if you live in accord with the spirit, you put the practices of the body to death, and so you will live.

8:14 All those who are led by the Spirit of God are his children. 8:15 You did not get the spirit of slavery to fear again, but instead you got the spirit of adoption, in which we cry out “Daddy, Father!” 8:16 And the Spirit confirms the testimony of our own spirit that we are the children of God. 8:17 And being children, that makes us heirs— heirs of an inheritance from God, and joint heirs with the Anointed One, since if we suffer together with him, we will also be exalted together with him.

8:18 In my estimation, what we experience at this time is unworthy of comparison to the honor to be revealed in us. 8:19 For the created world waits in intense anticipation for the children of God to be revealed, 8:20 because it was

unwillingly subjected to futility, in the hope 8:21 that it will be liberated from slavery to mortality into the honorable freedom of the children of God. 8:22 For we have observed that all of creation has been groaning in labor pains up to the present time. 8:23 And not only that, but all of us who are the first to be produced by the Spirit, groan in eager expectation of our legal adoption, which means the release of our body. 8:24 For it is Hope we were saved for, yet hope realized is no longer hope if what we hoped for is right in front of us. 8:25 But if we don't yet see what we're expecting, we eagerly wait for it.

8:26 In the same way, the Spirit also helps us in our weakness. We don't know how to pray to meet needs we

aren’t aware of, but the Spirit pleads on our behalf with unspeakable emotion. 8:27 The One who searches hearts knows the perspective of the Spirit, since the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of the holy ones. 8:28 And we know that for those who love God, everything works together for their good, to those called according to his purposes. 8:29 He prearranged it that those he knew about in advance would be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many siblings. 8:30 Now those he prearranged he also called; those he called he also justified; those he justified he also exalted.

8:31 So then, what can we say about all these things? If God is on our side, who

is against us? 8:32 Surely he who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for all our sakes— will he not graciously give us everything else as well? 8:33 Who can bring a charge against the chosen ones of God? God is the one who acquits us, 8:34 so who is the one who condemns? The One who died and yet rose again, Jesus the Anointed One, stands at God's right as our advocate!

8:35 What can ever separate us from the love of the Anointed One— oppression, or constriction, or persecution, or famine, or deprivation, or danger, or sword? 8:36 Just as it is written, "On account of you we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 8:37 No!

We are absolute conquerors through the One who loves us. 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither what is nor what approaches, neither powers 8:39 nor height nor depth nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God and of Anointed Jesus our Master.

Anguish over Israel

9:1 I tell you in all honesty before the Anointed One— and my conscience testifies together with me in the Holy Spirit— 9:2 that I have great sorrow and relentless pain in my heart. 9:3 For I would be willing to be cursed and separated from the Anointed One for the sake of my brothers and sisters, my

natural relatives. 9:4 They are the people of Israel; they possess the adoption, and the honor, and the covenants, and the law, and the divine service, and the promises. 9:5 They have the ancestors, and above all, as far as the flesh is concerned they are the ones through whom the Anointed One came— bless God forever, absolutely!

9:6 Now it isn't as though the Word of God has failed, because not all those who descended from Israel are Israel. 9:7 All the descendants of Abraham are his children, but "Your descendants will be called through Isaac." 9:8 That is, it's not the natural children who are children of God; rather, it's the children of the Promise who are considered

descendants. 9:9 This is how the Promise is worded: “At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son.” 9:10 In addition, Rebecca’s children all had the same father, our ancestor Isaac. 9:11 But before they were born— before they could have done anything good or bad— 9:12 the purpose of God remained; the choice was 9:13 not due to what anyone did but to the One who does the calling. And it was declared to her that “The older will serve the younger.”

9:14 What can we say then, that God is unjust? Absolutely not! 9:15 For as he told Moses, “I will show mercy to whom I choose, and I will show pity to whom I choose.” 9:16 So then it does not depend on a person’s will or efforts but

on God, the one who shows mercy. 9:17 As the scripture says to Pharaoh, “I raised you up for this very thing, so that I would display my power in you, and so that my Name will be known around the world.” 9:18 Consequently, God can choose to either be compassionate or to harden.

9:19 But you will protest to me, “Then why does he still blame people, since no one can thwart his intentions?” 9:20 Puny human! Who are you, after all, to talk back to God? Will the thing that’s been formed say to the one who formed it, “Why did you make me like this?” 9:21 Ridiculous! Doesn’t the potter have the right to take the same lump of clay and make both a container for honorable things and a container for trash?

9:22 Suppose God wanted to display his rage and make his power known. By patiently carrying the “trash bins” that are designed for destruction, 9:23 he also demonstrated the riches of his majesty on the containers of his compassion that were prepared for honor— 9:24 us, whom he called not only out of the Judeans but also out of the other nations. 9:25 In Hosea he says, “I will call those who were not my people, My People, and she who was unloved, My Dear,” 9:26 and, “It will happen in the place where it was declared to them ‘You are not my people’; there they will be called children of the living God.”

9:27 Now Isaiah cries over Israel, “Though the people of Israel are as

uncountable as the grains of sand, only a small number will be saved. 9:28 For the Master's word will bring the earth to a definite end." 9:29 And according to what Isaiah declared earlier, "If the Master of Armies hadn't preserved a small number of us, we would have become Sodom; we would have been compared to Gomorrah."

9:30 So what are we saying? That the other nations, who were not seeking acquittal, obtained it by means of faith. 9:31 Yet Israel, who sought a just law, did not obtain it. 9:32 Why? Because they pursued it out of works and not faith; they stumbled over the Stumbling Stone, 9:33 just as it is written: "Look, I am laying down a stumbling stone in Zion, and a Rock that trips people, but

the one who puts their trust in him will not be embarrassed.”

10:1 Sisters and brothers, my heartfelt desire and request to God on their behalf is for their salvation. 10:2 I can vouch for their enthusiasm for God, but they don’t understand what they are so enthusiastic about. 10:3 They are ignorant of the justice of God and try to establish their own; thus they were not justified by God. 10:4 For the Anointed One is the fulfillment of law, such that everyone who believes is cleared of all charges.

Law and faith

10:5 In writing about the justice of the law, Moses said, “The person who does

all of this will live by it.” 10:6 Yet the justice of faith says this: “Don’t ask yourself, ‘Who will go up into heaven?’ (that is, to lead the Anointed One down), 10:7 or ‘Who will go down into the Abyss?’ (that is, to lead the Anointed One up from the dead).” 10:8 But what does it say? “The declaration is near you, in your mouth and in your mind” (that is, the declaration of the faith we are proclaiming): 10:9 If you openly state that Jesus is Master and believe that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10:10 For it is with the mind that you believe and are cleared of all charges, and with the mouth you speak out and are saved. 10:11 As the scripture says, “No one who puts their trust in him will be embarrassed.” 10:12 For there is no

distinction between Judean and Greek, because the same One is Master of all and is generous to all who call to him for help— 10:13 “Everyone who calls on the name of the Master for help will be saved.”

10:14 But how can they ask for help from someone they have not put their trust in? And how can they trust someone they haven’t heard of? And how will they hear if no one tells them? 10:15 Yet how will anyone tell them if they are not sent out? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” 10:16 But not all heed this good news; as Isaiah says, “Master, who believed what we told them?” 10:17 So it follows that faith comes from being

told, and being told comes from the declaration of the Anointed One.

Provoking to jealousy

10:18 But am I saying that Israel didn't hear? Of course they did: "Their speech went out into all the earth, their declarations to the farthest reaches of civilization." 10:19 So am I saying Israel didn't know? First of all, Moses says "I will provoke you to jealousy over those who are not a nation; I will annoy you over a clueless nation." 10:20 Yet Isaiah boldly stated, "I was found by those who weren't even looking for me; I was revealed to those who weren't even asking about me." 10:21 To Israel he says, "All day long I stretched out my

hands toward people who are hostile to faith and argue with me.”

11:1 Then am I saying that God rejected his people? Absolutely not! I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 11:2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew; ridiculous! Have you not grasped what Elijah says in the scripture as he pleads with God against Israel? 11:3 “Master, they killed your prophets, they tore down your altars; I am the only one left, and now they are after me too!” 11:4 But what was he told? “I have reserved for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” 11:5 And so it is in the current age; there has come to be a small number remaining who were chosen by God’s favor. 11:6

Now if it is by favor then it couldn’t be by actions; conversely, if it is by actions then it couldn’t be by favor.

11:7 Here’s the situation: Israel is searching for that which she has not encountered, except for the chosen ones. Now the rest were calloused, 11:8 just as it is written: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that can’t see and ears that can’t hear, right up to the present time.” 11:9 And David says, “Let their dinner table become a trap for prey, a snare into their just deserts. 11:10 Darken their eyes so they cannot see; let all their backs be bent over continually.” 11:11 Then am I saying that they’ve fallen and can’t get up? Absolutely not! But their sins meant salvation to the other nations, for the

purpose of provoking Israel to jealousy. 11:12 Now if their sin becomes the world's enrichment and their loss is the other nations' gain, then what will result if all of them are saved?

11:13 Now here is what I am saying to the other nations, since in fact I am the Ambassador to them, and I hereby proudly dispense my commission: 11:14 I try to provoke my people to jealousy and so save some of them. 11:15 For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will be the result of their salvation, if not being brought back to life from the dead?

The grafting analogy

11:16 If the first offering of dough is holy then so is the whole loaf; and if the root is holy, then so are the branches. 11:17 Now if some of the branches were broken off so that you, a wild olive shoot, could be grafted in to join with the root and share in its nourishment, 11:18 do not gloat over the branches! If you do, remember that the root sustains you, not that you sustain the root. 11:19 But you will object, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” 11:20 Granted; but they were broken off due to unbelief, and you were grafted in for belief. So instead of gloating, be afraid! 11:21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

11:22 Now look at the kindness— and harshness— of God: harshness to those who fell but kindness to you. Persist in kindness or you too will be cut out. 11:23 Now on the other hand, they will be grafted back in if they don’t persist in unbelief, and God is certainly able to do that. 11:24 For if you were cut out of a wild olive tree and, against nature, were grafted into the cultivated olive tree, don’t you think that it is even better to re-graft the natural branches back in again?

11:25 I don’t want you to be ignorant of this secret, sisters and brothers, so that you won’t be congratulating yourselves: Partial callousness has come upon Israel until the full number of believers from the other nations has come in.

11:26 And finally all Israel will be saved, just as it is written: “The Rescuer will arrive out of Zion; he will turn ungodliness away from Jacob. 11:27 And this is my covenant with them when I will take away their sins.” 11:28 Now in regards to the good news they are in fact your enemies, yet at the same time they are the chosen people, loved because of their ancestors; 11:29 the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. 11:30 For just as even you were once hostile toward faith in God yet were shown mercy by means of the hostility of Israel, 11:31 so also they are hostile to this mercy of yours so that now they can be shown mercy. 11:32 God wraps it all up in hostility toward faith so he can be merciful to all.

Be transformed

11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unfathomable are his judgments, and how untraceable are his ways! 11:34 Who knew the mind of the Master, or who became his counselor? 11:35 Or who gave to him, that he owes repayment? 11:36 Out of him, and through him, and into him belongs all the honor into the ages, absolutely!

12:1 So I am encouraging you, brothers and sisters, through the compassion of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and very pleasing to God — which is your logical divine service. 12:2 And do not be conformed to this age but be transformed by renewing

your minds, for the purpose of testing what the will of God is, which is good, very pleasing, and perfect. 12:3 Now I say this through the favor shown to me, to everyone among you: Do not have an inflated opinion of yourselves, but be realistic and wise, in accord with the measure of faith God has apportioned to each of you.

The body analogy

12:4 For just as one body has many parts yet the parts do not all have the same function, 12:5 so also the many of us form one Body of the Anointed One and each part belongs to all the others. 12:6 Now each one should excel at whatever gift they were given: if Prophecy, then exercise this gift in

proportion with the faith; 12:7 if Service, then serve well; if Teaching, then teach well; 12:8 if Encouraging, then be very encouraging; if Generosity, then be very generous; if an Official Benefactor, do it diligently; if Mercy, give it cheerfully.

Love in action

12:9 Let love be simple, fair, and true; hate evil and cling to good. 12:10 Let us have fondness for each other as spiritual siblings, honoring others above yourselves. 12:11 Be diligent instead of lazy, since you are serving the Master. 12:12 Celebrate in hope, endure oppression, be persistent in prayer, 12:13 join in with the needs of the holy ones, pursue hospitality. 12:14 Bless those who are persecuting you— bless,

not curse! 12:15 Celebrate with those who celebrate and cry with those who cry. 12:16 Let all of you have the same attitude. Do not think yourself too good for others, but instead associate with people of low status— do not become self-important.

12:17 Do not pay back evil for evil; instead, do what is right in the sight of all people. 12:18 As far as it depends on you, be at peace with everyone. 12:19 Do not take vengeance, dear ones, but leave room for God's rage. As it is written: "'It is mine to avenge, I will repay!' says the Master." 12:20 But if your opponent is hungry give them food; if they are thirsty give them something to drink; for in doing this you will be showing them kindness. 12:21 Do

not be conquered by evil, but instead conquer evil with good.

Christians and government

13:1 Let everyone be supportive of the higher authorities, because there is no authority that isn't under God; those that exist have been arranged by God. 13:2 That means anyone who plots and schemes against these authorities is violating God's mandate, and those who do this will be judged. 13:3 The rulers do not terrorize those who do good but only those who do evil. So if you don't want to live in fear of them, do good and you will have their approval. 13:4 The authorities are God's servants for your good, but if you do evil, fear them! They carry weapons for good

reasons; as God's servants they carry out his anger to avenge God against those who do evil. 13:5 So it is necessary to be supportive, not only to avoid the anger of God but also as a matter of conscience. 13:6 That is also the reason you pay them taxes; they are God's relentless public servants. 13:7 So give whatever is due: if it's taxes then pay them; if it's tribute then give it; if it's fear then fear; if honor then honor.

Love is our law

13:8 The only debt you should carry is to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled law. 13:9 For all of this— "You must not commit adultery; you must not murder; you must not steal; you must not commit perjury; you

must not desire what belongs to others”— and any other precept you can think of, can be summed up as, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” 13:10 Love does no harm to its neighbor; therefore love fulfills the law.

13:11 And do all of this while being aware of the time we live in. It is already time for you to be awakened from sleep, because our rescue is nearer now than when we first believed. 13:12 The night has passed and the day is dawning! So then, let us be rid of acts of darkness and put on the weapons of light. 13:13 Keep pace with the light— not in wild parties and drunkenness, or illicit sex and vice, or rivalry and jealousy— 13:14 but instead clothe yourselves with Master Jesus the

Anointed One. Make no plans to indulge the desires and wishes of the flesh.

Grace for gray areas

14:1 Accept the one whose faith is fragile, but don't think poorly of them. 14:2 You may know you are allowed to eat all things, but the fragile one may believe we should only eat vegetables. 14:3 The one who eats must not look down on the one who does not; conversely, the one who does not eat must not look down on the one who does, for God has accepted them. 14:4 After all, who are you to judge someone else's household servant? To their own master they stand or fall; and stand they will, for the Master is able to make

them stand. 14:5 One person prefers one day over another, while another treats every day alike; let each one follow their personal conviction. 14:6 The one who observes special days wants to please the Master; the one who eats all things also wants to please the Master, for they are grateful to God. Likewise, the one who eats only vegetables is trying to please the Master and is grateful to God.

14:7 None of us lives or dies in isolation. 14:8 If we live, we live for the Master; if we die, we die for the Master. Either way we belong to him. 14:9 Because the Anointed One died and lives, he is Master of both the dead and the living. 14:10 So why do you judge your brother or sister? Why do you look down on

them? All of us will someday stand before the judgment seat of the Anointed One, 14:11 for it is written: “ ‘As I live,’ says the Master, ‘Every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will acknowledge God!’ ” 14:12 Since each one of us will give an account of ourselves to God, 14:13 in no way should we be judging each other’s personal convictions. Be resolved not to put any stumbling block or trap in front of a sister or brother.

14:14 I know and am convinced in Master Jesus that nothing is inherently forbidden for us to eat. But to the one who thinks it is, then for that person it really is. 14:15 So if what you eat grieves your brother or sister, you are no longer living under love. Do not use

what you eat to destroy that one for whom the Anointed One died! 14:16 In this way, what is a good thing for you will not be maligned. 14:17 After all, the kingdom of God is not about eating and drinking, but about justice, peace, and happiness in the Holy Spirit. 14:18 So the one who serves the Anointed One will then be pleasing to God and approved by people.

14:19 Consequently, then, we pursue that which brings peace and builds others up. 14:20 Do not demolish the work of God on account of food! All of it is “clean” but it becomes evil to the one who, seeing the freedom of others, violates their own conscience and eats it. 14:21 It would be much better to never eat meat, or drink wine, or do anything

else that might weaken or trip up your brother or sister. 14:22 Whatever your personal conviction is, keep it between yourself and God. Happy is the one who does not violate their conscience. 14:23 But if anyone has doubts about what they are eating, they are condemned, because whatever is not out of faith is sin.

15:1 We who are able should bear with the weaknesses of the unable and not only please ourselves. 15:2 Each one should please others for their benefit and for building them up. 15:3 For even the Anointed One didn't please himself, but in accordance with what is written, "The insults of those who insulted you fell on me." 15:4 Whatever was written before was for our instruction, so that

through the endurance and comfort of the scripture we would have hope. 15:5 And now may the God of endurance and comfort grant you the same attitude toward each other as that of Anointed Jesus, 15:6 so that, with one mind and voice, you may honor the God and Father of our Master Jesus the Anointed One. 15:7 So accept each other as the Anointed One accepted you, to the honor of God.

15:8 I am saying that the Anointed One became an attendant to the people of Israel, for the sake of the truth of God, in order to confirm the promises to the ancestors. 15:9 Yet the other nations are to honor God for his mercy, as it is written: “Because of this I will acclaim you among the other nations and play

music to your Name.” 15:10 And again
he says, “Celebrate, you other nations,
with his people!” 15:11 Yet again, “Praise
the Master, all the other nations,” and
“Let all the peoples greatly praise him!”
15:12 And again, Isaiah says, “There will
be the Root of Jesse, the One who
rises to be the ruler of the other nations;
the other nations will rely on him.”

Paul’s service to the Gentiles

15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you
all with joy and peace in the faith, so
you will overflow in the hope of the
power of the Holy Spirit. 15:14 I myself
have been convinced, sisters and
brothers, that you are good through and
through, having been filled with all

knowledge, able to caution each other. 15:15 Yet I still boldly write to you in part to remind you, because of the favor given to me under God, 15:16 that I should be a priest of Anointed Jesus to the other nations. I act as a priest of the good news of God, so that the offering is well-accepted by the other nations and made holy by the Holy Spirit.

15:17 So, because of Anointed Jesus, I have a reason to brag about what I do for God. 15:18 For I do not dare to speak about anything except that which the Anointed One did through me, leading to the obedience of the other nations, whether in word and actions, 15:19 in the power of signs and miracles, or in the power of God's Spirit. As a result, from Jerusalem and around into

Illyricum, I have finished bringing the good news of the Anointed One. 15:20 For that reason I am ambitious to bring the good news where the Name of the Anointed One has not yet been known, so that I don’t build upon someone else’s foundation. 15:21 Instead, as it is written, “Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard about him will understand.”

Paul wants to see them in person

15:22 This is the reason I have often been prevented from coming to visit you. 15:23 But now, since there is no more remaining for me to do in these regions, and since I have for many years ached to see you, 15:24 I hope to

see you on my way to Spain. Then you can send me on my way from there, after I have been with you for a while. 15:25 But first I am going to Jerusalem to attend to the holy ones. 15:26 For those in Macedonia and Achaia were happy to make a contribution for the poor among the holy ones in Jerusalem. 15:27 They were happy to do this because they are indebted to them; because if the other nations became partners with them in spiritual things, then they should also provide priestly service to them in physical things. 15:28 So when I have completed this and delivered these proceeds to them, I will visit you on my way to Spain. 15:29 And I know that when I come to you I will come with the full blessing of the Anointed One.

15:30 Now I plead with you, brothers and sisters, through our Master Jesus the Anointed One and the love of the Spirit, to fight together with me in prayers for my sake to God, 15:31 so that I will be rescued from those in Judea who oppose the faith, and that my service to the holy ones in Jerusalem will be well-received. 15:32 Then I can come to you in joy, God willing, and will rest together with you. 15:33 Now may the God of Peace be with all of you, absolutely!

Personal greetings

16:1 Now I am commending to you our sister Phoebe, attendant of the Congregation in Cenchrea. 16:2 Accept her as from the Master, in a manner

worthy of the holy ones, and stand by her in whatever matter she may need. For she became a presiding officer over many, including me!

16:3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my co-workers in Anointed Jesus. 16:4 They risked their own necks for my life; not only I but also all the Congregations among the other nations thank them. 16:5 Greet Epanetus, who is so dear to me, and who was the first convert to the Anointed One in the province of Asia. 16:6 Greet Mary, who works hard for you. 16:7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and co-captives, outstanding Ambassadors who were united with the Anointed One before me.

16:8 Greet Ampliatos, dear to me concerning the Master. 16:9 Greet Urbanus, our co-worker united with the Anointed One, and my dear friend Stachys. 16:10 Greet Apelles, approved by the Anointed One. Greet the followers of Aristobulus. 16:11 Greet Herodion, my relative. Greet the people of Narcissus who belong to the Master.

16:12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor for the Master. Greet dear Persis, who also works hard for the Master. 16:13 Greet Rufus, chosen by the Master, and his mother and mine. 16:14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters with them. 16:15 Greet Philologos and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the holy

ones together with them. 16:16 Greet each other warmly. All the Congregations united with the Anointed One send you greetings.

16:17 Now I plead with you, sisters and brothers, to make note of those who cause division and set traps, contrary to what you learned, and turn away from them. 16:18 Such people aren't serving our Master the Anointed One but their own appetites; through flattery and praise they seduce the hearts of the innocent. 16:19 Everyone knows about your compliance, and that makes me very happy, but I want you to be wise to what is good yet innocent about evil.

16:20 Now may the God of peace quickly crush the Adversary under your

feet! May the favor of our Master Jesus be with you all. 16:21 Timothy our co-worker greets you, along with Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my relatives. 16:22 I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you who are united with the Master. 16:23 Greeting you also is my host, Gaius, and the whole Congregation. Erastus greets you (he is the administrator of the city), as does brother Quartus.

16:25 Now to him who is able to establish you in accord with my good news, and the proclamation of Jesus the Anointed One— in accord with the revelation of the secret that was kept quiet through eternity past, 16:26 yet is now made known through the prophetic writings, according to the divine

command of the eternal God being made known to all nations for obedient faith— 16:27 to the only wise God through Jesus the Anointed One, be honor into the ages, absolutely!

1 Corinthians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, appointed an Ambassador of Anointed Jesus through the will of God, and brother Sosthenes,

1:2 To the Congregation of God in Corinth, those who have been set apart in the anointing of Jesus, appointed and set apart along with all those everywhere who invoke the Name of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, who is both our Master and theirs:

1:3 Favor, compassion, and peace to you all from God our Father and Anointed Jesus our Master.

1:4 I am always grateful to my God for you because of his favor given to you through Anointed Jesus. 1:5 In everything you say and do you are enriched in Him, 1:6 as confirmed by your testimony of the Anointed One, 1:7 so that you lack no gift as you anticipate the revelation of our Master Jesus the Anointed One. 1:8 He will also keep you firm to the end, blameless on the Day of our Master Jesus the Anointed One. 1:9 God, through whom you were called into partnership with his Son Jesus the Anointed One our Master, is trustworthy.

Chloe’s followers report on divisions in the Corinthian Congregation

1:10 Now, brothers and sisters, I plead with you through the Name of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, that you all agree and that there may not be factions among you, but instead that you are fully equipped with one mind and opinion. 1:11 Sisters and brothers, it has come to my attention via some of Chloe’s followers

Note that the woman Chloe is listed as a leader just as Paul, Apollos, and Peter (Cephas) are. There is nothing expressed or implied about any “household” (as most translations put it).

that there are rivalries among you. 1:12 I'm referring to the way each of you says, "I follow Paul" or "I follow Apollos" or "I follow Cephas" or "I follow the Anointed One." 1:13 You have carved up the Anointed One!

The good news against philosophy and rites

1:13 Paul was not crucified for your sakes, nor did you invoke the name of Paul when were you were immersed. 1:14 Thankfully I didn't immerse any of you except Crispus and Gaius, 1:15 so that no one can claim they were immersed invoking my name. 1:16 Oh, and I immersed the household of Stephanas, but I don't recall immersing anyone else. 1:17 For the Anointed One

did not commission me to immerse but to bring the good news— and not with sophisticated words which would drain the power from the cross of the Anointed One. 1:18 In fact, what we say about the cross sounds ridiculous to those who are on the road to destruction, but it is the power of God to us who are being saved. 1:19 For it is written, “I will annihilate the wisdom of the wise, and I will confound the understanding of the educated.”

1:20 Where is the wise one? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? God has made a mockery of the world’s wisdom! 1:21 The fact is that in his wisdom God decided to save those who would believe by means of this “ridiculous” proclamation, not by the

wisdom of the world. 1:22 The Judeans demand miraculous signs and the Greeks rely on wisdom, 1:23 but we proclaim the crucified Anointed One— a trap for the Judeans and nonsense to other nations. 1:24 Yet to those who are appointed, both Judeans and Greeks, the Anointed One is the power and wisdom of God. 1:25 His “foolishness” is wiser than people’s wisdom, and his “weakness” is stronger than people’s strength!

God chooses the humble

1:26 Brothers and sisters, consider the circumstances of your appointment: not many of you were considered wise, not many had power, not many were of noble birth. 1:27 But God chose the

foolish to shame the wise; he chose the weak of the world to disgrace the strong; 1:28 he chose the lowly, the outcast, and that which does not exist, to neutralize what does exist, 1:29 so that nobody could brag before God. 1:30 Yet you belong to him and are united with Anointed Jesus, who became wisdom from God to us, as well as justice and holiness and freedom. 1:31 So, as it is written, “If you’re going to brag, brag about the Master!”

2:1 So when I came to you, sisters and brothers, I did not come with high-sounding words of wisdom as I announced the hidden secret of God to you; 2:2 I resolved to stay focused on Jesus, the Anointed and Crucified One. 2:3 I came to you in weakness, with

sincere concern. 2:4 And my word and proclamation was not delivered with persuasive words of wisdom, but with the evidence of spirit and power, 2:5 so that your faith would not be in people's wisdom but in God's power.

The hidden good news revealed

2:6 Yet we do use wisdom among the mature— not the wisdom of this age nor of its rulers, which will amount to nothing— 2:7 but the wisdom of God, a hidden secret that God set up beforehand for our honor, before the ages. 2:8 Not one of the rulers of this age knew about this, or they would never have crucified the honorable Master. 2:9 As it is written, "No eye has

seen, no ear has heard, nor has it occurred to anyone what God prepared for those who love him.” 2:10 But God reveals this to us by means of the Spirit, for the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even to the very depths of God. 2:11 Who can know what is in a person, except that person’s own spirit? Likewise, no one can come to know what is in God except his Spirit.

2:12 Now we did not receive the spirit of the world but the Spirit of God, so that we can come to know what God has graciously given us. 2:13 And the words we speak were not taught to us in human wisdom but spiritual; spiritual words must match spiritual wisdom. 2:14 Now the soulish person does not accept what comes from the Spirit of God,

because such things sound ridiculous to them; they cannot fathom them because they are spiritually examined. 2:15 But the spiritual one examines everything, while others cannot examine the spiritual one. 2:16 And who has come to know the mind of the Master or been his equal? But we have the mind of the Anointed One.

Spiritual immaturity

3:1 Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people but as carnal, as if you are infantile as far as the Anointed One is concerned. 3:2 I gave you milk to drink instead of solid food because you couldn't take that—and you still can't. 3:3 You are still carnal, with your inflamed passions and

rivalry. Are you not carnal like everyone else? 3:4 When you say “I follow Paul” or “I follow Apollos,” are you not merely human? For those who say such things are carnal.

Each one does their part

3:5 So who is Apollos? Who is Paul? Only servants through whom you believed as the Master assigned each of us. 3:6 I planted and Apollos watered, but God makes it grow, 3:7 so that neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who makes it grow. 3:8 The one who plants and the one who waters are each paid according to their own labor. 3:9 We are co-workers of God on his field, and you are the building.

3:10 According to the favor God granted me, I laid a foundation as a wise foreman, and someone else is building upon it. But let each one be careful how they build! 3:11 For no one can lay any other foundation beside the one already set: Jesus the Anointed One. 3:12 The material someone builds with— gold, silver, gems, wood, hay, or straw— 3:13 that person's work will become obvious in that Day. It will be revealed with fire; the fire will test the quality of each one's work. 3:14 Whatever is left standing will be the basis for their reward. 3:15 But if someone's work is completely burned up, they will forfeit any reward. Yet they themselves will be saved, in spite of the fire.

The temple of the Holy Spirit

3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God has taken up residence in you? 3:17 If anyone ruins the temple of God, that one will be ruined, for the temple of God is holy, and that's what all of you are. 3:18 Don't be deluded! If anyone among you presumes to be wise in this age, let them become foolish in order to become wise. 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. As it is written, "He captures the wise in their craftiness," 3:20 and again, "The Master knows that the thinking of the wise is pointless."

Do not put people on pedestals

3:21 So then, no more bragging about people, for everything is yours— 3:22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or what exists or is still to come— it's all yours. 3:23 Yet you are the Anointed One's, and he is God's.

True leaders are servants

4:1 So then, let us consider people as deputies of the Anointed One and administrators of the secrets of God. 4:2 In addition, what is desired in such administrators is that they are found faithful. 4:3 Now whether you or any human court puts me on trial, I couldn't care less; I don't even judge myself. 4:4 My conscience is clear, but that cannot justify me— only the Master can put me

on trial. 4:5 So judge nothing prematurely; wait until the Master returns, who will illuminate the things hidden in the dark and expose the inner motives of the heart. Then each one will get their praise from God.

4:6 Sisters and brothers, I am trying to illustrate these things for you by applying them to myself and Apollos, so that through this example you may learn not to go beyond what it written, and so that no one will elevate one person over another. 4:7 What makes any of you so different? What do you have that you weren't given? And if you were given it, why do you brag about it? 4:8 You are already filled, you are already rich, you reign like kings without

us! I wish you really did reign so we could reign with you!

4:9 I really think God put us Ambassadors last, as if we were being put on display to the world like condemned prisoners, to both angels and humans. 4:10 We are fools for the Anointed One while you are so wise; we are weak while you are strong; we are despised while you are highly esteemed. 4:11 Even now we hunger and thirst, we are poorly clothed and beaten, we have to keep moving. 4:12 And we keep laboring, working with our own hands. We respond to verbal abuse with blessing; we tolerate persecution, we respond to cursing with encouragement. 4:13 In all things we

are treated as the dross or scum of the world, right up to this very day.

Paul’s right to be respected

4:14 Now I am not writing all this to shame you, but to warn you as my own dear children. 4:15 For although you may have ten thousand tutors concerning the Anointed One, you nevertheless have few fathers; I fathered you by means of the good news of Anointed Jesus. 4:16 So that is why I plead with you to imitate me. 4:17 For this reason I sent you Timothy, my dear child who is faithful to the Master. He will remind you of my ways concerning the Anointed One, just as I teach everywhere in every Congregation.

4:18 Now some are getting cocky, as if I will not come to you. 4:19 But I will certainly come shortly, if the Master allows it, and then we'll see what they're made of! 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not made of empty words but of power. 4:21 So what will it be? Should I come with a rod in my hand, or in a loving and gentle spirit?

Holding sinful Christians to account

5:1 It is common knowledge that there is immorality among you, and of a kind not even seen among the other nations: A man has his father's wife. 5:2 And you are proud! Should you not instead mourn, so that the one committing this act is removed from among you? 5:3 I

may not be there in person, but I am with you in spirit, and I have already judged the one who has done this just as I would if I were there. 5:4 When you are assembled together in the Name of our Master Jesus, and I am with you there in spirit along with the power of our Master Jesus, 5:5 hand this one over to the Adversary for the extermination of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved on the Day of the Master.

5:6 Bragging is the opposite of what you should do. Don't you know that it only takes a little yeast to make the whole loaf rise? 5:7 Then purge the old yeast, so that you can be a "fresh loaf" without yeast to go along with our Passover Sacrifice (the Anointed One). 5:8 Let us

observe the Festival, not with the old yeast of evil and malice, but with the bread without yeast, with sincerity and truth.

5:9 When I wrote to you before, I told you not to mingle with immoral people, 5:10 but I didn't mean those of the world — the greedy, extortioners, and idolaters. In that case you'd have to completely leave the world. 5:11 But what I'm saying is that you must not mingle with anyone who is called a sister or brother that is promiscuous, or greedy, or an idolater, or a mocker, or a drunkard, or an extortioner. Do not even eat with people like that! 5:12 After all, what business is it of mine to judge outsiders? Are you not to judge those on the inside? 5:13 God will judge the

outsiders. So expel the evil one from among you!

Embarrassing Jesus

6:1 If anyone among you has a legal dispute with another, you actually dare to take your case before the unjust and not the holy ones. 6:2 What!? Do you not know that the holy ones will judge the world? And if you will judge the world, can't you handle even small-claims court? 6:3 You don't seem to realize that we will judge the angels; how can you not judge the ordinary things of life? 6:4 Wouldn't the least among you make better judges than outsiders?

6:5 Now I am saying this to shame you! There is not one wise person among you who is able to judge between fellow believers, 6:6 so one sues another— and in front of unbelievers! 6:7 So you have already utterly failed because of these lawsuits among yourselves. Wouldn't it be better to be wronged? Wouldn't it be better to be cheated? 6:8 But you are injuring and cheating your own sisters and brothers!

6:9 What!? Do you not understand that the unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be fooled; the promiscuous, idolaters, adulterers, perverts, homosexuals, 6:10 thieves, the greedy, drunkards, trash talkers, extortioners— these will not inherit the kingdom of God. 6:11 And that's what

some of you were. But you were washed, you were made holy, you were acquitted in the Name of the Master Jesus the Anointed One and in the Spirit of our God.

Sinning against one's own body

6:12 "I can do whatever I want," but not everything is good for me. "I can do whatever I want," but I will not be mastered by anything. 6:13 "Food for the belly and the belly for food, and God will discard them both". Yet the body is not for promiscuity but for the Master, and the Master for the body. 6:14 Now God raised the Master and will raise us through his power.

6:15 Do you not know that your bodies are parts of the Anointed One? And should I take those parts of the Anointed One away and make them parts of a prostitute? Absolutely not! 6:16 What!? Do you not know that when someone joins to a prostitute the two of them become one flesh? It is written explicitly, “The two will be one flesh.” 6:17 Yet the one joining to the Master is one with him in spirit.

6:18 So run from promiscuity. Every other sin a person commits is outside of their body, but the one who is promiscuous sins against their own body. 6:19 Don’t you realize that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit in you, which you got from God, and you are not your own? 6:20 For you

were bought at a steep price. So then: honor God with your body.

Marriage rules and advice

7:1 Now concerning what you wrote: “It is good for a man not to be intimate with a woman.” 7:2 On the contrary: Because there is so much promiscuity, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. 7:3 The husband is obligated to give his wife what is rightfully hers, and likewise the wife to her husband. 7:4 For the wife is not the only one with authority over her body; her husband has it too. Likewise, the husband does not have exclusive authority to his body, but shares it with his wife. 7:5 Do not deprive each other unless you both agree to it so you can

devote yourselves to prayer, and only for a limited time, so that the Adversary cannot tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 7:6 Now I'm only saying this as a concession, not a command. 7:7 I would prefer everyone to be as I am, but each has their own gift from God; one has this while another has that.

7:8 Now let me say this to the unmarried and the widows: Ideally, they should remain as I am. 7:9 But if they cannot control themselves, let them marry, because it's better to marry than to be consumed with desire.

7:10 Back to the married (and this is not from me but from the Master): That woman must not separate from her

husband. 7:11 Yet if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And the husband is not to leave his wife.

7:12 Now to all of you (and this is from me, not the Master): If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she agrees to stay with him, he must not leave her. 7:13 Likewise, if any sister has an unbelieving husband who wishes to stay with her, she must not leave him. 7:14 For the unbelieving husband has been made holy by the sister, and the unbelieving wife has been made holy by the brother. Otherwise, your children would be impure, whereas now they are holy. 7:15 Yet if the unbeliever wants to leave, let them leave. A brother or sister is not to be enslaved in such cases;

instead, God has called you to live in peace. 7:16 After all, sister, you do not know that you will save your husband; brother, you do not know that you will save your wife.

Dealing with life events

7:17 Let each one keep going according to what the Master apportioned and God has called them; this is my prescription for all the Congregations. 7:18 Was anyone circumcised? You can't take it back. Were you uncircumcised? Don't be circumcised. 7:19 Whether you're circumcised or not is irrelevant; all that matters is keeping God's commands. 7:20 So let each one remain in the place to which they were called. 7:21 If you were called while a

slave, don’t let it concern you— but if you get a chance to be freed, take it! 7:22 For a slave of the Master is freed by the Master; a free person united with the Anointed One is his slave. 7:23 You were bought at a steep price, so do not become slaves of people. 7:24 Again, let each one remain as they were when God called them.

Singleness as the ideal Christian state

7:25 Now concerning women of marriageable age: I have no decree from the Master so I will give you my opinion as one who has been shown by the Master’s mercy to be faithful. 7:26 I think it’s best for people to stay as they are at present. 7:27 But if you are

pledged to marry, don't call it off. If you are not pledged to marry, don't look for a mate. 7:28 Yet if you do get married you have not sinned. I just want to spare you an added burden in this life. 7:29 What I'm trying to tell you is that the time is short. It's as if the married are single, 7:30 the bereaved don't cry, the happy don't celebrate, the shoppers don't buy, 7:31 and those who enjoy the world are left wanting, for the fabric of the world is changing.

7:32 Yet I don't want you to be overly concerned about this. The unmarried one can concentrate on how to please the Master, 7:33 but the married one has to also be concerned about worldly things because they must please their mate, 7:34 so they are divided between

the two. The single woman and the woman of marriageable age can concentrate on the things of the Master, that she may be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman has to attend to worldly things, to pleasing her husband. 7:35 Now I'm not saying this to restrict you, but for your own good, so you will focus on being respectable and attentive to the Master.

7:36 If that man is behaving indecently toward his fiancée and has gone too far, then let it happen; it is not wrong to marry. 7:37 But if he has made up his mind and does not feel compelled to marry but can control himself, he does well. 7:38 Of course, if he marries he also does well, but if he doesn't, he does even better.

7:39 That woman is bound as long as her husband lives, but if he dies, she is free to marry whoever she wants— but he must be a believer. 7:40 Yet in my opinion I think she will be happier if she stays single— and I'm pretty sure I have the Spirit of God.

Paul appears to be discussing a woman whose husband is apparently near death; if she were Jewish then she'd be concerned about whether to obey the Law that commanded her to marry one of her husband's brothers.

Questions about food sacrificed to idols

8:1 Now concerning idol sacrifices, we all think we know something. But though knowledge can make us

conceited, love builds us up. 8:2 If anyone thinks they know something, it only proves how little they really know; 8:3 but whoever loves God is known by him.

8:4 So then, about eating food that has been sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God. 8:5 So even if there are others called “gods”—whether in heaven or on earth where there are many “gods” and many masters— 8:6 to us there is only one God, the Father, from whom everything comes, and we belong to him. And there is one Master, Jesus the Anointed One, through whom everything exists, including us.

8:7 But not everyone knows this. Some who were accustomed to idols still can't eat the food that had been offered to them without considering it a sacrifice, and so their fragile conscience is violated. 8:8 Now food does not give us good standing before God, whether we nibble or stuff ourselves.

8:9 But be careful not to let this right of yours become a stumbling block to the weak. 8:10 If you have this understanding and someone sees you dining in an idol's shrine, won't you be damaging their fragile conscience by being seen eating there? 8:11 You would be destroying the weak one with your knowledge— and this is your brother or sister for whom the Anointed One died! 8:12 In doing this, you would be sinning

against your sisters and brothers and beating on their fragile consciences, and ultimately sinning against the Anointed One. 8:13 For that reason, if food becomes a trap for a brother or sister I'll never eat meat again, just so I won't lay a trap for them.

More about Paul's right to be respected

9:1 Am I not free? Am I not an Ambassador? Have I not seen Jesus our Master? Are you not there because of my work for the Master? 9:2 Even if I am not an Ambassador to others, I certainly am to you! For you are the official seal of my commission by the Master.

9:3 So my defense to those who have put me on trial is this: 9:4 Do we not have the right to eat and drink? 9:5 Do we not have the right to take a believing spouse with us, just like the rest of the Ambassadors, the Master's brothers, and Cephas? 9:6 What?! Is it only I and Barnabas who do not have the privilege of being supported? 9:7 Who goes to war but has to supply their own rations? Who plants a vineyard and gets none of the produce? Who tends a flock but gets none of the milk from it?

9:8 And I'm not making this up out of my head; the Law says the same thing. 9:9 For in the law of Moses it is written, "Do not muzzle an ox while it threshes the grain." Do you really think God only said this for the benefit of oxen? 9:10 What?!

He is obviously saying it to us, for our benefit. For it is written that the one who plows and the one who threshes expect to have a share in the crop.

9:11 So since we have planted spiritual things for you, are we asking too much when we expect physical produce from you? 9:12 If others have this right from you, why not us all the more? But in spite of all that, we do not use these rights; instead we forfeit them all so that we put no obstacle in front of the good news of the Anointed One.

9:13 Do you not know that the ones who work in the temple eat the offerings? Just as those who attend to the altar get a share in the offerings, 9:14 so also the Master prescribed a living from the

good news for those who proclaim it.
9:15 Yet I have not exercised any of
these rights— and I’m not writing this so
I can start. I’d rather die than be
deprived of my boast! 9:16 For if I am to
announce the good news, it’s not
something for me to brag about, but
something I must do, and woe to me if I
don’t! 9:17 If I do this voluntarily I am
earning wages, but if I do it involuntarily
I am only discharging my duty. 9:18 So
what is my wage? To bring the good
news free of charge, waiving my rights.

Reaching out to all

9:19 By being free of all obligation I
become the servant of all, so as to gain
all the more. 9:20 To the Judeans I
became like them, in order to win them

over. To those under the Law I became like them— though I myself am not under the Law— in order to win them over. 9:21 To those without the Law I became as without the law— not that I am free from God's law, since I am the legal property of the Anointed One— in order to win them over. 9:22 To the weak I became weak, to win them over. To everyone I became whatever I needed to become, so that some could be saved. 9:23 I did it all so I could be a joint partner of the good news.

Self-discipline

9:24 Do you not know that the competitors in a stadium all run the race, but only one gets the prize? You too must run to win the prize. 9:25 Every

athlete trains in order to win a perishable medal, but we are after an imperishable one. 9:26 So then, I do not run aimlessly; I am not like a poor boxer who only punches the air. 9:27 Instead, I defeat my body and subdue it, so that in the process of proclaiming the good news to others, I don't find myself disqualified.

Learning from Israel's sins

10:1 Now sisters and brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact that all our ancestors were under the cloud, and they all passed through the sea. 10:2 All of them were thereby "immersed" with Moses; 10:3 they all ate the same spiritual food 10:4 and drank the same spiritual drink, which flowed

out of the spiritual Rock they followed—
and that Rock was the Anointed One.
10:5 Yet the majority of them displeased
God and they were scattered around in
the wilderness.

10:6 Now these things became
examples for us so that we would not
crave worthless things like they did. 10:7
Don’t become idolaters as some of
them did. As it is written, “The people
sat down to eat and drink, and then got
up to play.” 10:8 And do not become
promiscuous as some of them did, and
twenty-three thousand of them died in
one day. 10:9 And we must not provoke
the Anointed One as some of them did,
and they were killed by serpents. 10:10
Do not grumble as some of them did,

who were wiped out by the Exterminator.

10:11 All of those things happened to them as a warning for us to whom the completion of the ages has come. 10:12 So then, let those who think they stand strong be careful that they don’t fall. 10:13 No trial has come upon you but that which all people experience. But God is faithful; he will not abandon you to be tested beyond your limit but will carry you to safety.

Keeping the Christian community pure

10:14 So, dear ones, run from idolatry. 10:15 Let the sensible ones judge what am saying. 10:16 The cup of blessing we

bless— isn't it partnership with the blood of the Anointed One? The bread we break— isn't it partnership with the body of the Anointed One? 10:17 For we who are many are one bread, one body; we all share in that one loaf.

10:18 Look at physical Israel; aren't those who eat the sacrifices in partnership with the altar? 10:19 Now do you think I'm trying to argue that a sacrifice to an idol is anything, or that the idol is anything? 10:20 Those that they sacrifice to are demons, not God, and I'm certainly not intending for you to become partners with demons! 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Master and of demons; you cannot eat at the table of the Master and of demons. 10:22 What?! We would be provoking

the Master to jealousy, and we are not stronger than he is!

10:23 “I can do whatever I want,” but not everything is good for me. “I can do whatever I want,” but not everything builds me up. 10:24 Don’t only be concerned about your own welfare but also that of others. 10:25 So don’t go to the meat market and start worrying about whether it might violate your conscience; just eat. 10:26 For “The earth is the Master’s, and everything in it.”

10:27 If an unbeliever invites you to eat and you want to go, eat whatever is placed before you and don’t ask questions. 10:28 But if they say to you, “This was offered in sacrifice,” then

don’t eat it, for the unbeliever’s sake and for conscience’ sake. 10:29 Now by conscience, I mean that of the other person, not you. After all, why should my freedom be decided by someone else’s conscience? 10:30 If I am partaking with gratitude, why should I be slandered over something I give thanks for?

10:31 So then, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to honor God. 10:32 Try not to offend Judeans or Greeks or God’s Congregation, 10:33 just as I, in all things, do not seek only my own good but the good of many so that they may be saved.

Response to questions about head coverings

11:1 Imitate me the way I also imitate the Anointed One. 11:2 Now I commend you for remembering me and keeping the traditions I handed to you. 11:3 But I want you to understand that the “head” of every man is the Anointed One, the “head” of the woman is the man, and the “head” of the Anointed One is God.

The literal meaning is “head,” but the word is put in quotes to indicate its metaphorical use, which will be followed by its literal use. The quoted passage is presumed from the context to be another question from the Corinthians, because otherwise it contradicts what Paul writes in the following paragraphs.

11:4 You write,“It is disgraceful for any man to pray or prophesy with something on his head, 11:5 but it is

disgraceful for a woman to do so with her head uncovered, because it would be like having her head shaved. 11:6 Because if she doesn't cover then she must be shaved too. But if being shaved is shameful then she must wear a covering."

11:7 Certainly man, made in God's image, shouldn't cover his head in shame since he is a tribute to what came from God, but the same applies to the woman who came from man. 11:8 After all, man didn't come from woman, woman came from man; 11:9 the man wasn't made because the woman need help, the woman was because the man needed help. 11:10 So the reason the woman is the one with authority to decide what to put on her own head is

for the benefit of the angels. 11:11 With the Master, however, woman and man are not independent of each other. 11:12 For just as woman came from man, so also all men have come from women ever since— but we all come from God.

This section makes it very clear that there is no hierarchy by reason of who was made first.

11:13 You all must judge as to whether it's proper for a woman to pray to God without a head covering. 11:14 After all, nature does not tell us that fancy hair is a disgrace for men 11:15 or an honor for women, since hair has been given as a natural article of clothing. 11:16 But if anybody wants to argue about it, consider that neither we nor any of

God’s Congregations has any such custom.

Making a mockery of the fellowship meal

11:17 Now in this instruction I do not commend you, because your meetings are doing more harm than good. 11:18 First of all, I’m hearing that when you meet together there are factions among you, and I believe at least part of it. 11:19 I suppose you need those divisions in order for the qualified ones to show off!

11:20 Secondly, when you eat together it is not the Master’s meal at all. 11:21 One gobbles their meal before the rest, another goes hungry, and still another

gets drunk! 11:22 Don’t you people have homes to eat and drink in? What?! You are scorning God’s Congregation and humiliating those who have nothing! What do you expect me to say to you? Do you think I’ll pat you on the back? Not a chance!

11:23 This is what I accepted from the Master and passed on to you: On the night he was arrested, the Master Jesus broke some bread, 11:24 gave thanks for it, and said, “This is my body, broken on your account; do this to remember me.” 11:25 Likewise also with the cup; after dinner he said, “This is the cup of the new covenant, signed in my blood; as often as you drink this, do it to remember me.” 11:26 So as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you

announce the death of the Master until he returns.

11:27 So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master in a disrespectful manner is held liable for the body and blood of the Master. 11:28 So each of you must test yourselves before eating the bread and drinking from the cup. 11:29 Any who don’t acknowledge his body are eating and drinking condemnation upon themselves. 11:30 That is the reason there are many among you who are weak and always sick, and a fair number have even died. 11:31 But if we examine ourselves we will not fall under judgment. 11:32 Yet when we come under judgment it is the Master’s

discipline, so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

11:33 So then sisters and brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. 11:34 If anyone is hungry they can eat at home so they do not come into judgement when they meet. And I will give you more instructions when I come to see you.

Spiritual gifts

12:1 Now concerning the spiritual, brothers and sisters, I don't want you to be ignorant. 12:2 You know that when you were among the other nations you were captivated by mute idols. 12:3 Therefore I declare to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God can say a

curse on Jesus, and no one can really say “Jesus is Master” if they do not have the Holy Spirit.

12:4 There are various gifts but the same Spirit; 12:5 there are various services but the same Master; 12:6 there are various activities but the same God is active in all of them. 12:7 The expression of the Spirit is given to each one for the common good: 12:8 To one is given a word of wisdom; to another, a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 12:9 to another, faith in the same Spirit; to another, gifts of healing according to the same Spirit; 12:10 to another, the ability to do powerful works; to another, prophecy; to another, discernment of spirits; to another, unknown languages; to another, the

translation of languages. 12:11 Now all of these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who gives them out to each one as it sees fit.

The body analogy

12:12 Just as there is one body with many parts (although there are many parts, there is only one body), so it is with the Anointed One. 12:13 For in that one Spirit we were all immersed into one body, whether Judeans or Greeks or slave or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

12:14 So the Body has many parts. 12:15 If the foot should say, “Since I am not a hand I am not part of the body,” that doesn’t make it any less a part of the

body. 12:16 And if the ear should say, “Since I am not an eye I am not part of the body,” that doesn’t make it any less a part of the body. 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, how could it hear? If it were all ears, how could it smell anything? 12:18 Now God has placed each part in the Body as he saw fit. 12:19 If it were all one part it would not be a body! 12:20 But in fact, there are many parts but one body.

12:21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!”; the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” 12:22 Rather, those parts of the body that seem weaker are more necessary, 12:23 and those parts that we consider nothing we actually treat with more respect. We cover our private parts but

give them the utmost respect and care, 12:24 while our presentable parts have no such need. So God assembled the body and gave the most vulnerable parts the greatest honor. 12:25 This is so the body will not be divided but will have each part caring for all the other parts. 12:26 So whatever one part experiences, so do all the other parts. If one part is honored, all the other parts celebrate together with it. 12:27 So you are the body of the Anointed One; you are its individual parts.

12:28 Now this is what God has placed in the Congregation: First Ambassadors, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of divine healings, perceptions, guidance, and supernaturally-understood

languages.

The first three items are people, while the remaining items are things. It seems to denote a sequence of events rather than a hierarchy.

12:29 Not all are Ambassadors; not all are prophets; not all are teachers; not all perform miracles; 12:30 not all have divine healing gifts; not all can supernaturally speak in other languages; not all translate. 12:31 Instead, aspire to the greater gifts. And now I will show you the absolute greatest path.

The greatest gift

13:1 If I were to speak in the languages of people and angels, yet have no love, I would be like noisy metal or a clanging

cymbal. 13:2 And if I were to be prophetic and perceive all secrets and have all knowledge, and have a faith that can move mountains, yet have no love, I am nothing. 13:3 And if I were to give away all my possessions and even give up my body so I could brag, yet have no love, I gain nothing.

13:4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not obsessed, not arrogant, not conceited, 13:5 not rude, not self-seeking, not thin-skinned, and does not keep an account of offenses. 13:6 It does not gloat over injustice but celebrates the truth; 13:7 it puts up with everything, trusts everything, expects everything, and endures everything.

13:8 Love never fails. If there are prophecies they will cease to be useful; if there are languages they will stop; if there is knowledge it will cease to be useful. 13:9 For we only have partial knowledge and partial prophecy, 13:10 but when all is completed the partial will cease to be useful. 13:11 When I was a baby I spoke, thought, and reasoned like a baby. But now that I've grown up I have no more use for those baby things.

13:12 Right now we see all this as though we are looking at a puzzle in a mirror, but then we will see face to face; right now I have partial knowledge, but then I will know as thoroughly as I am known. 13:13 For now, these three

remain: faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love.

Giving clear messages

14:1 Chase after love, but set your hearts on spiritual gifts, especially prophecy. 14:2 For the one who speaks in an unknown language does not speak to people but to God, because no one else can comprehend it; they are telling spiritual secrets. 14:3 But the one who prophesies builds people up, giving them strength and comfort. 14:4 The one speaking in an unlearned language builds up only that person, but the one who prophesies builds up the Congregation. 14:5 I would prefer that all of you could speak in unlearned languages, but even more that you

could prophesy, because the one who prophesies is of more benefit than the one who speaks in unlearned languages— unless there is a translator so that the Congregation benefits.

14:6 Sisters and brothers, if I came to you speaking unknown languages, what good would that do you if I never speak to you by revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? 14:7 Consider inanimate things like the flute or harp; if the notes are not played distinctly, who will know the songs? 14:8 And who would prepare for battle if the trumpet is not sounded clearly? 14:9 In the same way, who will know what you're saying if you only speak in unknown languages? You'd only be talking to the air. 14:10 The world is filled with all kinds of

sounds, 14:11 but if I cannot make sense of a sound I will be a foreigner to the one making it, and they will be a foreigner to me.

14:12 As for you, since you are so eager to have spiritual gifts, go all out for those that build up the Congregation. 14:13 So if someone speaks in an unlearned language they should also pray that they can translate, 14:14 because if I only pray in an unlearned language, my spirit prays but my mind gets nothing out of it. 14:15 So what will I do? I will pray spiritually but also rationally; I will play music spiritually but also play it rationally. 14:16 Otherwise, if this is only done spiritually, how would a visitor say “Absolutely!” to your thanksgiving since they have no clue

what you’re going on about? 14:17 You may be giving thanks well enough, but the visitor gets no benefit at all. 14:18 I thank God that I speak in unlearned languages more than the rest of you, 14:19 but in the Congregation I’d much rather speak five intelligible words that instruct others, than ten thousand words in an unlearned language.

14:20 Brothers and sisters, don’t have a childish perspective: be babies when it comes to evil, but be mature in how you view this. 14:21 In the Law it is written, “‘I will speak to this people in various languages and by the lips of others, but they will refuse to listen to me’, says the Master.” 14:22 So then, unknown languages are a sign— not for believers but for unbelievers. Conversely,

prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers.

14:23 So when you meet together in one place as a Congregation, and everyone is speaking in unlearned languages, suppose a visitor or an unbeliever arrives. Won't they say you are all out of your minds? 14:24 But if a visitor or an unbeliever arrives when you are prophesying, they come under conviction by all of this 14:25 and the condition of their heart is made obvious. Then they will fall down to worship God and exclaim, "God is truly among you!"

Controlling spiritual gifts

14:26 Then what is this that's happening when you get together, sisters and

brothers? Everyone has a song of praise, a teaching, a revelation, an unknown language and a translation, but everything must be done for building people up. 14:27 If anyone speaks in an unknown language, two or at the most three should speak, one at a time, and someone must translate. 14:28 If there is no translator they should keep quiet in the meeting; let them speak to themselves and to God.

14:29 As for prophets, let a few speak while the others judge what is said. 14:30 If a revelation comes to another who is sitting there, the first one should stop. 14:31 You can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may learn and be comforted, 14:32 because the spirits of the prophets are under their control.

14:33 For God is not the God of disorder but of peace, as in all the Congregations of the holy ones.

Rebuking flesh-based restrictions

14:34 You write, “The women must be silent in the meeting; they are not allowed to speak but must be supportive, as the law also says. 14:35 If they want to learn anything they must learn from their own husbands at home. For it is vile for a woman to speak in the meeting.”

14:36 What?! Did the Word of God originate with you? Do you really think you are the only ones to whom it was given? 14:37 Whoever presumes to be a

prophet or to be spiritual must realize that what I'm writing to you is a directive from the Master. 14:38 Whoever is wrong about this is wrong indeed!

14:39 So then, sisters and brothers, be eager to prophesy and do not prevent people from speaking in unknown languages. 14:40 Yet do everything decently and in order.

The good news

15:1 Now what I'm telling you, brothers and sisters, is the good news I delivered to you and you accepted, and in which you have stood 15:2 and are saved— that is, unless you never really took it to heart and your faith wasn't genuine. 15:3 What I first handed over

to you is what I too had accepted: that the Anointed One died for our sins according to prophecy, 15:4 and that he was buried, and that he has been raised the third day according to prophecy, 15:5 and that he was then seen by Cephas and then the Twelve.

15:6 After that he was seen by over five hundred sisters and brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, although some have been laid to rest. 15:7 Then he was seen by James, then all the rest of the Ambassadors, 15:8 and last of all by me, as if I were some kind of miscarriage. 15:9 For I am the least of the Ambassadors and don't even deserve to be called one, because I persecuted the Congregation of God. 15:10 Yet by his favor I am what I am.

And his favor was not without results in me, but in fact I worked harder than all of them— but of course not I, but the favor of God that was with me. 15:11 So then, no matter who it is, we have proclaimed and so you believed.

The resurrection of the dead

15:12 Now if the Anointed One is being proclaimed as having risen from the dead, how is it that some of you are reported as saying there is no such resurrection? 15:13 If that can't happen, then neither did the Anointed One rise — 15:14 and if that's true then both our proclamation and your faith was for nothing! 15:15 What's more, we are then guilty as false witnesses of God, seeing that we have testified before God that

he raised the Anointed One— which couldn’t have happened if the dead are not raised.

15:16 Once again: if the dead are not raised then neither was the Anointed One. 15:17 And if he wasn’t raised then your faith is worthless and you are still in your sins. 15:18 Consequently, those believers united with the Anointed One who have been laid to rest are gone forever. 15:19 If our hope in the Anointed One is only for this life, then we are the most pitiful people of all!

15:20 Yet the Anointed One has in fact risen from the dead, the first harvest of them. 15:21 For since death came through a human, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a human.

15:22 Just as we all die because of Adam, so also we will all be made alive because of the Anointed One— 15:23 yet each in turn: the Anointed One as the first harvest, then those belonging to the Anointed One upon his arrival, 15:24 and finally the completion when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father and neutralizes all rule and authority and power.

15:25 For he must reign until he places all opponents under his feet, 15:26 and the last opponent to be neutralized is Death. 15:27 “Everything was aligned under his feet.” Psalm 8:4 Now when it is said that all has been aligned under his feet, it is obvious that this excludes the One who put them there. 15:28 But when everything aligns with the Son,

then he himself will be aligned with the One who aligned everything to him, so that everything will be in God.

15:29 Otherwise, what's the point of immersing people concerning the dead? meaning Jesus' death. If the dead are not raised, what is that for? 15:30 And why are we always taking risks? 15:31 Brothers and sisters, I swear by your reason to boast— Anointed Jesus our Master— that I'm continually dying! 15:32 If I fought beasts in Ephesus for purely human reasons, then what did I gain? If the dead don't rise, then we might as well just go on eating and drinking, for tomorrow we are to die! 15:33 Now don't be fooled; "being intimate with evil corrupts good habits,"

The phrase about evil corrupting good is a verbatim quote from the Greek play Thais by Menander, a comic poet in the centuries before Jesus.

15:34 so wake up! Live righteously and don't sin, because some are ignorant of God— and I say this to your shame.

15:35 But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? What kind of body will they have?" 15:36 Dimwit! The seed you plant will not live unless it first dies. 15:37 And the form you plant is not the form that will rise but only a plain kernel of grain or whatever. 15:38 Yet God has decided to assign a unique form to each seed. 15:39 They are not all the same; humans have one kind of flesh, livestock another, birds another, and fish still another. 15:40 There are

celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; the celestial bodies have one characteristic and the terrestrial bodies have another. 15:41 The sun and moon each have their own qualities, and one star differs from another.

15:42 And so it is with the resurrection of the dead. A dead body is buried in mortality but raised in immortality; 15:43 it is buried in dishonor but raised in honor; it is buried in weakness but raised in power; 15:44 it is buried as a soulish body but raised as a spiritual body. It follows, then, that if there is a soulish body there must also be a spiritual one, 15:45 and so it is written: “The first human, Adam, became a living soul.” The Last Adam is a life-giving Spirit. 15:46 But the soulish must

come before the spiritual. 15:47 The first person was from the earth but the second Person was from heaven. 15:48 All the earthy are like the earthy one, but all the heavenly are like the Heavenly One. 15:49 And just as we bore the image of the earthy one, we will also bear the image of the Heavenly One.

We will all be changed

15:50 What I am trying to tell you, brothers and sisters, is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and the mortal cannot inherit the immortal. 15:51 Look, I'm telling you a secret: We will not all be laid to rest but we will all be transformed!— 15:52 in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last

trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised immortal and we will be transformed.

15:53 This mortal, the dying, must be clothed with immortality. 15:54 And when this happens then the written word will be fulfilled: “Death was swallowed by conquest!” Isaiah 25:8 15:55 “Death, where is your conquest? Death, where is your stinger?” Hosea 13:14 15:56 Death’s stinger is Sin, and Sin’s power is the Law. 15:57 But thank God, who gives us the conquest by means of our Master Jesus the Anointed One! 15:58 So then, dear sisters and brothers, become settled and immovable. Excel in the work of the Master, and always remember that your labor for the Master is not wasted.

A collection to help believers in Jerusalem

16:1 Now concerning the collection of funds for the holy ones, do what I prescribed for those in Galatia: 16:2 on one of the sabbaths,

"This likely refers to the day of the wave offering, which is the day after the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the start of marking off 7 weeks until Pentecost (see verse 8).

each of you should set aside an amount according to how you have prospered. That way no collections have to be made when I come. 16:3 Now when I do come, I will write letters of recommendation for whomever you choose to take your gift to Jerusalem.

16:4 If I have the opportunity to go, I'll take them along with me. 16:5 I plan to come to you on my way through Macedonia.

Personal business

16:6 If by any chance I can stay there with you, maybe even for the winter, then you can send me on to wherever I'm going. 16:7 My intention is not to just see you now in passing, but with the hope that I can spend some time with you if the Master permits. 16:8 But I will stay in Ephesus till Pentecost, 16:9 because a great opportunity has presented itself, and there are many who oppose me.

16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see to it that he can come to you without apprehension, for he is doing the work of the Master just as I am. 16:11 And let no one look down on him. Send him on in peace so he can visit me, because I am waiting for him with the brothers and sisters. 16:12 Concerning brother Apollos, I have asked him to come to you with the sisters and brothers. He really did not want to come now, but he will when it's convenient.

Final greetings

16:13 Stay sharp! Stand firm in the faith; be brave and strong. 16:14 Do everything in love. 16:15 Now I plead with you, brothers and sisters— you who are acquainted with the household

of Stephanas, the first in Achaia to believe and who dedicated themselves to serve the holy ones— 16:16 that you will support them and all who labor together with us. 16:17 I am very happy that Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus have arrived because they were able to supply whatever you lacked. 16:18 Take note of these who have soothed my spirit and yours.

16:19 The Congregations in the province of Asia greet you as fellow servants of the Master, as do Aquila and Prisca, along with the Congregation that meets in their home. 16:20 All the brothers and sisters greet you; greet each other warmly. 16:21 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.

16:22 A curse upon anyone who has no affection for the Master! Come, Master! 16:23 May the favor of Master Jesus the Anointed One be with you. 16:24 My love is with all of you in Anointed Jesus.

2 Corinthians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an Ambassador of Anointed Jesus through the will of God, and brother Timothy,

To the Congregation of God in Corinth, together with all the holy ones in all of Achaia:

1:2 Favor and peace to you from God our Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One.

Praise to God for help during suffering

1:3 Praise the God and Father of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, the Father of compassion and God of all consolation! 1:4 He consoles us in all our oppression, so we are able in turn to console others because of how God consoles us. 1:5 So it follows that since the experiences of the Anointed One abound in us, so also does our consolation. 1:6 Now if we are being oppressed it's for the sake of your consolation and salvation; if we are consoled it is for the sake of your consolation and ability to endure unpleasant experiences, because we experience the same things. 1:7 And our

hope about you is confirmed, because we are aware of your partnership in these experiences and also in consolation.

1:8 Now we don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of how we came to suffer in the province of Asia. We were loaded down beyond our ability to bear it, to the point where we despaired of our lives. 1:9 But at the same time, though we have carried the death sentence, we never relied on ourselves but on the God who raises the dead. 1:10 He rescued us from this terrible end and will get us through it again, because he is the one we rely on to keep pulling us through.

1:11 You also got involved by your earnest requests for us, making it possible for the many who gave gifts to be thanked on our behalf. 1:12 We can be proud of this: Our conscience testifies before God that we conducted ourselves with the simplicity and genuineness of God— not in natural wisdom but God's favor, not only in the world but especially toward you. 1:13 And we're really not writing anything to you that you didn't already know. Now I trust that 1:14 you will understand completely that which you already know in part: that we can be proud of each other on the Day of our Master Jesus.

Paul is falsely accused of unreliability

1:15 I was confident that I would favor you with a double visit 1:16 on my way to Macedonia and back again, so that you could send me on to Judea. 1:17 Now that you know what my intentions were, do you still accuse me of being unreliable? Do you think I am like carnal people and say one thing when I mean another? 1:18 God is my witness that we are not like that! 1:19 For the God-Man, Jesus the Anointed One, was proclaimed to you through us— me and Silvanus and Timothy— not as maybe yes and maybe no, but as a resounding Yes! 1:20 In Him we have a definite Yes for the promises of God, so that when we honor God it is truly through Him. 1:21 Now the One who confirms us together with you and anoints us into the Anointed One is God. 1:22 He is the

One who also sealed us by giving us the down payment of the Spirit in our hearts.

1:23 Now I call God as my witness and stake my life on it, that the reason I didn't come to Corinth was to spare you. 1:24 And it isn't that we're making ourselves masters over your faith but participants of your happiness, because you have stood in the faith.

Restoring the repentant

2:1 So I decided not to return to you myself and cause more sorrow. 2:2 After all, if I make you sad, who will cheer me up, if not those I would be making sad? 2:3 And this is why I wrote to you, so that I wouldn't have to come and be

saddened by those I should have been celebrating with. But I am confident in all of you, who are my happiness.

2:4 I wrote to you with a very heavy heart and through many tears, not to make you sad but so that you will know the abounding love I have for you. 2:5 Yet if that person has caused sorrow, it wasn't just me they made sad but all of you— and I'm not exaggerating. 2:6 The discipline administered by the majority of you was enough for him. 2:7 So now, turn around and show him mercy and consolation, so that he will not be consumed by extreme sorrow. 2:8 Therefore I plead with you to affirm him in love.

2:9 Now I’m also writing this to test you and see whether or not you are paying attention to everything I told you. 2:10 If you have granted him mercy then so have I, for whatever there was to grant, I did so through you in the presence of the Anointed One. 2:11 This way the Adversary will have no way to stake a false claim on us, for we are not ignorant of his scheming.

The message we spread

2:12 When I arrived in Troas the Master opened a door for me for the good news of the Anointed One. 2:13 But I had no relief in my spirit because I could not find my brother Titus, so I left them and went to Macedonia.

2:14 Now thank God, the one who always grants us victory with the Anointed One! He spreads the aroma of the knowledge of him through us everywhere, 2:15 for we are the fragrance of God— both to those who are being saved and those who are being destroyed. 2:16 To the latter we are the stench of impending death, but to the former we are the fragrance of promised life. But who is up to the task? 2:17 For we are not like most people who peddle the Word of God, but instead we are sincere because we speak of God and from God with the Anointed One.

Confidence or conceit?

3:1 Are we beginning to promote ourselves again? What?! We need no letters of recommendation, either from you or to you. 3:2 You yourselves are that letter! You were engraved on our hearts, known and read by everyone. 3:3 You are the living letter we sent from the Anointed One. This letter was not written in ink but by the Spirit of the Living God; not on stone tablets but on your hearts. 3:4 This is the basis for our confidence toward God through the Anointed One. 3:5 And it isn't as though we ourselves are competent to figure anything out, but that our understanding comes from God. 3:6 He also qualifies us to dispense the new covenant— not a written one but a spiritual one— because the Law condemns while the Spirit acquits.

Law against life

3:7 Think about that Law chiseled in stone, the one that condemns. If it came in majesty, so that the people of Israel could not keep watching Moses' face while the majesty faded, 3:8 how much greater is the majesty of what is dispensed by the Spirit? 3:9 If that which condemns had majesty, then think of how much greater is the majesty of that which acquits! 3:10 In fact, the old majesty has faded because of the new one that outshines it. 3:11 If that which was destined to fade out had majesty, then think of how much more majesty is there for what remains!

3:12 So then, because we have this hope we are bold and free— 3:13 not

like Moses who had to cover his face so the people of Israel couldn't watch the majesty fade away. 3:14 But up to the present day their minds have been calloused; the covering still remains when they read the old covenant, because only the Anointed One can uncover their minds. 3:15 To this very day their minds remain covered when Moses is read. 3:16 But if they ever turn toward the Master, the covering will be removed. 3:17 The Master is Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Master is, there is freedom. 3:18 Now all of us, with faces uncovered, reflect the majesty of the Master and are being transformed into the same image, becoming more and more majestic, by the Spirit of the Master.

Motives for perseverance

4:1 For this reason, because we have this service, we were shown mercy and are not demoralized. 4:2 But we turn our backs on the shameful things people hide, and we no longer practice craftiness. We do not contaminate the Word of God but will declare the truth, commending ourselves to human conscience before God.

4:3 If our good news has been concealed, it is only concealed to those who are being destroyed. 4:4 The minds of unbelievers have been blinded by the god of this age so the light cannot illuminate them— the light of the good news of the majesty of the Anointed One, who is the image of God. 4:5 For it

is not ourselves we are proclaiming but Jesus the Anointed Master, whose servants you are. 4:6 For God— the One who said “Let light shine out of darkness”— shone light into our hearts to illuminate knowledge of God’s majesty in the presence of Jesus the Anointed One.

4:7 Now we have this treasure in containers of clay so that it is obvious that the power is of God and not of us. 4:8 We are oppressed in every way yet it is not more than we can take; we are trapped but not to the point of despair; 4:9 we are persecuted but not abandoned; we are rejected but not destroyed. 4:10 In our bodies we always carry the death of Jesus, yet we also thereby exhibit his life. 4:11 We who are

alive are always facing death because of Jesus, so that his life will be exhibited in our mortal flesh. 4:12 In this way death is active in us but life is active in you.

4:13 Now since we have the same spirit of faith in accordance with what is written— “I believed, therefore I spoke”— then we who believe are also speaking. 4:14 We know that the One who raised the Master Jesus will also raise us together with him and present us together with you. 4:15 Everything is being done for your benefit, so that this favor which is increasing through most of you will overflow to honor God.

4:16 All this keeps us from getting demoralized. Even if outwardly we are

rotting away, inwardly we are being rejuvenated every day. 4:17 The lightweight oppressions we experience at the moment are achieving for us a most excellent honor to carry in eternity. 4:18 We are not focused on what is seen but only on what is unseen, because the visible is temporary while the invisible is eternal.

Patience in faith

5:1 And we know that if our earthly “tent” is taken down we have a supernatural building constructed by God, eternally in the heavens. 5:2 We ache for this new home of ours; we long to put on these clothes from heaven 5:3 so that we won’t be caught undressed! 5:4 We who are in this earthly tent groan under

its weight, preferring not to remain undressed but to be clothed, so that the dying may be engulfed by the living.

5:5 Yet the same God who put this longing inside of us also gave us the Spirit as a down payment. 5:6 So be confident, even with the knowledge that living here in the body means not being at home with the Master. 5:7 For we live by faith, not sight. 5:8 Yet we are confident and would prefer to leave this home and be out of the body so we can be in our real home with the Master. 5:9 But whether at home or away, it is our great ambition to please him, 5:10 for everything about us will be revealed at the throne of the Anointed One. We are to be assessed for whatever we did

during our time in the body, whether good or flawed.

The good news message is reconciliation with God

5:11 Having this respectful fear of the Master, then, we try to persuade people. But what we really are is plain to God— and I hope also to you. 5:12 Now we are not patting ourselves on the back again, but giving you a reason to be proud of us so that you can stand up to those who brag about appearances and not the heart. 5:13 If we were out of our minds it was for God; if we are sane it is for you.

5:14 We are constrained by the love of the Anointed One, when we consider

that one died for the sake of all, and in that way all died. 5:15 And he died for the sake of all so that those who live will no longer live only for themselves but also for the one who died for them and was raised. 5:16 So we no longer think of people as how they are in the flesh. We once knew the Anointed One only in this way but no longer, 5:17 because if anyone is united with the Anointed One, they are a new creation; the original has passed away and become something completely new!

5:18 Yet it all comes from God, the one who reconciled us to himself by means of the Anointed One and assigned us to this service of reconciliation. 5:19 Through the Anointed One God reconciled the world to himself, not

holding their sins against them, and gave us the message of reconciliation. 5:20 That means we are the Anointed One's representatives and God pleads through us. So, on behalf of the Anointed One, we plead with you to be reconciled to God! 5:21 For this one who knew no sin was made to be Sin for our sakes, so that because of him we can become right with God.

6:1 As co-workers we plead with you not to waste the favor you received from God. 6:2 He says, "At the right time I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." Look, now is the right time; now is the day of salvation!

Perseverance through hardship

6:3 We put no obstacles in front of anyone, so that that our service would not be blamed. 6:4 Instead, in everything we commend ourselves as servants of God: in endurance, in many pressures, in stress, in harrowing circumstances, 6:5 in beatings, in jails, in riots, in hard work, in sleeplessness, in fasting, 6:6 in purity, in knowledge, in great patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in a love that is not hypercritical, 6:7 in the word of truth, in the power of God, through the weapons of justice in both hands, 6:8 through honor and shame, through false rumors and good reports, through lies and truth, 6:9 as being misunderstood and well known, as dying and yet somehow living, as being disciplined and avoiding the death penalty, 6:10 as grieving and yet

always happy, as poor yet enriching many, as having nothing yet having everything.

Reconciliation is a two-way street

6:11 Corinthians, we have made ourselves vulnerable to you; we have opened our hearts wide. 6:12 If things are strained between us, it is only on your part. 6:13 I should only have to say this to children, but now you too must open up!

No reconciliation with unbelievers

6:14 Do not allow yourselves to be harnessed together with unbelievers,

for what do justice and lawlessness have in common? What partnership can there be between light and darkness? 6:15 Especially, to what agreement can the Anointed One and Belial come? What?! What connection is there between a believer and an unbeliever? 6:16 And what could join the temple of God with that of idols? For we are the living temple of God, just as he said: “I will take up residence with them and walk among them; I will be their God and they will be my people.” 6:17 Therefore, “ ‘Come out from among them and be separate,’ says the Master, ‘and touch nothing unclean, and I will accept you. 6:18 I will be a father to you and you will be sons and daughters to me,’ says the Almighty Master.”

7:1 So since we have these promises,
dear ones, let us wash away everything
that pollutes body and spirit, bringing us
to holiness out of respect for God.

Paul pleads for reconciliation with the Congregation in Corinth

7:2 Make room for us! We haven't
wronged anyone, destroyed anyone, or
demanded more than we deserve from
anyone. 7:3 I'm not saying this to
condemn you, because I told you
before that you are in our hearts,
whether we live or die together. 7:4 I
have been blunt and open with you all
and have bragged about you. You have
encouraged me greatly to the point that

my happiness knows no bounds, in spite of all the pressure we've been under. 7:5 For even when we came into Macedonia no one eased our physical suffering, and we suffered both with outer struggles and inner fears. 7:6 But God, the advocate for the oppressed, consoled us with the arrival of Titus. 7:7 Not only that, but he also brought with him the consolation you gave him; he told us of your aching, extreme anguish, and passion for my sake. And that made me very happy.

7:8 So even if the letter I wrote upset you, I don't regret it, because it only upset you for a time. 7:9 But now I'm happy— not because I upset you, but because this hour of sadness caused you to turn to God. That was Godly

sorrow so that you would not lose out on anything because of us. 7:10 This kind of sorrow is what causes people to turn to God for salvation without regret; in contrast, worldly sorrow only leads to death.

7:11 Look at all the things this Godly sorrow put you through: diligence, defense, indignation, fear, longing, passion, and vindication. At the end of it all you commended yourselves as pure in the matter. 7:12 Consequently, I didn’t write to you just for the guilty party or the victim, but to get you to see your devotion to us before God. Because of all that we have been more than consoled.

7:13 We are very happy for Titus, whose spirit was soothed by you all. 7:14 For you did not make my bragging about you an embarrassment; just as we always speak the truth to you, our bragging about you to Titus proved to be true as well. 7:15 He is all the more endeared to you as he remembers your compliance and how you welcomed him with genuine concern. 7:16 I am very happy and encouraged about you in all of this.

A collection for believers in need

8:1 Now, sisters and brothers, we want to tell you about the favor God granted to the Congregations in Macedonia. 8:2 Their extreme happiness matched their

extreme hardship, and the height of their generosity matched the depth of their poverty. 8:3 They went beyond their ability, by their own free will, 8:4 begging to participate with us in service to the holy ones. 8:5 In contrast to what we expected, they willingly gave first to the Master and then to us, according to God's will. 8:6 So we encouraged Titus that, just as he did before, he should complete this gift with you also. 8:7 Just as you excel in faith, speech, knowledge, dedication, and the love that flows from you to us, now excel in this gift.

8:8 I am not giving you a command, but I want to test the genuineness of your love in light of the dedication of these others. 8:9 For you know about the favor

of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, how he gave up his riches to become poor for your sakes, so that through his poverty you could become rich. 8:10 And in my opinion, this is for your own good, because for the past year you have been putting your intentions into action. 8:11 So now you need to finish the job from what you have.

8:12 If someone is eager to give, it is accepted on the basis of what they have, not on what they don't have. 8:13 And the purpose is not to make them comfortable at your expense but to bring equality. 8:14 Right now your excess will meet their need, but there may come a time when they will have excess to meet your need; that is equality. 8:15 As it is written: "The one

who gathered a lot had no extra, and the one who gathered little had enough.”

8:16 I am so grateful to God for putting into Titus’ heart the same dedication to you that we have. 8:17 He not only gladly accepted the assignment to visit you but was all the more intent upon doing so. 8:18 Now we stand together with this brother, whose reputation with the good news extends to all the Congregations. 8:19 Not only that, he was the one chosen by them to travel with us to take this gift we eagerly dispense, to the honor of the Master Himself. 8:20 So we need to be extra careful about how we handle this generous gift. 8:21 We need to be above

reproach, both in the sight of the Master and the sight of people.

8:22 Now we sent along with them our brother, who has often been tested and found dedicated and is now much more so. I have a lot of confidence in you, 8:23 whether by virtue of Titus, my partner and your co-worker, or our sisters and brothers, the Ambassadors of the Congregations and the honor of the Anointed One. 8:24 Then your love and our bragging about you will be displayed for all the Congregations to see.

9:1 It really is unnecessary for me to write to you about serving the holy ones 9:2 because I am aware of your enthusiasm, which I'm bragging about

to the Macedonians. Your example has stirred up most of those in Achaia, who have been prepared to give for the past year. 9:3 But I had to send the believers to you to ensure that our bragging about you was not hollow. 9:4 It goes without saying that we would be embarrassed if the Macedonians came along with me, assuming what I bragged about, and found you unprepared.

Generosity

9:5 So I felt it necessary to send the believers on ahead to see to it that you made good on your promised generosity. Then it would truly be a generous gift and not something we robbed you of. 9:6 But remember this:

The one who plants sparingly will harvest little, and the one who plants generously will harvest much. 9:7 Let each one give as they choose— without sadness or compulsion— because God loves a cheerful giver.

9:8 Now God has the ability to shower you with gifts, to the point where you will not only have all your needs met, but that you will overflow with good deeds. 9:9 As it is written, “He gives generously to the poor, and his justice remains forever.” 9:10 The One who supplies more than enough seed for planting and bread for food will also supply you with limitless “seed” and cause your “crops” of justice to multiply. 9:11 Then you will be rich in every way

— enabling you to be generous, which will result in gratitude to God.

9:12 Through this official service—meeting the needs of the holy ones—you have passed the test and honored God. This will certainly result in overflowing gratitude to God, 9:13 because they will see your support and agreement with the good news of the Anointed One and your generous partnership with them and everyone. 9:14 Out of their overflowing gratitude toward God they will pray that he will favor you, and they'll be eager to meet you. 9:15 Praise God for his indescribable gift!

Paul defends himself against misjudgment

10:1 I, Paul, encourage you through the gentleness and mercy of the Anointed One. I am humble in person, but even when I am not with you I have confidence in you. 10:2 But when I am there with you, I plead with you not to make me display the confident courage I use when I must stand against those who gauge us according to the flesh. 10:3 For although we are in the flesh we do not conduct warfare in the flesh. 10:4 Our weapons of war are not fleshly but have the power of God to pull down strongholds, 10:5 schemes, and everything that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every scheme captive into compliance with the Anointed One. 10:6 We always stand ready to avenge every lapse of

attention, once your compliance is complete.

10:7 You are only looking on the surface. Anyone who is self-assured as belonging to the Anointed One must consider this: If they belong to the Anointed One, then so do we. 10:8 In fact, if I were to brag about all the authority the Master gave us (for building you up, not pulling you down), I can assure you that I would not be put to shame, 10:9 because my letters would be much more terrifying than they already are! 10:10 One of you says, “His letters are weighty and strong, but in person he is weak and a poor speaker.” 10:11 Let that person consider the fact that we are quite capable of

being the same in person as we are in writing!

10:12 We wouldn’t dare to think we are in the same class as these people! But when they use themselves as their own standard, it shows they know nothing at all. 10:13 Now we will keep our bragging within reason, according to the limits God gave out to us— and you are within those limits. 10:14 No, we’re not out of bounds with you, because we were the first to reach you with the good news; 10:15 we are not taking credit for someone else’s work. Yet we hope that your faith will mature and be greatly expanded, 10:16 so that our range will extend beyond you— but not over the work someone else has prepared. 10:17 Now whoever brags must brag only

about the Master. 10:18 It is the one the Master commends who is qualified, not those who commend themselves.

11:1 Oh, if only you would put up with just a little crazy talk from me! On second thought— you do have to put up with it! 11:2 I care deeply for you, and it comes from God. For I had promised you to one husband, as a pure marriageable woman to present to the Anointed One. 11:3 Yet I fear that somehow, just as the serpent thoroughly deluded Eve with his treachery, your minds have been corrupted and turned from the pure simplicity of the Anointed One. 11:4 In fact, if anyone comes proclaiming some other Jesus than the one we proclaimed to you, or you receive a different spirit

than the one you had, or you hear a different good news than the one you received before, you just take it in stride.

11:5 I don’t see how I am in any way inferior to these ultra-Ambassadors. 11:6 Even if I really am a poor speaker I am not poor in knowledge; we have made that quite clear in every way. 11:7 Did I do such a terrible thing by humbling myself so you could be exalted? Seeing that I brought the good news to you free of charge, 11:8 surely I must be robbing other Congregations in order to get rations to dispense to you! 11:9 When I was with you and in need I was not a burden to anyone, because I was replenished by the ones who came from Macedonia. And I will continue to

support myself so I will not be a burden to you.

11:10 By all that is true of the Anointed One, I will not be robbed of this boast I have in all the regions of Achaia. 11:11 (Do you think I don't love you? God knows that I do!) 11:12 Now what I am doing, and will continue doing, is to knock the foundation out from under those who are looking for a reason to brag about you just as we do. 11:13 For such are fake Ambassadors, fraudulent workers who try to pass themselves off as Ambassadors of the Anointed One. 11:14 And this should come as no surprise; the Adversary presents himself as an angel of light. 11:15 So it is to be expected that his servants also present themselves as servants of

justice. But in the end they will get what they deserve.

Our weakness is God's strength

11:16 I say again: Let no one take me for a fool. But if you must, then just accept me and let me keep on bragging a little more! 11:17 What I'm saying now is not from the Master, but as a fool and how a fool would go on bragging. 11:18 So since others are bragging about the flesh, then so will I. 11:19 After all, you must be putting up with fools because you are so dignified! 11:20 You let people enslave you; you let them consume you; you let them take you captive; you welcome the conceited; you let them slap you in the face! 11:21

How we must have humiliated you by being too weak to do any of that!

Now let me continue to compete with the other idiots. 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. 11:23 Are they servants of the Anointed One (I am continuing with this crazy talk!)? I outdo them all— in exhaustion, in imprisonments, in terrible beatings, in facing death many times. 11:24 Five times I was given the Judeans' 39 lashes; 11:25 three times I was flogged with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; I spent a night and a day in the open sea. 11:26 I have been on many travels; I have been in danger from rivers, robbers, my own

people, foreigners, the city, the desert, the sea, and fake believers. 11:27 I have done hard labor, kept vigils, often gone without food or drink, fasted many times, and went without adequate clothing and shelter.

11:28 On top of all that I have the daily responsibility for the Congregations. 11:29 Who is weak and I do not empathize? Who is caught in a trap and I am not enraged? 11:30 So if I am to keep bragging then I must surely brag about all this weakness of mine. 11:31 The God and Father of the Master Jesus— praise him forever!— will vouch for what I am about to say. 11:32 In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas had the city under surveillance in order to arrest me, 11:33 but I was

lowered in a basket through a window in the wall and I escaped him.

Paul is given a vision and a physical disability

12:1 And I must go on bragging, even though there's no practical reason for it, because now I will tell you about visions and revelations from the Master. 12:2 I know someone united with the Anointed One who fourteen years ago was snatched up to the third heaven. (I don't know whether it was in the body or not; only God knows.) 12:3 And I am familiar with such a person— again, whether in or out of the body only God knows— 12:4 and how he was snatched up into Paradise and heard proclamations that no one is able or permitted to talk

about. 12:5 I'll brag about someone like that, but not about myself unless it is about my weaknesses. 12:6 If I ever did want to brag, it wouldn't be as a fool but the truth. But I will refrain, so that no one will think more of me than what they can see or hear.

12:7 And because of those amazing revelations, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a burr in my flesh— an angel of the Adversary by which he could assault me— to keep me humble. 12:8 Three times I pleaded with the Master to take it away, 12:9 but he has declared to me, "My favor is enough for you, for spiritual power is perfected by means of physical disability." So instead I will wholeheartedly celebrate my

weaknesses in order to allow the power of the Anointed One to cover me. 12:10 For that reason I will happily endure weakness, outrage, going without necessities, persecution, and distress— all for the sake of the Anointed One. For when I am physically unable, then I am spiritually able!

More self-defense

12:11 I have become a fool, but you drove me to it, so you should commend me for it! Those ultra-Ambassadors have nothing on me— even if I am nothing! 12:12 In fact, the hallmarks of an Ambassador— miracles and powers — were produced among you consistently. 12:13 So in what way did you miss out compared to all the other

Congregations— unless it was that I was not a burden to you? Please have mercy on me for this terrible injustice!

12:14 Look, this will be the third time I am ready to visit you, and I still will not be a burden to you. I'm not after what belongs to you, but you yourselves. After all, it is the parents who should save up for their children, not the other way around. 12:15 Yet I would gladly go bankrupt for the sake of your souls, even if loving you more makes you love me less. 12:16 At any rate, I was not a burden to you. But— crafty guy that I am— I took you in by trickery! 12:17 Have I somehow taken advantage of you through those I sent to you? 12:18 I sent Titus and a brother, did he take advantage of you? Do we not keep

pace with the same Spirit and walk in the same path?

12:19 It must seem like an eternity that we've been presenting our defense! But we speak before God united with the Anointed One, and it's all for building you up, dear ones. 12:20 I fear that when I arrive I won't find you as I'd prefer you to be, and you won't find me as you'd prefer me to be. I'm afraid that somehow there will be strife, jealousy, rage, factions, trash talk, rumors, conceit, and riots. 12:21 My God will not humble me the next time I come, and I will mourn for many who sinned before but never changed their minds about the filthiness and promiscuity and vice they committed.

Final warning to the believers in Corinth

13:1 Again, this will be my third visit to you; “By the testimony of two or three witnesses every charge will be confirmed.” 13:2 I declared before to those who were sinning and to all the rest (as I warned when I was there the second time and repeat now in my absence), that if I came a third time I would not spare anyone, 13:3 because you want proof that the Anointed One speaks through me. He is not weak among you but powerful. 13:4 For even though he was crucified in weakness, he nonetheless lives in the power of God. So we who are weak are together with him in weakness, but we will live

together with him by the power of God for you.

13:5 Test yourselves to see if you really are in the faith— unless of course you yourselves do not know whether Jesus the Anointed One is in you, and you are somehow disqualified! 13:6 And I hope you know that we are not disqualified. 13:7 We are putting in a claim to God that you will do no evil— not so we'll look better but so you will do what is right, even if that makes us look bad. 13:8 For we cannot be against the truth. 13:9 We celebrate when we are weak but you are strong, and we put in a claim to God for you to be fully equipped. 13:10 Because of all that, I am writing these things in my absence so that when I come I will not have to

be harsh with you, in accordance with the authority the Master gave me to build you up and not tear you down.

Final greetings

13:11 Finally, sisters and brothers, be happy! Change your ways, encourage each other, be of one mind, be at peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. 13:12 Greet each other warmly. 13:13 All the holy ones greet you. 13:14 May the favor of Master Jesus the Anointed One and the love of God and the partnership of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Galatians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an Ambassador— not from people nor through people, but through Jesus the Anointed One and God the Father who raised him from the dead— 1:2 and the brothers and sisters with me,

To all the Congregations in Galatia:

1:3 Favor and peace to you from God our Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One! 1:4 He gave himself on account of our sins so that he could lift

us up out of this evil age, according to the will of our God and Father. 1:5 Honor to him forever, absolutely!

The one and only good news

1:6 I am astounded that you are being moved from your calling by the favor of the Anointed One into a different ‘good news’— 1:7 which really isn’t another ‘good news’ at all. Someone is confounding you and trying to distort the genuine good news of the Anointed One. 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should bring you a ‘good news’ that isn’t the one we brought you before, let them be cursed! 1:9 I repeat: even if we or an angel from heaven should bring you a ‘good news’ that isn’t

the one we brought you before, let them be cursed!

Paul's radical change

1:10 Do you think I'm trying to impress people or God? Am I after people's approval? If I were still trying to please people I would not be a servant of the Anointed One. 1:11 I'm telling you right now, sisters and brothers, that the good news I brought you was not from people. 1:12 No, I didn't learn it from people; it came by means of revelation from Jesus the Anointed One.

1:13 You know very well how I once behaved in Judaism. I severely persecuted God's Congregation and tried to wipe it out. 1:14 I excelled in

Judaism beyond many of my peers and was very loyal to the traditions of my ancestors. 1:15 And yet it seemed good to God, who set me apart from birth and called me by means of his favor, 1:16 to reveal his Son in me, so that I could bring the good news to the other nations.

I did not immediately consult flesh and blood, 1:17 nor did I go to Jerusalem to see those who were Ambassadors before me, but instead I went off to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. 1:18 Then after three years I went to Jerusalem to interview Cephas (Peter) and stayed with him for fifteen days. 1:19 I did not see any of the other Ambassadors except for James, the brother of the Master. 1:20 These things

I am writing to you are the honest truth before God. 1:21 Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, 1:22 and I was still unknown to the Congregations of the Anointed One in Judea. 1:23 They only knew that “the one who persecuted us is now bringing the good news of the faith he once tried to destroy!” 1:24 And they honored God because of me.

Paul is accepted by Peter, James, and John

2:1 Fourteen years later I went up to Jerusalem and took Barnabas and Titus with me. 2:2 I went according to a revelation and presented to them the good news I proclaim among the other nations. Yet I only told this privately to those who were highly esteemed, in

case somehow I was still, or had been, running in vain. 2:3 But they didn’t even force Titus, the Greek who was with me, to be circumcised. 2:4 And this had to be done privately because of the fake believers, who were planted to spy on the freedom we have in Anointed Jesus so they could enslave us. 2:5 But we did not give in to them for even a second, so that the truth of the good news could stand secure with you.

2:6 As for those who were highly esteemed, what they once were is of no concern to me (and God is not impressed with human credentials), because they did not add any further conditions. 2:7 But on the contrary, they saw that I have been entrusted with bringing the good news to the other

nations, just as Peter was to the Judeans. 2:8 The same One who empowered Peter in his commission to the Judeans also empowered me in that of the other nations. 2:9 James, Cephas (Peter), and John— those reputed to be the “supporting pillars”— recognized the favor that was granted to me and welcomed me and Barnabas into the partnership; we were to go to the other nations and they to the Judeans. 2:10 All they asked is that we remember the poor, which is exactly what I had intended to do.

Paul confronts Peter

2:11 Now when Cephas came to Antioch I confronted him to his face because he was in error. 2:12 What happened was

that before some people came representing James, he ate together with people of other nations, but when those people came he withdrew and segregated himself out of fear of “the circumcision.” 2:13 And he led the rest of the Judeans into displaying a double standard with him, to the point where even Barnabas got carried away with it. 2:14 But when I saw that they had veered off the road leading to the truth of the good news, I said to Cephas in front of them all, “If you, a Judean, could live as the other nations and not according to Judaism, how is it that now you are compelling the other nations to observe Judaism?”

Justified by faith, not law

2:15 We who are natural Judeans, not non-Judean scoundrels, 2:16 have understood that no one is justified on the basis of meeting the requirements of the Law, but only by trusting in Jesus the Anointed One. And we put our trust in Anointed Jesus so that we may be justified by that trust and not due to performing the requirements of the Law, which the flesh cannot accomplish.

2:17 Now if we want to be justified and are found to be united with the Anointed One yet are scoundrels ourselves, does that mean that the Anointed One is condoning sin? Absolutely not! 2:18 For if I demolish what I build, I condemn myself as a sinner. 2:19 By means of the Law, I died to sin so that I would live for God. 2:20 I have been crucified along

with the Anointed One, yet I live; but at the same time, it isn't really I but the Anointed One who lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh, I live in trust of the God-Man who loved me and gave himself up for my sake. 2:21 I do not deny the truth of the favor of God, because if the Law could clear me of all charges, that would mean the Anointed One's death was for nothing!

3:1 You senseless Galatians! Who has cast a spell on you with the "evil eye"? Right before your eyes Jesus the Anointed One was openly presented as crucified, 3:2 so I'd like to learn just one thing from you: Was it by your legal performance that you received the Spirit, or by believing what you heard? 3:3 Are you really so senseless as to

think you would start with the Spirit and finish with the flesh? 3:4 Was all your suffering really for nothing? 3:5 Did the One who supplied you with the Spirit do powerful works among you because you followed the Law, or because you believed what you heard?

3:6 Since Abraham was cleared of all charges just for believing God, 3:7 the same is true for those with that same faith. 3:8 So the scripture, looking ahead to the time when God would justify the nations by means of faith, brought Abraham the good news: “All the nations will be blessed because of you.” 3:9 So then, those with faith are blessed together with faithful Abraham.

3:10 Those who rely on their legalistic performance are cursed, for it is written: “Cursed is anyone who does not perfectly observe everything written in the scroll of the Law.” 3:11 Now it is obvious that no one is justified before God solely on the basis of the Law, because “the just will live by faith.” 3:12 The Law is not about faith but instead, “the one who does them will live in them.” 3:13 So the Anointed One ransomed us from the curse of the Law by becoming that curse for our sakes, because it has been written, “Cursed is anyone who is hung on wood.” 3:14 That is how the blessing of Abraham could come to the nations in Anointed Jesus, so that we may obtain the promise of the Spirit by means of faith.

The sharp line between the Promise and the law

3:15 Now let me put this in practical terms, brothers and sisters. Once a person's Last Will and Testament has been properly signed and notarized, no one can modify it or declare it annulled. 3:16 Now the promises were declared to Abraham and his Descendant (note that it is singular— Descendant— and not "to your descendants"), who is the Anointed One. 3:17 What I'm saying is that this legal will, ratified by God, was not invalidated by the Law that came four hundred and thirty years later. 3:18 For if the inheritance could come by a law then it would no longer come by a

promise. Yet God graciously granted it to Abraham through promise.

3:19 So then, what purpose did the Law serve? It was added to deal with our sins until the promised Descendant could come. And it was established in the presence of angels through the agency of a mediator. 3:20 In contrast, you can't mediate between one— and God is One.

3:21 So then, does the Law conflict with the promises of God? Absolutely not! If the Law could bring life, then righteousness could actually come from the Law. 3:22 But the scripture used Sin to contain everything, so that the promise may be given from the faith of Jesus the Anointed One to those who

believe. 3:23 Now before the arrival of faith we were bound under the Law until the faith was revealed. 3:24 So you could say that the Law served as our guide, to lead us to the Anointed One so we could be justified by faith. 3:25 And when we arrived at faith, we had no further need of a guide.

3:26 Now you are all children of God through faith in Anointed Jesus, 3:27 because whoever is immersed into union with the Anointed One has clothed themselves with him. 3:28 And since you are all united as one with Anointed Jesus, there is no more division between Judean and Greek, servant and free, or even male and female.

This exactly parallels an ancient rabbinical prayer: “Thank God that I was not born a gentile, a servant, or a woman!” This is especially significant in light of the fact that Paul was a Pharisee.

3:29 And if you are his, then it follows that you are descendants of Abraham and thus heirs of the promise.

Not of the Law.

4:1 Now a minor heir is no better off than a servant even though they will inherit the whole estate, 4:2 since they are under guardians and household administrators until the time set by the father. 4:3 So it is also with us; when we were minors we were enslavedby the elemental spirits of the world. 4:4 But when the time set by God arrived, he

sent out his Son to be born from a woman and under Law, 4:5 so that he could redeem those under the Law and adopt them as children. 4:6 So since you are children, God sends out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, so that we can call out, “Daddy, Father!” 4:7 meaning you are no longer a servant but a child— and if a child, then an heir through God.

The foolishness of turning from grace to law

4:8 But before, of course, you had no concept of God and were a servant to what were not really gods at all. 4:9 Yet now that you know God— or rather are known by God— how can you turn back again to those weakling elemental

spirits and enslave yourselves to them again? 4:10 You are observing sacred months and times and years! 4:11 I fear for you, that somehow I labored for nothing on your behalf.

4:12 Become like me, sisters and brothers, because I was once like you. I plead with you because you did me no wrong. 4:13 You know that when I brought the good news to you before, I was physically ill. 4:14 Yet you were not put off by my physical condition and did not “spit me out,” but you accepted me as though I were an angel of God or even as Anointed Jesus. 4:15 So where is your happiness? I vouch for you that if you could, you would have gouged out your own eyes and given them to

me! 4:16 Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?

4:17 Those people are trying to sway you to their side, and not out of pure motives. They want to cut you off from me so you will admire them. 4:18 Now admiring someone is fine, and not just when I'm around. 4:19 But my little children, I am writhing in the pains of childbirth with you until you become like the Anointed One! 4:20 I want so much to be there with you in person right now so I could change my tone. I am exasperated with you!

An analogy from Sarah and Hagar

4:21 Tell me, you who want to go back under the Law, do you not listen to it? 4:22 For it has been written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and one by the free woman. 4:23 But the one by the slave woman came purely by means of the flesh, while the one by the free woman came through a promise. 4:24 This is an allegory, for these women represent two covenants. One was from Mt. Sinai in Arabia and gave birth into slavery— that is Hagar. 4:25 She represents Mt. Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to Jerusalem today, since she and her children are still in slavery. 4:26 Yet the Jerusalem from above is free— it is she who is our mother. 4:27 For it has been written, “Be glad, childless one who is not giving birth! Break your silence and

shout, you who are not in labor pains!
For the children of the single woman
outnumber those of the one with a
husband!”

4:28 Now brothers and sisters, you are
children of promise, corresponding to
Isaac. 4:29 But the child of the flesh
persecuted the child of the Spirit; it’s the
same now as it was then. 4:30 But what
does the scripture say? “Send the slave
woman and her son away, for he will
not share in the inheritance with the
free woman’s son.” 4:31 So then, sisters
and brothers, we are not children of the
slave woman but of the free woman.

The Anointed One is freedom, law is slavery

5:1 The Anointed One has set us free, so stand firm and do not chain yourselves to slavery again. 5:2 Now look! I, Paul, am telling you that if allow yourselves to be circumcised, then the Anointed One will be of no use to you. 5:3 I solemnly testify to you that everyone who does this is obligated to perform the whole Law perfectly. 5:4 You who think justification comes from the Law have been “cut away” from the Anointed One and “fallen off” of God’s favor!

Paul is using double entendre, comparing the act of circumcision to what happens when people separate themselves from the favor of God by going back under the Law.

5:5 We who are of the Spirit hope in faith for the justice we await. 5:6 For in Anointed Jesus neither circumcision nor un-circumcision matters, but only faith operating through love. 5:7 You were running a great race; who cut in on you and pushed you away from the truth? 5:8 This gullibility certainly doesn't come from the One who called you! 5:9 "It only takes a little yeast to make the whole loaf rise." 5:10 But I have confidence in you from the Master, that you will get back on course. Yet the one who is disturbing you will face judgment, whoever it may be. 5:11 Sisters and brothers, if I am still pushing circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? Without the cross, the Judeans wouldn't be offended. 5:12 If only those who are disturbing you

would keep cutting until the whole thing is gone!

Once again Paul is using crudity in his ire against those advocating circumcision.

Freedom is not license

5:13 You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters— not freedom to indulge the flesh but to enslave yourselves to each other out of love. 5:14 For the entire Law is encapsulated in this one sentence: “You must love others as you love yourself.” 5:15 But if you keep backbiting each other, beware that you don’t consume each other! 5:16 So I say, keep pace with the Spirit and do not give in to the cravings of the flesh. 5:17 For flesh and Spirit

continually fight against each other and get in the way of your doing what you want. 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under law.

5:19 Now what the flesh does is obvious: promiscuity, impurity, vice, 5:20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, rivalry, tension, fits of rage, factions, disputes, divisions, 5:21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties and so on. I warned you about all that, just as I warned you that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 5:22 But the evidence of the Spirit is love, happiness, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustworthiness, 5:23 gentleness, and self-control; there is no law against any of that. 5:24 Now those of us who are united with Anointed

Jesus have crucified the flesh with its feelings and desires. 5:25 If we are living in the Spirit let us keep pace with the Spirit. 5:26 Then we will not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Restoring the sinner

6:1 Sisters and brothers, if anyone is overtaken by sins, you spiritual ones must restore them with great humility, remembering that it could happen to you. 6:2 Look after each other so that you will fulfill the law of the Anointed One. 6:3 If anyone thinks they're something special, they are nothing—they're only fooling themselves. 6:4 Let each one test their own work, and be content with that instead of comparing

themselves with others; 6:5 you are each responsible for yourselves.

6:6 The one who is instructed in the Word should partner with their instructor by sharing their goods.

6:7 Don’t fool yourselves— God is not mocked! A person will harvest what they plant. 6:8 The one who plants for their own flesh will harvest only decay, yet the one who plants for the Spirit will harvest eternal spiritual life. 6:9 Now let’s not despair of doing good, for we will harvest according to what we planted if we don’t get lazy. 6:10 So then, as we have the opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those in the household of the faith.

Final warning against the slavery of the law

6:11 Now I myself am writing this in really big letters so nobody can miss it: 6:12 The ones who are pushing circumcision on you are only doing it for show, so they won't be persecuted because of the cross of the Anointed One. 6:13 They don't even keep the whole Law themselves, but only want you to be circumcised so they can brag about controlling you. 6:14 May I never brag except about the cross of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. 6:15 For it doesn't matter whether or not

someone is circumcised, but only whether they are a new creation.

Final greetings

6:16 Peace and compassion upon whoever pays careful attention to this rule, and to the Israel of God. 6:17 From now on let no one give me any more grief, for my body is branded with the scars of Jesus. 6:18 May the favor of our Master Jesus the Anointed One be with your spirits, brothers and sisters, absolutely!

Ephesians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an Ambassador of Anointed Jesus through the will of God,

To the holy ones living in Ephesus and trusting in Anointed Jesus:

1:2 Favor and peace to you all from God our Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One.

Gratitude for salvation

1:3 May the God and Father of our Master Jesus the Anointed One be

blessed, for through the Anointed One he gave us every spiritual blessing in the heavens. 1:4 Because of his love, he chose us for himself before the foundation of the world to be holy and flawless in his view. 1:5 It delighted him to lock us into the place of his own sons and daughters through Jesus the Anointed One.

1:6 Praise his honor and favor! He showed his favor to us in the Loved One, 1:7 who dismissed all the charges against us by means of his blood. He paid for us to be acquitted of all charges with the overwhelming favor 1:8 he lavished on us in his wise plan. 1:9 It delighted him to make his secret will known to us, 1:10 his plan to dispense the progression of the ages to the goal

of bringing everything in heaven and earth to the Anointed One. 1:11 Not only that, but God in his wisdom also destined us, 1:12 who were expected first with the Anointed One, to honor him. 1:13 Likewise for you who heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation. You believed and were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 1:14 who is the down payment that guarantees our inheritance. Praise and honor to him!

1:15 So ever since I heard of your faith in the Master Jesus and your love for all the holy ones, 1:16 I haven't stopped thanking God because of you! You are in my prayers, 1:17 especially that the God of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, the glorious Father, may give you

all the spirit of wisdom and reveal knowledge of him. 1:18 He has illuminated your minds so you can grasp the hope of your calling, the riches of his honor, your inheritance among the holy ones, 1:19 and the overflowing great power he pours into us who believe. This is the same power 1:20 he used to raise the Anointed One from the dead and seat him at his right hand in heaven, 1:21 over every rule and authority and power and mastery, and every name there is, not only in this age but also in the next. 1:22 God put all of them beneath his feet, and he alone is the one given by God as the head of the Congregation, 1:23 which is his

body, bringing everything to completion.

Note Paul's comparisons: under/over, feet/head, body/completion. In Jesus, every entity is in its proper place, in this particular context of the subjection of all forms of rule and authority.

Dead to sin, alive to Jesus

2:1 You are all dead to the sins 2:2 in which you once lived as part of this age. You were followers of the world and the ruling authority of the air, the spirit behind those who are stubbornly hostile. 2:3 We all used to act on the urges of our flesh, doing its bidding and thinking its way, and of course we deserved God's fury just like the rest. 2:4 But God, forever rich in compassion because of the love he had for us, 2:5

made us forever dead to sins and alive to the Anointed One— you have been saved because of his favor!

2:6 Through Anointed Jesus, he raised us and seated us among the celestial ones, 2:7 so that he could show in the coming ages the overwhelming riches of his favor— his kindness to us who are united with him. 2:8 And it is because of this favor that you have been saved through faith. This is all a gift of God, 2:9 not something you did, so nobody can brag. 2:10 For we are his achievement, created in unity with Anointed Jesus to do the good deeds God prepared for us to continue doing.

Reconciling Jew and Gentile

2:11 Don’t forget that once all you of other nations were called ‘uncircumcised’ by those who were circumcised by human hands. 2:12 In that age you all were apart from the Anointed One, alienated from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenant of promise. You were without hope and without God in the world. 2:13 But now, united by the blood of Anointed Jesus, all of you who were once far away became near. 2:14 For he is our peace; in his flesh he joined the two groups into one, demolishing the barrier between them. 2:15 He made peace by voiding the law of decreed commands, so that the two would be created as one new person united with him. 2:16 He reconciled them both to God in one body by means of the cross,

putting the hostility to death. 2:17 He came to bring the good news of peace to all of you, the far and the near. 2:18 So through him, both have access to the Father in one Spirit.

2:19 As a result, then, you are no longer strangers and aliens but fellow citizens with the holy ones, living in the very house of God. 2:20 You are a house built on the foundation of the Ambassadors and prophets, whose cornerstone is Jesus the Anointed One himself. 2:21 This house is constructed by the Master and is growing into a holy temple. 2:22 And you are also being constructed into this spiritual home of God.

The hidden Congregation is now revealed

3:1 This is why I, Paul, am a prisoner of Anointed Jesus, for the sake of the other nations. 3:2 Surely you have heard of the detailed plan of God's favor to me for your sakes. 3:3 He revealed the secret to me, as I wrote to you briefly before. 3:4 By reading what I wrote about that, you are able to grasp my full understanding of the secret of the Anointed One. 3:5 It was not revealed to people in other generations but now is revealed in spirit to his holy Ambassadors and prophets. 3:6 This secret is that the other nations would be joint-heirs, of the same body, sharing in

the promise of Anointed Jesus through the good news.

3:7 I was appointed to present this secret according to the gift of God's favor, a gift granted to me by his power. 3:8 This favor was given to me, though I am lower than the lowest of the holy ones, to bring the other nations the good news of the Anointed One's unfathomable riches, 3:9 and to make one and all see the detailed secret plan that God, who created everything, kept hidden for ages. 3:10 Now, by means of the Congregation, the celestial rulers and authorities can know the multi-faceted wisdom of God, 3:11 whose purpose from the ages was to make Anointed Jesus our Master. 3:12

Because of our faith in him, we can approach God boldly and confidently.

Prayer for the Ephesian believers

3:13 I say all of that so you will not be discouraged over my suffering for you; it is in your honor. 3:14 For this reason I humble myself before the Father, 3:15 for whom all people groups in heaven and earth are named. 3:16 I ask that from his rich supply of honor he may empower you through his Spirit, 3:17 so that the Anointed One may live within you by the faith in your hearts. Being rooted and founded in love, I pray 3:18 that you will be strong and that you will grasp, along with all the other holy ones, the width and length and height

and depth of the Anointed One’s love,
3:19 a love that is really beyond us.
Then you will be entirely filled with God.

3:20 Now all honor belongs to the One
who is able to do extravagantly more
than we ask or imagine by his power
operating in us, 3:21 the Congregation
of Anointed Jesus, for all generations
and endless ages, absolutely!

Spiritual growth

4:1 So I, the Master’s captive, urge you
to keep pace with the appointment to
which you were called. 4:2 Be humble,
gentle, and patient, tolerating each
other in love. 4:3 Make an effort to keep
the unity of the Spirit, tied together with
peace. 4:4 Be one body and one spirit,

just as you were also called into one hope, 4:5 one Master, one faith, one immersion, 4:6 and one God and Father who is over, through, and in all. 4:7 Yet each of us was given favor in accordance with how the Anointed One has apportioned each gift.

4:8 What does it mean, “Ascending to the heights, he captured captivity and gave gifts to people”? 4:9 Well, in order to ascend it means he first descended into the lower parts of the earth. 4:10 The same one who descended also ascended above the heavens, to complete everything. 4:11 In fact, he gave the Ambassadors, the prophets, those who bring the good news, the shepherds and teachers, 4:12 to equip the holy ones to perform this service of

building up the body of the Anointed One. 4:13 The goal is that we should all reach unity of faith and full understanding of the God-Man, to a mature man of the full stature of the Anointed One. 4:14 Then we will no longer be minors, running here and there and being carried away by whatever teaching is blowing in the wind. Such things come from con artists and crafty people who scheme to lead others astray. 4:15 Speaking the truth in love is how we can make everything grow into the Anointed One, the Head. 4:16 The entire body grows out of him, connected together and united to the supply at every point of contact. Each part does its work to make the body grow and build itself up in love.

Living as believers

4:17 So this is what I'm getting at, as a witness for the Master: In no way should you still be following in the footsteps of the other nations. Their thinking is muddled 4:18 and dark; they are alienated from the life of God because of their ignorance, caused by their hard hearts. 4:19 They are beyond feeling, given over to vice and greed and all sorts of unsavory things.

4:20 Yet this is not what you learned 4:21 about the Anointed One, since surely you heard him and were taught by him according to the truth about Jesus. 4:22 You must put off the old ways, the old self that is corrupted by seductive desires. 4:23 Be rejuvenated instead in

mind and spirit, 4:24 and put on the new you that is being created by God in justice and devotion to the truth. 4:25 So get rid of falsehood and speak the truth with those around you, since we are members of each other. 4:26 It's not a sin to be angry, but don't let the sun set before you resolve it; 4:27 don't give the Slanderer an advantage!

4:28 The thief must stop stealing and get to work; they must work with their own hands so they can share with the needy. 4:29 Do not let any foul talk come out of your mouths; only say what is good and needed to build up others and favor those who hear. 4:30 And do not distress the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 4:31 Let all bitterness, fury,

rage, shouting, and slander be far removed from you, along with all malice. 4:32 Instead, do good to each other and be compassionate, behaving graciously among yourselves just as God through the Anointed One also dealt graciously with all of us.

Purity

5:1 So imitate God as dearly loved children, 5:2 and walk in love just as the Anointed One loved us and gave himself up for our sake as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 5:3 As is fitting for holy people, let there be no grounds for charges of promiscuity, dirtiness, or even greed to be brought against you— 5:4 and no filth or stupid talk or innuendo. Instead of being those

things, be thankful. 5:5 For you know and understand that no promiscuous or dirty or greedy people (who are idolaters) will have a share in the inheritance of the kingdom of the Anointed One and of God.

5:6 Let no one fool you with hollow words about all this, because the rage of God is coming upon those who stubbornly resist him. 5:7 No, do not join in with them! 5:8 For you were once darkness but now, unified with the Master, you are light. 5:9 So act like people of the light, since light produces all goodness and justice and truth, 5:10 testing to see what is most pleasing to the Master. 5:11 And do not join in with the unproductive acts of darkness, but instead expose them. 5:12 It’s shameful

to even talk about what they do. 5:13 But everything is being exposed under the light appearing everywhere, for light is indeed appearing. 5:14 This is why it says, “Wake up, sleeper! Get up, and the Anointed One will illuminate you.” 5:15 So make sure that you are keeping pace— not with the unwise but with the wise, 5:16 making good use of the time in these evil days. 5:17 For that reason, do not become dimwitted but intelligent regarding the will of the Master.

Spirit, not flesh

5:18 Don’t get drunk with wine, which shows a lack of discipline, but be filled in spirit.

The Greek grammar indicates that everything from here to ch. 6 verse 10 refers back to being “filled in spirit”.

5:19 Speak to each other with praise songs, festive songs, and spiritual songs, singing and playing music in your hearts to the Master. 5:20 Live in gratitude to God for everything in the name of our Master Jesus the Anointed One.

Mutual support between spouses

5:21 Support each other out of respect for the Anointed One. 5:22 Wives, support your own husbands just as the Congregation supports the Master. 5:23 Since the man is the source of the woman just as the Anointed One is the

source of the Congregation, which is the Body he saved,

Paul is using a play on words which is difficult to convey in English: The body holds up (supports) the head, and the head (source) in turn feeds and nourishes the body. This is a picture of unity and interdependence, not hierarchy.

5:24 the wives are to support their husbands in every way, just as the congregation supports the Anointed One.

5:25 Husbands, love your wives in the same way that the Anointed One did when he gave himself up for the Congregation, 5:26 to make her special and bathed clean by his pronouncement. 5:27 This way he could

present the Congregation with himself as esteemed— not blemished, wrinkled, or any other such thing, but special and flawless. 5:28 Likewise, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies. After all, a husband is really loving himself when he loves his wife, 5:29 since nobody ever hates their own body; they feed it and take care of it. That's what the Anointed One does for the Congregation, 5:30 a Body of which we are all parts. 5:31 In this same way, a man leaves his parents to join completely with his wife, and they become one flesh. 5:32 This is a big secret, but I'm talking about the Anointed One and the Congregation. 5:33 To emphasize: Every husband must love his wife as he loves himself,

so that the wife won’t have to live in fear of her husband.

Mutual support between parents and children

6:1 Children, listen to your parents because of the Master; it’s the right thing to do. 6:2 “Honor your father and mother” is the first precept with a promise: 6:3 that it may go well with you and you live long on the earth. 6:4 And fathers, do not exasperate your children! Instead, nurture them in the training and counsel of the Master.

Mutual support between masters and servants

6:5 Slaves, listen to your earthly masters with sincere concern and an open heart, as you would to the Anointed One. 6:6 Don’t merely put on a show like sycophants, but as servants of the Anointed One, do God’s will from your soul. 6:7 Serve sincerely, as you would to the Master and not just to people. 6:8 Understand that if anyone does good they will be repaid for it from the Master, whether slave or free. 6:9 And masters, the same goes for you! Tone down the threats; keep in mind that the Master of both of you is in heaven, and he shows no partiality.

Spiritual armor

6:10 As for the rest of you, be empowered by the Master and his

strong rule. 6:11 Put on the complete armor of God to enable you to stand against the strategies of the Slanderer. 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, the authorities, the demonic powers of darkness, the evil celestial spiritual forces. 6:13 Because of that, take up the complete armor of God so you are able to stand firm in the day of evil, to stand after having overpowered them. So stand firm, 6:14 wearing a belt around your waist by means of truth, putting on the body armor of justice, 6:15 wearing the shoes of readiness to spread the good news of peace, 6:16 and taking up in front of them all the full-sized shield of the faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming projectiles of the evil one. 6:17 Having done all of

that, accept the helmet of salvation and the sword of that spirit which is the declaration of God.

6:18 In your prayers, pray all the time in spirit, and be vigilant to persevere. Pray for all the holy ones, 6:19 and me too, that the word may be granted to me to speak boldly. Then I can make the secret known, the hidden good news 6:20 for which I am an envoy in chains. Pray that I will be bold as I must. 6:21 So that you also may be familiar with my habits, I am sending Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful attendant of the Master. 6:22 He will inform you of our concerns and soothe your hearts.

Final greetings

6:23 Peace to the brothers and sisters,
and love with faith from God the Father
and Master Jesus the Anointed One.
6:24 May undiluted favor be with all the
loved ones of our Master Jesus the
Anointed One.

Philippians

Greeting

1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Anointed Jesus,

To all in Philippi set apart with the Anointed One, together with the guardians and attendants:

1:2 Favor and peace to you from God our Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One!

Gratitude and prayer

1:3 I thank my God every time I think of you, 1:4 always making requests for your sakes with great joy, 1:5 because of your partnership in the good news from the first day until now. 1:6 And I am confident that the One who initiated a good work in you will keep making installments on it to the very Day of Anointed Jesus.

1:7 It is appropriate for me to have this attitude toward all of you, because you have all kept me in your hearts, whether I was in prison or defending and confirming the good news. You are all equal partners with me of this favor, 1:8 for God is my witness that I ache for you with the compassion of Anointed Jesus. 1:9 And I pray that your love will overflow more and more in

understanding and perception 1:10 so that you can test various things, being sincere and inoffensive all the way up to the Day of the Anointed One, 1:11 and being filled with righteousness by means of Jesus the Anointed One— to the honor and praise of God!

Persecution advances the good news

1:12 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has in fact served to advance the good news, 1:13 because it became obvious to the whole palace guard and everyone else that my imprisonment was only because of the Anointed One. 1:14 Not only that, but now most of those who trust the Master, seeing my

imprisonment, have become bold, daring to fearlessly spread the Word. 1:15 Of course, some proclaim the Anointed One only to stir up trouble or try to make me envy them, but others do so out of love 1:16 because they know I'm here for defending the good news. 1:17 Some tell about the Anointed One only because they think they can make things worse for me here in prison, 1:18 but so what? The most important thing is that no matter what the method or motivation, the Anointed One is being proclaimed, and that's a good thing.

And I continue to be happy 1:19 because I know that I will be rescued eventually, through your requests and the supply of the Spirit of Anointed

Jesus. 1:20 It is my greatest hope that I will have nothing to be ashamed of but will go on boldly as always. And now the Anointed One will be more greatly honored in my body, whether through life or death. 1:21 For while I am alive I have the Anointed One, yet if I die I have even more, 1:22 but on the other hand if I am to go on living in the flesh I can still get work done. I don't know which is better! 1:23 I am torn between the two: to break away and be together with the Anointed One (which would definitely be better for me), 1:24 or to stay in the flesh (which is better for you). 1:25 Yet I am completely confident that I will stay and be with you all, for your progress and the joy of the faith, 1:26 so that your boasting about

Anointed Jesus will overflow due to my coming to you again.

High standards for believers

1:27 The most important thing is that you are worthy citizens of the good news of the Anointed One, so that whether I come to see you or not, I hear that you stand firm in one spirit and soul, contending side-by-side for the faith of the good news. 1:28 Don’t be spooked by those who oppose you, by which they prove their condemnation and your acquittal by God. 1:29 For you have been graciously given, for the Anointed One’s sake, not only to put your trust in him but also to suffer for him, 1:30 having the same struggle you saw and heard that I have.

Following Jesus' example of humility

2:1 So then, if you have any consolation in unity with the Anointed One, any comfort of love, any partnership of spirit, any compassion and pity, 2:2 then complete my joy by having that same love for each other, joining in soul with one attitude. 2:3 Do nothing out of bitter rivalry or selfish ambition, but humbly consider others as your superiors. 2:4 Don't push your own agenda but be considerate of others. 2:5 Have the same attitude among yourselves that Anointed Jesus had:

2:6 He was in the form of God, so he didn't consider his equality with God as an act of robbery.

This disputed phrase seems to indicate that Jesus had no need to try and take by force what was aleady his.

2:7 Rather, he made himself nothing
and took on the form of a servant by
becoming human. 2:8 And in human
form, he humbled himself; he heeded
God to the point of death— even death
on a cross!

2:9 Therefore God made him great and
honored him with the Name above all
others, 2:10 so that at the Name of
Jesus every knee will bow— those in
heaven and earth and under the earth
— 2:11 and every tongue will confess
that Jesus the Anointed One is the
Master, to the honor of God the Father.

Don’t be complainers

2:12 With that in mind, my loved ones, take heed as you always have— not only in my presence but now even more so in my absence— with the utmost respect, thereby carrying your salvation to its ultimate conclusion. 2:13 For it is God who is empowering you as he sees fit, in your will and your activities. 2:14 So do everything without whining and arguing, 2:15 so that you will become blameless and un-compromised children of God, flawless within a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world. 2:16 Hang on to the Word of Life so I can be proud of you on the Day of the Anointed One, and so that I will not have labored for nothing. 2:17 For even if I am like a drink offering on the sacrifice— the official service of your

faith— I celebrate with all of you. 2:18 Come on, share this with me!

Paul vouches for Timothy and Epaphroditus

2:19 I hope by Master Jesus to send Timothy to you very soon, so that I will be cheered up by knowing how you're doing. 2:20 For there is no one else who genuinely cares about you as I do; 2:21 they all are only concerned about themselves and not Jesus the Anointed One. 2:22 But you know the kind of person Timothy is, serving together with me for the good news as a child with their father. 2:23 So I definitely hope to send him as soon as I know my situation. 2:24 Even so, I have

confidence from the Master that I will come soon myself.

2:25 I also feel it necessary to send Epaphroditus, my brother and co-worker and comrade-in-arms, and at the same time your ambassador and the public servant you sent to meet my needs. 2:26 In fact, he was aching to see you, and even depressed because you heard he was sick. 2:27 And he was, almost to the point of death! But God was merciful to him, and not just to him but also to me, so that I wouldn't have one sorrow piled on top of another. 2:28 So I am all the more determined to send him to you, so you can see him again and celebrate, and I can be relieved. 2:29 So happily accept him as one belonging to the Master,

and esteem him highly, 2:30 since he nearly died in his work for the Master, risking his life so he could fulfill your wishes to be my public servant.

Spirit, not flesh

3:1 To the rest of you, sisters and brothers: Be happy as those who belong to the Master! I don't get tired of repeating that, because it is for your safety. 3:2 Watch out for those "dogs," those evildoers! They are the "discarded" 3:3 but we are the "circumcision" by the Spirit of God, offering divine service and being proud of Anointed Jesus instead of having confidence in the flesh. 3:4 And if anyone is to be confident in the flesh, I certainly qualify. I have more

credentials than anyone: 3:5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew among Hebrews, and a Pharisee regarding the Law. 3:6 You want enthusiasm? I persecuted the Congregations. You want cold, hard justice? I was blameless.

3:7 But whatever I had gained, through the Anointed One I consider it lost. 3:8 Without a doubt I gave it all up for something superior: knowing Anointed Jesus my Master. I lost it all for him and now view it as nothing but a pile of manure, in order to gain the Anointed One. 3:9 I want to belong to him— not having a righteousness of my own from the law but by means of the faith of the Anointed One, the righteousness that

comes from faith in God. 3:10 And I want to know him, the power of his resurrection, and the partnership of his sufferings. Then I will conform to his death, 3:11 and perhaps even attain the resurrection from the dead.

3:12 Now it isn't as though I have already arrived or finished, but only that I am chasing after it in order to acquire that for which Anointed Jesus surely acquired me. 3:13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have acquired it, but I have this one thing in mind: Forgetting what is behind me, I stretch out for what is in front of me 3:14 toward the goal I'm after: the prize of the calling of God above in Anointed Jesus.

3:15 So then, whoever is mature will agree with this, and if anyone doesn't, God will reveal it to you. 3:16 Regardless of the level we've reached, let's all pull in the same direction. 3:17 Imitate me, sisters and brothers, and take note of those who continue with the model we presented to you. 3:18 For I often told you about many— and I say this with tears— who go around as enemies of the cross of the Anointed One. 3:19 They will be destroyed in the end; their god is their appetite; they celebrate their shame. Their attention is on the earth, 3:20 but our citizenship is in the heavens, an inheritance we await from Master Jesus the Anointed One. 3:21 He will transform our lowly body into one like his majestic body, with the

power that enables him to uphold everything.

A plea for unity

4:1 So stand firm in our eagerly-expected Master, dear sisters and brothers, my joy and medal of honor!

4:2 I encourage Euodia and Syntyche to pull together as co-workers of the Master.

Euodia and Syntyche are women's names.

4:3 And yes, I'm also asking you, Synzugos, to assist them, because they contended for the good news together with me, along with Clement and the rest of our co-workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

Final advice and gratitude

4:4 Always be happy because of the Master; I repeat: be happy! 4:5 Make your impartiality obvious to everyone; the Master is near. 4:6 Don’t be obsessed with anything, but in everything— with prayers and appeals with gratitude— make your requests known to God. 4:7 Then the peace of God, which is superior to every other state of mind, will fortify your hearts and thoughts because of Anointed Jesus.

4:8 Finally, sisters and brothers: whatever is true, whatever is dignified, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is agreeable, whatever is well-spoken of— if there is any valor or something praiseworthy— consider

these things. 4:9 Whatever you learned from me and accepted, whatever you heard and saw in me, that's what you should do. And the God of Peace will be with you.

4:10 Now I am very happy along with the Master because your generosity toward me has finally blossomed; you've been inconsistent with this. 4:11 Not that I'm hinting that I want something from you, for I have learned how to be self-sufficient in any situation. 4:12 I know what it means to be poor and what it means to have more than I need. I have been initiated into the mysteries of satisfaction and hunger, excess and deprivation. 4:13 I am strong in everything with the One who

empowers me. 4:14 Even so, you did well to participate in my hardship.

4:15 Yet you Philippians are aware that in the beginning of the good news, when I came out from Macedonia, not one Congregation participated in the collection except you alone. 4:16 And in Thessalonica you sent me aid more than once or twice. 4:17 But again, I'm not after your gift, I just want to see your "account balance" increase. 4:18 Now I have received it all to the point of overflowing, as well as what Epaphroditus brought from you: the fragrant aroma of a sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. 4:19 So my God will fill every need of yours in keeping with his glorious wealth through Anointed Jesus.

Final greetings

4:20 Now all honor goes to our God and Father for eternity, absolutely! 4:21 Greet all who are set apart with Anointed Jesus; the believers with me greet you. 4:22 All who are set apart greet you, especially those in the household of Caesar. 4:23 May the favor of Master Jesus the Anointed One be with your spirits.

Colossians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an Ambassador of Anointed Jesus through the will of God, and brother Timothy,

1:2 To the holy ones living in Colosse and trusting in the Anointed One:

Favor and peace to you from God our Father!

Gratitude and prayer

1:3 We thank the God and Father of our Master Jesus the Anointed One for you,

and we’re always praying for you. 1:4 We heard about your faith in Anointed Jesus, and the love you have toward all the holy ones 1:5 because of the hope reserved for you in the heavens. You heard about this hope via the word of truth of the good news, 1:6 which is bringing results throughout the world—and in you from the day you heard and realized the truth of the favor of God. 1:7 You learned it from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow servant, who faithfully served the Anointed One for your sakes. 1:8 He has also informed us of your spiritual love.

1:9 That is why, from the day we heard this, we have not stopped praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the recognition of his will in all

wisdom and spiritual understanding. 1:10 And we pray that you conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the Master, being productive in every good and pleasing work, and growing in your understanding of God. 1:11 We pray that you are empowered according to his mighty and honorable rule, resulting in great endurance and patience 1:12 with joy. We thank the Father, who qualifies you for your portion of the inheritance of those who are holy and in the light, 1:13 and who rescued us out of the jurisdiction of darkness and moved us into the kingdom of the Son he loves— 1:14 the Son who got us released and our sins pardoned.

The supremacy of Jesus

1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation. 1:16 Everything was created by him—everything in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, as well as positions of power, ruled domains, and authorities. It has all been created by him and for him. 1:17 He precedes everything and holds it all together. 1:18 He is the head of the body (which is the Congregation) and the ruling firstborn from the dead. He is first in every way! 1:19 For it was in him that the entirety of God was pleased to live, 1:20 so that by means of him everyone in heaven and earth could be reconciled to himself, making peace by means of his blood on the cross.

1:21 And yet he has now reconciled you who were once estranged and were hostile to understanding, because you did evil. 1:22 He did this by physically dying, so he could present you holy and flawless and above reproach in his sight — 1:23 since in fact you are persisting in the faith. You have been founded and settled so that you are not removed from the hope of the good news, which you heard is being proclaimed in all of creation on earth; this is what I was sent to attend to.

A positive attitude toward suffering

1:24 I now celebrate my sufferings for your sakes and do my share to complete in my own flesh whatever is

lacking in the physical sufferings of the Anointed One,

This does not refer to salvation, since Jesus' suffering is not what saved us.

for the sake of his body which is the Congregation. 1:25 I became an attendant of this in accord with God's planned schedule, to complete the Word of God in you. 1:26 The secret that was concealed from past ages and generations has now appeared in the ones set apart for him. 1:27 God wants them to inform the other nations of the glorious riches of this secret, which is the Anointed One in you, the honorable hope. 1:28 We tell and warn everyone and teach them wisely, so that we can present every person as in complete unity with the Anointed One. 1:29 This is

my labor and struggle in keeping with the operation of his power in me.

2:1 I want to give you some concept of the tremendous struggle I'm in for your sakes, and also for those in Laodicea and whoever else hasn't met me in person. 2:2 The struggle is to console their hearts and unite them in love, in a fully rich and firm conviction of understanding that realizes the secret of God and of the Anointed One. 2:3 All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed in him.

Caution against smooth talkers

2:4 Now I am saying all this so that no one scams you with smooth talk. 2:5

Although I am not with you physically I am with you in spirit, and I’m happy to see that you are solidly aligned due to your trust in the Anointed One. 2:6 Seeing that you accepted Anointed Jesus the Master, keep pace with him. 2:7 You have been founded and constructed in him and confirmed in the faith you were taught, overflowing with gratitude. 2:8 So beware that no one loots you by means of the philosophy and hollow delusion that come from human tradition; these are aligned with the elements of the world and not with the Anointed One.

Jesus our Savior

2:9 The entirety of the Divine Nature is embodied in him, 2:10 and you have

been made complete by him who is the source of every rule and authority. 2:11 You were vicariously “circumcised”—not literally by human hands, but with the stripping-off of the physical body in the “circumcision” of the Anointed One. 2:12 You were buried with him in the immersion, and you were raised with him through faith in what God did when he raised him up from the dead. 2:13 And yet you really are dead— to your sins and the “un-circumcision” of your flesh. But he made you alive with him and dealt kindly to us in all our sins, 2:14 erasing the list of charges that were written up against us, and wiping it away by nailing it to the cross. 2:15 After getting rid of the rulers and authorities too, he triumphed over them and boldly made a public spectacle of them.

Jesus frees us from religion

2:16 So then, do not let anyone judge you about food and drink, or about observing festivals or new moons or Sabbaths; 2:17 those are all shadows of what is to come. As the body of the Anointed One, 2:18 let no one pass judgment on you. They're always going on about their humility and seeing angels in their rituals— legends in their own carnal minds. 2:19 They have lost connection with the Head out of whom the entire body grows from God, who supplies the ligaments and connects it all together.

2:20 So if, along with the Anointed One, the elements of the world are now dead to you, why, as though you still live in

the world, do you subject yourselves to its rules? 2:21 “You should stay away from this, stop tasting that, don’t touch those”… 2:22 all those things will decay and be used up, since they are merely human edicts and instructions. 2:23 They do seem on the surface to be pious acts of wisdom and humility with their physical deprivations, but they are of no value for satisfying cravings.

Raise the bar

3:1 So then, if you were raised with the Anointed One, seek what is above where the Anointed One is seated at the right hand of God. 3:2 Set your heart on what is above, not on the earth. 3:3 For you died, and your life has been hidden together with the Anointed One

in God. 3:4 When the Anointed One appears, you and your life will appear with him in honor. 3:5 So put your association with the earth to death: promiscuity, impurity, evil emotions and passions, and greed, which is idolatry. 3:6 These are the reasons for the coming rage of God on the stubbornly hostile. 3:7 You used to keep doing those things when you lived that way. 3:8 But now, get rid of all these: rage, fury, malice, slander, and obscene talk. 3:9 Do not lie to each other but strip off the old self and its practices. 3:10 Replace it with the new one, which is being rejuvenated to resemble the One who formed it— 3:11 one that knows no Greek and Judean, no circumcision and un-circumcision, no barbarian or Scythian or servant or free— because

all are united as one with the Anointed One.

3:12 So then, as God’s chosen holy ones that are dearly loved, put these on: compassion, kindness, humility, even-temperedness, and patience, 3:13 putting up with each other and being nice to each other. If you have a grievance with anyone, deal kindly with them just as the Master did with you. 3:14 Then complete it by putting on love as an outer coat to hold it all together. 3:15 And let the peace of the Anointed One be the decision-maker in your hearts, which is the reason you were called into one body. Become grateful. 3:16 Let the Word of the Anointed One live in you richly. In all wise instruction, teach and warn each other with praise

songs, festive songs, and spiritual songs, singing freely in your hearts to God. 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all as representatives of Master Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Mutual support

3:18 Wives, join with your husbands just as you are joined to the Master. 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be upset with them. 3:20 Children, listen to your parents in everything, because this pleases the Master. 3:21 Fathers, don’t provoke your children and make them disillusioned.

3:22 Slaves, listen to your physical masters in everything. Slave for them,

not for show as sycophants, but out of respect for the Master. 3:23 Do everything from your soul, like you're working for the Master and not people, 3:24 knowing that the Master will pay you the due compensation of your inheritance. You are slaving for Master Anointed One! 3:25 And whoever causes harm will get what they deserve, without favoritism.

4:1 Masters, pay fair wages to your servants and remember that you too have a Master in heaven.

Final advice

4:2 Be persistent in prayer, watching for answers, and be grateful. 4:3 Pray for us too, that God will open a door for us

to speak the Word, the secret of the Anointed One, which I am compelled to do; 4:4 pray that I will speak it clearly. 4:5 Behave wisely toward outsiders, making good use of the time. 4:6 Your words should always be gracious yet not bland, and perceptive of the best way to answer each one.

Final greetings

4:7 Our dear brother Tychicus will inform you about everything I’m doing. He is a faithful servant and co-servant of the Master, 4:8 whom I send to you for the purpose of telling you about us and consoling your hearts. 4:9 He will be accompanied by Onesimus, the faithful and dear brother who is one of you.

They will tell you all about what's going on here.

4:10 My co-captive Aristarchus greets you, along with Barnabas' cousin Mark, the one you asked about. If he visits you, accept him. 4:11 Also greeting you is Jesus (the one they call Justus). These of "the circumcision" are the only co-workers in the kingdom of God who were a comfort to me. 4:12 Ephaphras (one of you) greets you; he is always struggling in prayers for you as a servant of Anointed Jesus, that you will stand complete and fully assured in all the will of God. 4:13 I can vouch for his very hard work for your sakes, as well as those in Laodicea and Hierapolis. 4:14 Dear Doctor Luke greets you, as also does Demas.

4:15 Greet all the brothers and sisters in Laodicea, and Nympha and the Congregation that meets in her house. 4:16 And when this letter is read to you, make sure it is also read to the Congregation in Laodicea, and also that you read theirs. 4:17 Tell Archippus, “See to it that you fulfill the service that you accepted from the Master.” 4:18 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my confinement. May God’s favor be with you.

1 Thessalonians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the Congregation in Thessalonica, united with God the Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One:

Grace and peace to you all.

Gratitude for living out their faith

1:2 We always thank God for you, mentioning you in our prayers. 1:3 We never stop remembering your faithful work, your loving efforts, and your enduring hope from our Master Jesus the Anointed One in the sight of our God and Father. 1:4 We can plainly see God's selection of you, brothers and sisters, 1:5 because the good news from us came to you not only in word alone, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full assurance. And as you know, we were like that among you for your benefit.

1:6 You also imitated us and the Master by accepting the Word with the joy of the Holy Spirit in spite of great oppression. 1:7 In turn, you became models for all the believers in

Macedonia and Achaia. 1:8 Not only that, the Word of the Master has sounded out from you everywhere that your faith toward God has gone. So we really don't need you to tell us anything 1:9 because they all report the kind of effect we had on you, how you turned toward God and away from idols to be genuine living servants to God, 1:10 and how you wait for his Son from the heavens, whom he raised from the dead: Jesus, the One who rescues us from God's rage that will come.

Paul's example

2:1 For you are well aware, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not a wasted effort. 2:2 Although we were publicly humiliated and insulted in

Philippi, we came in the boldness of our God to relay his good news to you— with a lot of contention. 2:3 We didn't try to persuade you out of deception or impurity or fraud, 2:4 but in keeping with the test God put us under: to be trustworthy with the good news. So we do not speak in a way that pleases people, but as to the God who tests our hearts.

2:5 As you well know, at no time did we ever use flattery or act greedily— God is our witness. 2:6 Neither did we try to get people to exalt us; not you or anyone else. We could have been a burden to you as Ambassadors of the Anointed One, 2:7 but instead we were kind among you, because a nurse should comfort her own children. 2:8

Being so thoroughly intertwined with you, we delight to share with you not only the good news of God but also our own souls, because you became so dear to us.

2:9 For you remember, brothers and sisters, our hard work night and day so we would not be a burden to any of you. We proclaimed the good news of God to you, 2:10 and both you and God are witnesses to the fact of how innocent and just and sinless we were to you believers. 2:11 And you also know that we treated each of you as parents treat their own children, 2:12 consoling and comforting and affirming you, so that you would live in a way worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom and majesty. 2:13 And that is the reason we

also thank God continually, because you accepted the Word of God you heard from us— not as that of people but as it truly is, the Word of God, which is active in you who believe.

The Congregation's example in persecution

2:14 You, brothers and sisters, imitated God's Congregation of the Anointed One in Judea, for you suffered just as they did— from their own fellow citizens. 2:15 Theirs killed the Master Jesus and the prophets, and they banished us. They do not please God and are against everyone, 2:16 forbidding us to speak to the other nations so they can be saved. They are

piling up their sins, but God's anger will overtake them in the end.

Paul's wish to see them in person

2:17 Brothers and sisters, we were torn away from you for a short time— but only physically— so we are all the more intent upon seeing your faces again. 2:18 We sincerely wanted to visit you once or twice (especially I, Paul), but the Adversary blocked us. 2:19 Who else is our hope or joy or badge of honor, if not you standing in the presence of our Master Jesus? 2:20 Yes, you are our honor and joy!

3:1 So when we couldn't stand it any longer, we thought it best to be left

alone in Athens 3:2 and send Timothy, our brother and co-worker for God, to strengthen you in the good news of the Anointed One and console you in your faith. 3:3 In this way no one will be disturbed over these hardships, because as you know, this is our calling. 3:4 Even while we were with you we predicted that we were about to be oppressed, and so it happened, as you are well aware.

Timothy's encouraging report

3:5 So I just had to send someone to find out about your faith, in case somehow the Intimidator had gotten to you and all our efforts had come to nothing. 3:6 Yet now Timothy has

returned to us from you, and he brings us the good news of your faith and love, and that you have fond memories of us and long to see us as much as we long to see you. 3:7 So, brothers and sisters, because of this we are relieved about you through all our needs and hardships, by means of your faith. 3:8 We can breathe a sigh of relief now that we know you stand firm with the Master. 3:9 How can we possibly thank God or repay him for you, or for all the joy we have because of you? 3:10 Night and day we plead with God, begging to see your faces again and to correct any deficiencies in your faith.

3:11 Now may our God and Father and our Master Jesus guide us on a path to you! 3:12 May the Master keep

increasing your love for each other till it overflows to everyone else too, just like our love to you. 3:13 May he firmly set your hearts in pure holiness before our God and Father, in the presence of our Master Jesus, with all his holy ones, absolutely!

The Christian life

4:1 As for the rest of you, brothers and sisters, we plead with you on behalf of Master Jesus, that you continue to practice what we told you about pleasing God, until it overflows in you. 4:2 You are well aware of the responsibilities we gave you through Master Jesus; 4:3 what God wants from you is holiness. You are to stay away from promiscuity, 4:4 being aware that

each of you must get control over every aspect of your life so that you are holy and honorable, 4:5 instead of being driven by passion like the other nations who don't know God. 4:6 And don't take advantage of others in this matter, because the Master is the Avenger; we told you about all this before and certify it as true. 4:7 Since God does not call us to impurity but holy living, 4:8 it surely follows that the one who rejects this is not rejecting people but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

4:9 Now we have no need to write to you about love for the believers there, for you yourselves are instructed in this by God. 4:10 Not only that, but you also have this love toward all the believers in Macedonia. Yet we must plead with

you, sisters and brothers, to reach even higher. 4:11 Strive for a quiet life, minding your own business and doing your own work, just as we directed you. 4:12 Then you will have a good reputation with outsiders and will lack nothing.

Our future reuniting with believers who have died

4:13 Now brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who have died, so that you do not grieve like the rest who have no hope. 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and then rose, so also will God raise the dead through Jesus. 4:15 We tell you this by the Word of the Master, that we who are alive when the Master

appears will not be in line in front of those who have died. 4:16 For the Master himself will descend from heaven with the loud command of the Ruling Angel and the trumpet of God. Those who were united with the Anointed One when they died will rise first, 4:17 and then we who are alive will be snatched away at the same time with them in the clouds, to meet the Master in the air. Then we will always be together with the Master. 4:18 So comfort each other with these words.

The Day of the Master

5:1 Sisters and brothers, we really don't need to write to you about times and seasons, 5:2 because you already know that the Day of the Master comes like a

thief in the night. 5:3 When they say “We have peace and security,” sudden ruin will come upon them like labor pains and they will not escape. 5:4 But you, on the other hand, are not in the dark, that this Day should surprise you like a thief. 5:5 You are all of the light and the daytime, not the darkness and the night.

5:6 So don’t fall asleep like the rest but watch and be sensible. 5:7 Those who fall asleep do so at nighttime, and the drunks get drunk at night; 5:8 but we are of the day and must be sensible, putting on the body armor of faith and love, and the helmet of the hope of salvation. 5:9 Because God did not appoint us to suffer his anger but to acquire salvation by means of our Master Jesus the

Anointed One 5:10 who died for our sakes, so that whether we are alert or falling asleep we will live together with him. 5:11 So comfort each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

Final advice

5:12 Now we are asking you, brothers and sisters, to notice those who labor among you, provide for you , protect you, and warn you concerning the Master. 5:13 Esteem them highly in love for their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

5:14 Sisters and brothers, we plead with you to warn the disorderly, encourage the disillusioned, shield the weak, and

be patient with everyone. 5:15 See to it that people don’t seek revenge but always chase after what is good for one and all. 5:16 Always be joyful; 5:17 pray continually; 5:18 be thankful in everything, because this is God’s will for you as followers of Anointed Jesus. 5:19 Do not squelch the Spirit; 5:20 do not scorn prophecies 5:21 but test everything and keep the best. 5:22 Stay far from even the slightest hint of evil.

Final greetings

5:23 Now may the God of Peace himself make you completely holy and free in body, soul, and spirit. May you be kept blameless in the presence of our Master Jesus the Anointed One. 5:24

The One who calls you is faithful to do this.

5:25 Brothers and sisters, pray for us too. 5:26 Greet the other believers warmly. 5:27 I hold you to the solemn responsibility of reading this letter to all the sisters and brothers. 5:28 May the favor of our Master Jesus the Anointed One be with you all.

2 Thessalonians

Greeting

1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the Congregation in Thessalonica, united with God the Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One:

1:2 Favor and peace to you from God our Father and Master Jesus the Anointed One!

Gratitude and prayer

1:3 It is fitting that we should always be thanking God for you, sisters and brothers, seeing that your faith is flourishing and your love for each other is increasing. 1:4 We are so proud of you among the Congregations of God, because of your endurance and faith through the persecutions and suffering you bear. 1:5 This displays the perfect justice of God, that you were considered worthy of the kingdom of God for which you suffer, 1:6 because he will repay those who are oppressing you. 1:7 We and you who are being oppressed will be relieved when Master Jesus is revealed from heaven with his powerful angels.

1:8 He will deal out a blazing fire of vengeance to those who don’t know

God and who do not heed the good news of our Master Jesus. 1:9 They will have earned endless ruin from the presence of the Master and from his majestic strength, 1:10 when he comes on that Day to be honored by his holy ones and held in awe by all the believers who accepted our testimony. 1:11 We always pray for you about this, so that you are counted worthy of our God's calling and fulfill every benefit of goodness and powerful work of faith. 1:12 Then the Name of our Master Jesus will be honored in you, and you in him, according to the favor of our God and Master Jesus the Anointed One.

The Departure, the Restrainer, and the Lawless

One

2:1 Now, brothers and sisters, concerning the coming of our Master Jesus the Anointed One and our gathering together with him: 2:2 Please do not be easily disturbed or alarmed in your minds or spirits, because no word or letter has come from us saying that the Day of the Master is already here. 2:3 Don’t let anyone fool you by any means, because that won’t happen until after the Departure, and then the Lawless One, the Destroyer, will be revealed. 2:4 He opposes everything and elevates himself over every god or object of worship, even to the point of seating himself in the Temple of God and proclaiming himself God. 2:5 You

have forgotten that I told you these things when I was with you.

2:6 And you know what is holding him back for now, so that he is only revealed in his time. 2:7 For although the secret of lawlessness is already in operation, it is only after the Restrainer is taken out of the way 2:8 that the Lawless One will be revealed. This is the one the Master Jesus will do away with by the breath of his mouth, and will neutralize when he appears at his arrival. 2:9 He will come when the Adversary is at the height of his power, which he held by means of signs and fake miracles and seduction, 2:10 and every kind of wickedness to delude those who are dying, because they would not love the truth that would save

them. 2:11 As a result, God will send them down the wrong path so they will believe the lie, 2:12 and in this way all who rejected the truth and celebrated injustice will be condemned.

Stand firm in truth

2:13 Now we should always thank God for you, sisters and brothers loved by the Master, because God favored you as the first harvest to come into salvation via the Holy Spirit, in true faith. 2:14 And he called you through our good news so you would obtain the favor of our Master Jesus the Anointed One. 2:15 So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold to the traditions you were taught, whether by word or letter from us.

2:16 Now may our Master Jesus the Anointed One himself, and our God and Father who loves us and graciously gives us eternal comfort and a good hope, 2:17 soothe your hearts and set you firmly in every good action and word.

Prayer request

3:1 Oh, and pray for us, sisters and brothers, so that the Word of the Master may pick up speed and be exalted, just as it has with you, 3:2 and that we are rescued from disgusting and evil people since not everyone is of the faith. 3:3 Yet the Master is faithful to establish you and guard you from the evil one. 3:4 We have confidence in the Master concerning you, that you will continue

doing what we solemnly commission you to do. 3:5 May the Master guide your hearts toward the love of God and the endurance of the Anointed One.

Caution against freeloaders and troublemakers

3:6 Now we are solemnly commissioning you, sisters and brothers, in the Name of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, to separate yourselves from every believer who has a habit of slacking and not staying with the tradition they accepted from us. 3:7 For you know you are to imitate us, and we were not lazy among you. 3:8 Neither did we accept handouts from anyone, but worked very hard night and day so we would not be a burden to any

of you. 3:9 And it isn’t as though we don’t have the right, but that we wanted to be a model for you to follow. 3:10 Even while we were still with you, we made the rule that if anyone refuses to work then they should go hungry. 3:11 For we are hearing that some among you are not being busy, but busybodies. 3:12 So we insist, and appeal by Master Jesus the Anointed One, that they mind their own business and earn their own keep.

3:13 Don’t give up doing the right things, brothers and sisters. 3:14 If anyone does not heed this word we’ve written to you, take note of them and do not associate with them so they’ll be ashamed. 3:15 Yet don’t treat them as an enemy but warn them as a believer.

Final greetings

3:16 Now may the Master of Peace give you peace in everything and in every way; may the Master be with you all.
3:17 This greeting is in my (Paul's) own hand, which is how I sign all my letters.
3:18 May the favor of our Master Jesus the Anointed One be with all of you.

1 Timothy

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an Ambassador of Jesus the Anointed One, according to the divine command of God our Savior and Master Jesus the Anointed One, our hope,

1:2 To Timothy, a genuine member of the faith:

Favor, compassion, and peace from God the Father and Anointed Jesus our master.

Stand against false teachers

1:3 Just as I encouraged you when we were going into Macedonia, stay in Ephesus in order to direct some of them not to spread contrary teachings, 1:4 and to stop being obsessed with made-up stories and never-ending genealogies. These lead to uncertainty instead of trust in the orderly planning of God. 1:5 The intended outcome of this directive is love from a clean heart, a good conscience, and a genuine faith

1:6 Some have gone off-course from this into empty rhetoric, 1:7 determined to be respected teachers of the law but having no idea what they're talking about and so strongly asserting. 1:8 Now of course the law is fine if it's

handled properly. 1:9 But we need to keep in mind that it isn’t laid down for decent people but for the lawless and rebellious, the irreverent and errant, those who malign and profane, who would murder even their own parents, 1:10 the promiscuous, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and anything else that is against wholesome teaching. 1:11 This is in keeping with the good news with which I was entrusted, of the majestic and blessed God.

Gratitude for salvation

1:12 I am grateful to the one empowering me— our Master Jesus the Anointed One— for considering me trustworthy enough to be placed into his service. 1:13 I used to be irreverent; I

persecuted and was arrogant. But I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 1:14 Yet the favor of our Master abounded with the faith and love that are in Anointed Jesus.

1:15 This saying is trustworthy and acceptable in every way: Jesus came into the world to save sinners— of which I am the supreme example. 1:16 But I was shown mercy so that in me, the supreme example, Jesus the Anointed One could demonstrate his limitless patience, as a prototype of those who would put their trust in him for eternal life. 1:17 So to the King of the Ages, the immortal, invisible, and only God, let there be the greatest honor for ever and ever, absolutely!

More instructions about false teachers

1:18 Timothy, my child, here is the charge I lay before you: In accordance with the prior prophecies pronounced over you, be a good soldier in this war. 1:19 Do this with faithfulness and a clean conscience— from which some have shoved off and shipwrecked, as far as the faith is concerned. 1:20 Two such people are Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I handed over to the Adversary to be schooled not to slander.

Praying for rulers

2:1 So I am advocating above all that serious requests, prayers,

intercessions, and thanks are done for all people, 2:2 especially for kings and those in positions of influence so that we can conduct tranquil and respectable lives, with the utmost devotion and dignity. 2:3 This is best and welcome in the sight of God our Savior, 2:4 who intends for all people to be saved and to come to know the truth. 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and people: the person Anointed Jesus, 2:6 who gave himself as the ransom payment for all, and as a testimony at the right time. 2:7 And I tell you in all sincerity that I was appointed to this as an announcer and Ambassador, a true and faithful teacher of the other nations.

Addressing problems in Ephesus

2:8 It would be nice if the men in every place could manage to pray with clean lives and without argument. 2:9 The same goes for the women, too. I'd like them to dress themselves tastefully and decently, with modesty and good sense; not with fancy hair or expensive jewelry and clothing, 2:10 but as is fitting for women who are doing the good work of professors for converts to Judaism.

"Professors for converts to Judaism" is the proper meaning in the Greek; ref. Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias, J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, Cambridge Philological Society Supp. Vol. 12, 1987, p. 50.

A new believer must not teach

2:11 That woman must learn, and she must do so in a respectful and supportive manner. 2:12 At this time I am not even conferring teaching privileges on the woman, much less allowing her to treat the man abusively; she must be still.

The term “treat abusively” was chosen for the rare Greek word in the context of the Artemis fertility cult, wherein a priestess would teach men and then impart divine wisdom to them through intercourse; ref. Ancient Heresies by Catherine C. Kroeger.

2:13 For Adam was formed first and Eve afterward, 2:14 and Adam was not

deceived. But this woman, being completely fooled, has sinned.

The Greek grammar indicates that this woman was still sinning at the time of Paul's writing. This is a vital key to understanding the passage.

2:15 Even so, she will be restored by the mentoring, as long as they remain in faith and love and holiness, with good sense.

Guardians and attendants

3:1 This saying is trustworthy: Whoever wants to guard has a lofty aspiration. 3:2 The guardian must be blameless, faithful in marriage, sober, sensible, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach, 3:3 not a drunkard or a brawler but peaceable, and not greedy. 3:4 They

must also watch over and provide well for their own household, with children who are supportive and dignified, 3:5 for if they don't know how to care for their own home, how would they take care of God's Congregation? 3:6 And they can't be a novice, otherwise they might become conceited and come under the Slanderer's judgment. 3:7 Further, they must have a good reputation with outsiders so that they don't fall into

disgrace, the trap of the Slanderer.

The emphasis is on character, not authority, and they must already have attained a high level of spiritual maturity and unsoiled reputation before serving in this capacity. In this society, the requirement for men to be faithful to their wives was especially unusual. This list of qualifications is restrictive on the basis of character and not societal class, ethnicity, gender, or any other factor. The same is then applied to attendants

3:8 Likewise, attendants must be dignified, not be two-faced, not given to excessive drinking, and not be profiteers, 3:9 holding to the secret of the faith in good conscience. 3:10 These must first be tested; only after they have

been proved to be above reproach can they serve. 3:11 (The same goes also for the women; they are to be dignified, not slanderers, sober, and trustworthy in everything.) 3:12 The attendants must be faithful in marriage, watching over their children and households well. 3:13 Those who serve well earn a high rank and great boldness in the faith of Anointed Jesus.

The purpose for the letter

3:14 I am writing these things to you though I expect to come to see you soon. 3:15 But if I don't, this will guide you as to how you must conduct yourself in God's household, which is the Congregation of the living God, the base and pillar of truth. 3:16 Surely this

devout secret is profound: He was revealed in flesh, justified in spirit, examined by angels, heralded among the other nations, believed in the world, and taken up in honor.

Demonic teachers

4:1 But the Spirit is telling us plainly that in later times some will reject the faith, listening to straying spirits and the teachings of demons. 4:2 Their consciences will have been cauterized by twisted lies, 4:3 such as forbidding marriage and abstaining from certain foods that God created to be eaten with gratitude by those who are faithful and know the truth. 4:4 But everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is accepted with gratitude,

4:5 because it is consecrated through
the word of God and prayer.

Stay focused

4:6 By recommending these things to
fellow believers you will be a good
attendant of Jesus the Anointed One,
nourishing them by means of the
sayings of the faith and the good
teaching that you have continued to
follow closely. 4:7 But have nothing to
do with silly old fables; instead, go into
training for devoutness. 4:8 For while
physical exercise is of some small
benefit, devoutness is helpful for
everything, having promise for both this
life and the one to come. 4:9 This saying
is trustworthy and acceptable in every
way, 4:10 because this is what we toil

and contend for, seeing that we have put our confidence in the living God who is the savior of all people, especially the faithful.

4:11 Direct and teach these things, 4:12 and let no one put you down for your youth. Instead, be a model of trustworthiness in your speech, behavior, love, faith, and holiness. 4:13 Until I arrive, focus on reading, intercession, and teaching. 4:14 And do not neglect the gift in you that was given by means of prophecies when the elders dedicated you. 4:15 Cultivate all these things and be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be obvious to everyone. 4:16 Watch what you're doing and be persistent in this instruction, for

in this way you will preserve both yourself and those who hear you.

Treatment of widows, servants, and the elderly

5:1 Do not sharply reprimand an older man but encourage him as a father, the younger men as brothers, 5:2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters; do all of this with absolute propriety.

5:3 Honor those who are widows in the fullest sense of the word. 5:4 Now if a widow has children or grandchildren, those must do their duty above all and repay what is due to their parents or grandparents, because this is acceptable to God. 5:5 But the true

widow, being without support of any kind, is relying on God and praying fervently night and day. 5:6 On the other hand, the self-indulgent one is dead on her feet. 5:7 Direct all of these things so that they may be blameless. 5:8 But if anyone fails to care for their own, especially those living in their own household, they have renounced the faith and are worse than an unbeliever.

5:9 Don’t enroll any widow under the age of sixty or who has been married more than once.

since she would have family to support her

5:10 She must have a good reputation for how she raised children, being hospitable, serving the other believers, giving aid to the oppressed, and every

good deed that follows from that. 5:11 Decline younger widows, because their desire to remarry may overcome their pledge to the Anointed One 5:12 to remain unmarried. 5:13 On top of that, some develop the habit of going from house to house, being not only idle but gossipy and meddling and saying things they shouldn't. 5:14 So I'd like the younger ones to marry, raise a family, and take control over their household, so that they don't give critics any ground to stand on. 5:15 Some of these critics have already turned to follow the Adversary. 5:16 If any believing woman is related to widows, she should support them instead of burdening the Congregation with them.

High standards for elders

5:17 The elders who have protected and provided well are worthy of double honor, especially those who have done the work of teaching the Word. 5:18 As the Writing says, “Do not muzzle the ox threshing grain,” and “The worker deserves compensation.” 5:19 Don’t listen to a charge against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses, 5:20 but if the charges are true, the elder must be held up as a public example in order to instill fear in the others. 5:21 I solemnly declare, in the presence of God and Anointed Jesus and the chosen angels, that you watch over these things without bias and without a hint of partiality. 5:22 And stop being so quick to dedicate people, so that you do not take part in the sins of others; watch yourself and stay holy.

Some general advice

5:23 Stop drinking the water, and take some wine for your frequent urination problem.

5:24 Some people's sins are so obvious they practically convict them before the trial, while other people's are only revealed later. 5:25 Likewise, some good deeds are obvious, while others can't be hidden for long.

6:1 Whoever is under the burden of slavery is to consider their master worthy of respect, so that the reputation of God and the Teaching may not be slandered. 6:2 But if the master is a believer, they must not treat them with any less respect. In fact, they should

serve them all the more since they are a dear fellow believer, and both will benefit.

Caution against subversives and materialism

6:3 Teach and encourage these things. If anyone teaches otherwise, and does not come to you with the healthy sayings of our Master Jesus the Anointed One according to godly instruction, 6:4 they are conceited and skilled in nothing. They are consumed with investigations and verbal wars, which lead to envy, strife, slander, suspicion, 6:5 and malicious friction. They've lost their minds and are devoid of the truth, seeing devoutness as a way to make a profit. 6:6 But it is of

great profit to have independent wealth together with devoutness, 6:7 because none of us brought anything into the world, and we can’t take anything out. 6:8 Be content to have food and clothing. 6:9 Now those who are determined to get rich are wandering into a trial and a trap and into many unwise and harmful cravings, which are sinking some people into ruin and devastation. 6:10 Desire for wealth is the root of everything evil, and some such people have wandered from the faith and caused themselves much suffering.

The discipline required of Timothy

6:11 But since you belong to God, run away from these things and toward justice, devoutness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. 6:12 Fight for the best in the contest of faith, and seize the eternal life into which you were called, along with the good confession you made in front of many witnesses. 6:13 I am directing you in the sight of God, the one sustaining all life, and of Anointed Jesus who made the same good confession before Pontius Pilate, 6:14 to guard this injunction. Remain unblemished and blameless until the sudden return of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, 6:15 who will appear at the right time. He is the only Power, the King of kings and Master of masters, 6:16 the only immortal one living in unapproachable light, whom no

one has seen or is able to see. To him belong absolute honor and mighty rule!

6:17 As for those who are rich in this age, direct them to not be elitist. They are to stop trusting in uncertain riches instead of God, the one richly supplying everything to us for our enjoyment. 6:18 They must be good, be rich in good deeds, and share generously. 6:19 Then they will be storing up for themselves the best foundation for what is to come, acquiring real life.

6:20 Timothy, protect the deposit entrusted to you. Turn aside from those profane and empty words, and the opposition from what is falsely called “knowledge,”

“Knowledge” here is an obvious reference Gnosticism.

6:21 which some have professed so authoritatively. They have missed the mark concerning the faith.

May you all enjoy God’s favor.

2 Timothy

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an Ambassador of Anointed Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of life in Anointed Jesus,

1:2 To my dear child Timothy:

Favor, compassion, and peace from God the Father and Anointed Jesus our Master.

Gratitude and encouragement

1:3 I am grateful to God, to whom I offer divine service from a clear conscience as my ancestors did, as I continually remember you in my impassioned prayers night and day. 1:4 I long to see you again as I recall your tears, so I can be filled with joy. 1:5 I am reminded of your genuine faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I’m sure still lives in you.

1:6 For this reason, I am reminding you to rekindle the gift of God that you have because I dedicated you. 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. 1:8 So then, may you not be ashamed of the testimony of our Master, nor of me, his captive. Instead, by means of the power of God, endure

the suffering that is to the benefit of the good news. 1:9 He is the one who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of anything we did, but because of his own proposal and the favor given to us in Anointed Jesus before the beginning of time.

1:10 This favor is about to be revealed at the sudden appearance of our Savior Jesus the Anointed One, who neutralized death while illuminating life and immortality through the good news. 1:11 This is what I was appointed to as a herald and Ambassador and teacher, 1:12 and the reason I am experiencing these things. But I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have trusted, and I am convinced that he has the power to guard the deposit entrusted to

me until that day.

“the sudden appearance of our savior Jesus.”

1:13 Keep to the pattern of healthy sayings you’ve heard from me, in trust and love in the anointing of Jesus. 1:14 Guard the good deposit by means of the Holy Spirit that lives in us.

Desertion and loyalty

1:15 As you know, everyone in the province of Asia turned on me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 1:16 But may the Master have compassion on the household of Onesiphorus, since he refreshed me on many occasions and was not ashamed of my confinement. 1:17 In fact, when he came to Rome he searched for me

diligently until he found me. 1:18 May the Master grant compassion on that day! And you are well aware of all his service in Ephesus.

Analogies of soldiers and athletes

2:1 You then, my child, be empowered by the favor of Anointed Jesus. 2:2 And whatever you heard from me through many witnesses, present it as evidence to trustworthy people who will be competent to teach others. 2:3 Participate in suffering as a good warrior of Anointed Jesus. 2:4 No soldier gets entangled with the everyday business of life but pleases their recruiter. 2:5 Or if anyone competes in athletics, they won’t win

the prize if they didn't compete according to the rules. 2:6 The hard-working farmer gets a share of the produce. 2:7 Grasp what I'm saying, for the Master will give you complete understanding in all this.

2:8 Remember Jesus the Anointed One, the one who was raised from the dead, of the lineage of David, according to my good news. 2:9 In this I am suffering to the point of being locked up like a criminal— though the Word of God is not locked up! 2:10 I endure it all for the sake of the Chosen, that they too might happen upon the eternal, honorable salvation in Anointed Jesus. 2:11 This saying is trustworthy: If we died together we will live together; 2:12 if we endure we will reign together; if we

renounce him he will renounce us; 2:13 if we are not faithful he remains faithful, because he cannot renounce himself.

Avoiding distractions and naming false teachers

2:14 Gently remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them before God not to engage in a war of words. This is good for nothing; in fact, it's catastrophic for those who hear it. 2:15 Make every effort to prove yourself to God as having passed the test, an unashamed worker who cuts a straight path through the Word of Truth. 2:16 But avoid irreverent, empty chatter, because it gets progressively worse, 2:17 spreading like gangrene. Examples of this are Hymeneus and Philetos, 2:18

who have completely missed the mark as far as truth is concerned. They say that the final resurrection has already happened, undermining the faith of some. 2:19 But the foundation of God stands solid and is sealed with this: “The Master knew his own,” and “Let all who claim the name of the Master separate themselves from injustice.”

Strive to be useful and a good role model

2:20 In a large house there are not only containers of gold and silver, but also those of wood and clay; some are of great worth while others are worthless. 2:21 So whoever purges themselves from these things will be a container of great worth, having been consecrated

and useful to the owner, and prepared for all kinds of good activities.

2:22 So run away from the lure of young radicals, but toward justice, faith, love, and peace, right along with those who call upon the Master from a clean heart.
2:23 Avoid stupid and ignorant investigations which only spawn fights.
2:24 A servant of the Master doesn't need to fight, but is kind toward all, qualified to teach, and thick-skinned.
2:25 Train them with gentleness, because God may grant that these who resist will turn to him and recognize the truth. 2:26 Then they will come to their senses out from the trap of the Slanderer, who had captured them to do his bidding.

The Last Days

3:1 But know this, that in the final days there will be difficult times. 3:2 People will be selfish, stingy, fake, contemptuous, disrespectful of their parents, incorrigible, ungrateful, improper, 3:3 cold-blooded, truce-breakers, slanderers, out of control, savage, haters of all that is good, 3:4 traitors, reckless, conceited, and lovers of pleasure instead of God.

3:5 They will have the appearance of devoutness but renounce its power; turn away from such people! 3:6 They are the kind who worm their way into people's homes and take prisoner those who are gullible enough to follow anyone; they are the kind who are

loaded down with many sins and are
led around by all kinds of desires; 3:7
though they keep on learning they are
never able to understand the truth. 3:8
Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed
Moses, so also these people oppose
the truth; their minds are ruined and
they are disqualified as far as the faith
is concerned. 3:9 But they will never
make any progress, and their
senselessness will be as obvious as it
was for those two.

3:10 You, on the other hand, have
continued to closely follow me: my
instruction, my methods, my intentions,
my faith, my great patience, my love,
my endurance, 3:11 my trials, and the
hardships I experienced in Antioch and
Iconium and Lystra. Such trials I have

had to endure! But the Master pulled me through them all. 3:12 And everyone who chooses to live devoutly in Anointed Jesus will be harassed in the same way, 3:13 while evil people and sorcerers will get worse and worse, misleading and being misled.

More instructions for Timothy

3:14 But as for you, hold tightly to what you've learned and put your faith in, considering from whom you learned. 3:15 Practically from infancy you've been learning the sacred Writings, which are able to make you wise to the salvation that is found in Anointed Jesus. 3:16 All the Writings are brought to life by God, and are useful for

instruction, as evidence, for correction, and for teaching justice, 3:17 so that those who belong to God will be fully equipped for every good activity.

4:1 I solemnly charge you before God and Anointed Jesus— the one who is about to judge the living and the dead— and in view of his sudden appearance and kingdom: 4:2 Proclaim the Word; stay at your post, whether it's convenient or not; refute, rebuke, encourage, and teach with the utmost patience. 4:3 For the time will come when they will no longer tolerate sound instruction but will collect teachers who tell them only what they want to hear; 4:4 in fact, they'll turn away from truth and toward fables.

4:5 But you must be clear-headed in everything. Put up with suffering, and be fully confident in your task of spreading the good news. 4:6 For I am already being poured out like an offering and the time of my departure is at hand. 4:7 I have played my best game and finished the race; I have protected the faith. 4:8 At last, the Righteousness Award is reserved for me, which the Master, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day… and not only to me, but also to all who eagerly anticipate his sudden appearance.

Personal business

4:9 Try your best to come to me quickly, 4:10 because Demas loved this world

and deserted me. He went into Thessalonica, Crescens went into Galatia, and Titus went into Dalmatia. 4:11 Luke is the only one with me. Get Mark to go with you, because I could use his help in this service. 4:12 I sent Tychicus into Ephesus. 4:13 Oh, and bring the coat I left behind with Carpas in Troas, along with the scrolls, and especially the set of parchments.

4:14 Alexander the coppersmith caused me a lot of harm; the Master will pay him back for what he did! 4:15 Be on your guard against him, because he was very much opposed to our words. 4:16 At my first defense not one person stood beside me; they all deserted me. But may it not be charged against them, 4:17 because the Master stood with me

and empowered me. In this way the proclamation may be fully accomplished through me, and all the other nations may hear. I escaped from the lion’s mouth! 4:18 The Master will get me through all the wiles of the evil one and deliver me into his heavenly kingdom. All honor through the ages truly belongs to him!

Final greetings

4:19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. 4:20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, but I left Trophimus in Miletus because he was ill. 4:21 Try your best to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and

sisters. 4:22 May the Master be with your spirit, and grant favor to you all.

Titus

Greeting

1:1 Paul, servant of God and
Ambassador of Jesus the Anointed
One, according to the faith of God's
chosen ones, and to the devoutness of
the realization of the truth, 1:2 on the
hope of ageless life which God, who
does not lie, made apparent in ages
past. 1:3 At the chosen time I was
considered trustworthy to announce his
Word, according to the divine command
of our Savior God.

1:4 To Titus, a genuine member of our
common faith: Favor and peace to you
from God our father and Anointed
Jesus our Savior.

Appointing elders

1:5 I left you in Crete to tie up loose
ends, namely the appointing of elders in
each city, based on the criteria I
specified: 1:6 They must above
reproach, faithful to their spouse, with
children who are believers who cannot
be accused of being wild or
disrespectful. 1:7 A guardian has to be a
manager for God who is above
reproach, not self-centered, short-
fused, given to addictions, violent, or
unethical. 1:8 Instead, they should be
hospitable, seeking the good, sensible,

fair, pure, and self-controlled. 1:9 They must be reliable for staying faithful to the right teachings so they can expose false ones, while encouraging the teaching of that which is healthy.

The Judaizers must be contained

1:10 For there are many insubordinate babblers and impostors, especially those pushing circumcision. 1:11 They must be corralled because they subvert entire households and teach legalism as scams to make money. 1:12 One of their own prophets has even said, “Cretans are always liars, dangerous animals, lazy bellies.” 1:13 And that’s true! So expose them decisively, that they may be made healthy in the faith,

1:14 not listening to Judaic myths and the rules of people who turn from the truth. 1:15 Everything is clean to those who are clean, but nothing is clean to those whose mind and conscience is tainted. 1:16 They claim they have a familiarity with God, yet by their actions they deny it; they are repulsive and incorrigible, and good for nothing.

Role models

2:1 Here is what you need to say to ensure beneficial teaching: 2:2 Male elders must be sober, dignified, and sensible, with a completely healthy faith, love, and endurance. 2:3 The same goes for the female elders. They must conduct themselves in a manner worthy of their priestly honor— not

slanderers or drunks but teachers of what is right. 2:4 Then they can put some sense into the new women, teaching them to love their husbands and children, 2:5 to be wise and holy, to be responsible running their homes, to be good, and to align themselves with their own husbands. This way no one will be able to give the Word of God a bad name. 2:6 The same goes for the new men; encourage them to be wise. 2:7 In everything you do, be the ideal model. Be above reproach in your teaching, and dignified 2:8 and pure in your words. That way whoever is opposing you will be ashamed, because they will have nothing bad to say about us.

Slaves

2:9 Slaves must align themselves with their owners in everything: pleasing, agreeing, 2:10 not embezzling. Instead, they must exhibit good faith in everything, so that the teaching of God our Savior may be made attractive in every way. 2:11 For the saving favor of God suddenly made its appearance to all people, 2:12 training us to renounce irreverence and worldly cravings, so that we should live sensibly, justly, and devoutly in the current age. 2:13 We eagerly anticipate the sudden, majestic appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus the Anointed One, 2:14 who gave himself for our sakes to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to cleanse for himself people who are eager to do good deeds.

General instructions

2:15 Tell them about these things;
encourage and refute with divine
sanction. Let no one slight you.

3:1 Gently remind them to be good
citizens, to be ready to do all kinds of
good deeds, 3:2 to not slander, and to
be peaceable, moderate, and gentle to
all people.

3:3 We too were once foolish and
incorrigible, being deceived and
enslaved to various desires and
gratifications. We were malicious and
envious and hateful to each other. 3:4
But when our Savior God's kindness
and compassion for people appeared,
3:5 he saved us— not because of

anything we did right, but according to his mercy. He saved us by bathing us in the rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 3:6 which he poured out on us generously through our Savior Jesus the Anointed One. 3:7 Being cleared of all charges by that favor, we can become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 3:8 You can count on that!

I want you to insist upon these things, so that those who have trusted in God may lead the way when it comes to good deeds. This is good and beneficial for the people. 3:9 Yet keep your distance from ridiculous speculation and genealogies, and tension and fighting about the law; they are worthless and pointless. 3:10 Reject a divisive person after two warnings. 3:11

You can be sure that they have excluded themselves and are in error; they are self-condemned.

Final instructions

3:12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to visit me in Nicopolis, because I have decided to stay there this winter. 3:13 Send out Zenas the lawyer and Apollos with whatever they need. 3:14 Our people need to learn to put good deeds into practice so that they won’t be unproductive. 3:15 All those with me greet you; please greet our friends in the faith. Favor be with you all.

Philemon

1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Anointed Jesus,
and brother Timothy,

To Philemon our dear co-worker, 1:2 to
sister Apphia, to Archippus our fellow
soldier, and to the Congregation
meeting at your home:

1:3 Favor and peace to you from God
our Father and Master Jesus the
Anointed One.

Gratitude and prayer

1:4 I always thank my God, mentioning
you when I pray, 1:5 because I hear

about the love and faith you have toward Master Jesus and all the holy ones, 1:6 so that the fellowship of your faith may become energized in the realization of every good thing we have united with the Anointed One. 1:7 I was very happy and comforted to see that your love has soothed the holy ones, brother!

A plea for restoration

1:8 I could boldly instruct with authority from the Anointed One as to what is proper. 1:9 But instead I am asking you out of love, as Paul the old man and prisoner of Anointed Jesus, 1:10 concerning Onesimus, the “child” I “gave birth to” here in prison. 1:11 He was once useless to you, but now he is

useful to both of us. 1:12 I have sent this one who is so close to me back to you, 1:13 though I really would prefer to have him stay here in my service to the good news. 1:14 But I don't want to do anything without your input, so you can do the right thing voluntarily and not out of compulsion. 1:15 Who knows but that he was separated from you for a short time so that you could have him back "with interest" for eternity— 1:16 no longer as a servant but much more— as a dear brother to me and most of all to you; and not only a brother in the flesh but also of the Master.

1:17 So if you consider me your close friend, take him back as you would me. 1:18 And if he has harmed you or owes you anything, put it on my account. 1:19

I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will pay it back— not to mention that you really owe me your whole self! 1:20 Yes, brother, then I will make a “profit” from you concerning the Master, so soothe my heart. 1:21 And I am confident that you will comply, since I wrote to you knowing you will do even more than I ask. 1:22 Oh, and prepare a room for me, because I expect that as a result of your prayers I will graciously be allowed to visit you.

1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Anointed Jesus, greets you, 1:24 along with my co-workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke. 1:25 May the favor of Master Jesus the Anointed One be with your spirit.

Hebrews

Jesus is the completion of God's Word

1:1 God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets little by little and in many ways in times past. 1:2 But in these last days he spoke to us through his Son, who has been named heir of everything, and through whom he made the ages. 1:3 He is the radiance of God's majesty and the exact likeness of his core being, besides holding everything up by his powerful pronouncement. After cleaning away

sins, he was seated at the right hand of the Highest Majesty, 1:4 making him far above the angels and inheriting a superior Name.

Jesus is superior to angels

1:5 After all, when did he ever say to an angel, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father,” or, “I will be his Father and he will be my Son”? 1:6 And when he brings his firstborn into his earthly home, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him!” 1:7 In fact, about the angels he says, “He makes his angels spirits and his officers flames of fire.” 1:8 But about the Son:

“God, your throne is eternal and the scepter of your kingdom is

righteousness. 1:9 You loved justice and hated lawlessness, and for that reason your God anointed you with the oil of great joy, far beyond your peers. 1:10 You laid down the foundations of the earth in the beginning, Master, and the heavens are the works of your hands. 1:11 They will be destroyed but you remain, and everything will wear out like an old coat. 1:12 Yes, you will roll them up like clothing, and change them like a coat. Yet you are constant, and your years will never run out."

1:13 Now to which of the angels has he ever declared, "Sit at my right till I make your enemies your footstool"? 1:14 Are they not all spiritual officials who are commissioned to serve those who are about to inherit salvation?

Pay attention to Jesus

2:1 Because of all that, we must listen more intently to what we've heard so we won't ever drift away. 2:2 For if the word spoken through angels was confirmed, and every sin and lapse was justly paid, 2:3 how would we escape if we neglected a salvation of such proportions, since it was spoken by means of the Master and confirmed to us by those who heard him? 2:4 God also gave confirming testimony to it with signs and miracles, along with various powers and distributions by the Holy Spirit as he saw fit.

Jesus stooped down to our level

2:5 He did not set up the inhabited world we're talking about for angels. 2:6 Instead, there is a place where someone has solemnly declared:

"What is a person, that you remember them, or what is a human being, that you notice them? 2:7 You made them somewhat inferior to angels but you honored and esteemed them. 2:8 You made everything under their feet to support them."

Nothing exists that isn't for their support, even though we don't see everything in support yet. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was temporarily made lower than the angels, honored and esteemed due to his suffering to the point of death, which by God's favor he

did for all our sakes. 2:10 And it was proper for God to do this, because everything comes from him and he leads many children into honor, perfecting the Originator of their salvation by means of suffering. 2:11 In this way, both the Holy One and the ones made holy are truly one. And because of that, he is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters.

2:12 He says, “I will announce your Name to my brothers and sisters; in the congregation I will sing festive songs to you,” 2:13 and again, “I will have confidence in him,” and, “Here I am, and the little ones God gave me.” 2:14 So just as the little ones are of flesh and blood, so also he came very close to sharing in the same, so that by means

of death he would throw down the one who holds the power of death (that is, the Accuser). 2:15 And he freed those who all their lives were enslavedby the fear of death.

2:16 It should go without saying that he isn’t doing this for angels but for the Descendant of Abraham. 2:17 This is why he had to be like his sisters and brothers in every way, so he could be a merciful and faithful high priest concerning things of God, being the sacrifice that takes away the people’s sins. 2:18 For since he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

Jesus is superior to Moses

3:1 This being the case, holy brothers and sisters who are associates of the heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Ambassador and High Priest of our covenant. 3:2 He is faithful to the One who made him, just as Moses was out of all those in God's house. 3:3 But this One is worthy of more honor than Moses, since the builder of the house is esteemed more highly than the house itself. 3:4 Every house is built by someone, but God built everything. 3:5 Certainly Moses was faithful in God's house as one who could stand on his own two feet, which I'll say more about later. 3:6 Yet the Anointed One is Son over all his house. And we are that house, if we hold tightly to our hope with boldness and celebration. 3:7 So the Holy Spirit says:

“If you hear his voice today, 3:8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion during the day of temptation in the wilderness. 3:9 That was where your ancestors tested me after knowing full well what I had done over those forty years. 3:10 So I was disgusted with that generation and said, ‘Their hearts are always wandering, yet they do not know my ways.’ 3:11 And in my indignation I swore, ‘They will never enter my rest!’”

Don’t miss the opportunity to be saved

3:12 So beware, brothers and sisters, against any one of you having a wicked and unbelieving heart, withdrawing from the living God. 3:13 Instead, encourage each other daily, as long as it is called

Today, so that none of you will be hardened and seduced into sinning. 3:14 For we have become associates with the Anointed One, if we hold tightly to our original hope to the end.

3:15 So while it is still called Today, if you hear his voice don’t harden your hearts as in the rebellion. 3:16 For not everyone Moses led out of Egypt rebelled against him. 3:17 But who was he disgusted with for forty years? Those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness. 3:18 And who did he swear would never enter his rest? The disbelieving. 3:19 Now we can see that they were not able to enter because of disbelief.

The Sabbath Rest

4:1 So then, beware that while the promise of entering his rest is left open you are not left out, 4:2 because we too have been brought the good news. But hearing the word did them no good because it was not combined with faith.

4:3 We who believe are the ones who enter into the rest, in accordance with what he has declared (“As I swore in my indignation, They will never enter my rest!”), although the work was done since the foundation of the world. 4:4 For he has declared somewhere about the seventh day: “And God stopped from all his work on the seventh day,” 4:5 and again, “They will never enter my rest!.” 4:6 So then, some remain to enter into it, but those who were formerly brought the good news did not enter

because of disbelief. 4:7 So God designated another day called Today. After a long time he said as before, through David, “If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts.” 4:8 For if Joshua gave them rest he would not have spoken about another Day. 4:9 Consequently, a Sabbath still remains for the people of God. 4:10 Whoever entered into his rest also stopped working, just as God stopped working. 4:11 So we should try to enter into that rest so that nobody falls into that same type of disbelief.

The Word of God

4:12 For the Word of God is alive and effective, and sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates to the point

of dividing soul from spirit, joints from marrow, and judges the heart's inner feelings and thoughts. 4:13 And there is no creature that can hide from him; everything is completely exposed to the eyes of him who gave us the Word.

Jesus our High Priest

4:14 So then, since we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the God-Man, we must hold tightly to our commitment. 4:15 For we do not have a Hgh Priest who can't sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way yet never sinned. 4:16 Because of that, we can boldly approach the throne of favor, so we may receive mercy and find favor for help at just the right time.

5:1 For every high priest is selected out from other people, and appointed on their behalf to present gifts to God and sacrifices to cover sins. 5:2 They are able to be gentle with the ignorant and wandering, because they too are weak. 5:3 That is why they must offer sacrifices both for themselves and the people.

5:4 No one takes this honor upon themselves but has to be called by God; this even applied to Aaron. 5:5 Not even the Anointed One appointed himself Hgh Priest, but the One said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father,” 5:6 and in a different place, “You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.” 5:7 While he was in the flesh, this Son brought

serious requests and humble pleas, with shouts and tears, to the One who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of the precautions he took. 5:8 Even he, as Son, learned obedience from his suffering. 5:9 And being complete, he became the cause of eternal salvation to those who obey the One 5:10 who was appointed by God as Hgh Priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Babies who should be teachers by now

5:11 We have a lot of deep things to say about all this, but you have become hard of hearing. 5:12 By this time you should be teachers, but you need to be taught all over again about the basic

foundational truths of God. You are back on milk instead of solid food, 5:13 and all such people are beginners, babies concerning the word of justice. 5:14 Solid food is for the mature who, through practice, have developed a sense of discernment to distinguish good from evil.

6:1 So let us move on from the foundation of the Word of the Anointed One toward maturity, not laying again the foundation of turning from dead works to faith in God, 6:2 and of teachings about immersions, dedications, the resurrection, and eternal judgment. 6:3 And this we will do, with God’s permission. 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, who have sampled the

heavenly gift, who were associates of the Holy Spirit, 6:5 who have sampled the ideal proclamation of God as well as the coming age, 6:6 and then defect, to be restored to another turning to God as long as they are re-crucifying the God-Man by their actions and holding him up to public mockery.

6:7 Ground that soaks up the rain and grows crops is a blessing from God to the farmers, 6:8 but if it produces only thorns and thistles it is worthless and cursed, and it will finally be burned. 6:9 But we are convinced of better things about you, dear ones— things that have to do with salvation— even though we talk like this. 6:10 For God is not unjust, that he would forget your work and the love you displayed in his Name through

your continued service to the holy ones. 6:11 Now we long for each one of you to show the same diligence toward the assured hope until the end, so you won't become lazy. 6:12 So imitate those who inherit the promises through faith and patience.

The Promise to Abraham

6:13 For God made a promise to Abraham (and since there was no one greater, he swore by himself), 6:14 "I solemnly swear that I will greatly bless you and greatly multiply your descendants." 6:15 After waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. 6:16 People swear by someone greater, because the oath confirms their words and ends all

dispute. 6:17 Similarly, God made this oath for the purpose of making every effort to show his unchangeable decision to the heirs of the promise. 6:18 So by means of two unchangeable matters— and it is impossible for God to lie— we who have taken refuge in the hope that has already been settled can be greatly comforted. 6:19 This hope is an anchor for our souls, secure and confirmed. It takes us into the inner room beyond the curtain,
That is, the holiest place of the temple.
6:20 where the Forerunner, Jesus, entered for our sakes, making him the Hgh Priest in the order of Melchizedek forever.

The priesthood of Melchizedek

7:1 This Melchizedek was King of Salem and a priest of the Supreme God. He blessed Abraham, who was returning from combat with the kings, 7:2 and Abraham gave him a tenth of all the plunder. The name Melchizedek means “King of Justice” and also “King of Salem,” which means “King of Peace.” 7:3 There is no account of his lineage, neither his birth nor his death, for he had no father or mother. Yet as a picture of the God-Man, he remains a perpetual priest forever.

7:4 Now look at how great this one was, to whom the patriarch Abraham gave the best tenth of the plunder of war. 7:5

As a matter of fact, the descendants of Levi who take up the priestly office are instructed according to the law to accept tithes from the people.

The tithe was one-tenth of the increase of someone's crops or herds.

And these are their own brothers and sisters who also are descended from Abraham. 7:6 Yet this one without such lineage received the tithe from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7:7 Now it is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. 7:8 So in fact, we see here that tithes are collected by mere mortals, yet there is One who is witnessed to be alive. 7:9 In a manner of speaking, you could say that Levi, who collected the tithes, paid them through Abraham, 7:10 being still

in his ancestor's body when he met Melchizedek.

Jesus, the eternal Melchizedek priest

7:11 So then, if perfection could come by means of the Levitical priesthood (which the people were put under by law), what need would there have been for another priest to arise— one not from the order of Aaron but from that of Melchizedek? 7:12 For when there is a change of priesthood, there must be a change of law. 7:13 The one we've been talking about is from a different tribe, one that has no access to the altar. 7:14 It goes without saying that our Master came from the tribe of Judah, which Moses never mentioned regarding

priests. 7:15 So it should be even more obvious that if a different priest comes in the order of Melchizedek, 7:16 they did not come according to the law based on ancestry, but on the basis of the power of an immortal life, 7:17 because he testified, “You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.”

7:18 In fact, the former law is annulled because it is weak and useless 7:19 since it didn’t solve anything. But now we are introduced to a better hope, by means of which we draw near to God. 7:20 And it isn’t as though this happened without an oath being sworn. Now those who became priests never swore an oath, 7:21 but that One came with the swearing of an oath: “The Master swears and will not change his

mind: You are a priest forever.” 7:22 So accordingly, Jesus has become the pledge of a better contract.

7:23 Under the old law, there had to be many priests because death prevented them from continuing. 7:24 But that One has a unique priesthood because he remains forever. 7:25 For that reason, he is able to completely save those who come to God through him, because he always lives as their advocate. 7:26 Such a Hgh Priest is the right one for us because he is clean, innocent, and untainted, having been separated from those who sin, being raised up higher than the heavens. 7:27 He is not like the former high priests, who had to offer up sacrifices for their own sins as well as those of the people. Instead, he did this

once and for all, sacrificing himself. 7:28 The law appoints weak people as high priests, but the word that came after the law with a sworn oath appointed the Son, who has been perfected forever.

The significance of this new priesthood and law

8:1 Now here is the point of what's being said: The kind of High Priest we have is the One seated to the right of the Throne of Majesty in the heavens, 8:2 who officiates in the holy place of the true Tent of Meeting pitched not by humans but by the Master. 8:3 Every priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, so this One must also bring an offering. 8:4 Ironically, on earth he wouldn't even be a priest at all, since

there are already priests offering gifts according to the law. 8:5 But the divine service they offer is only a shadow and pattern of the heavenly ones. For that same reason Moses was instructed about how to complete the Tent of Meeting; “See to it that you make everything according to the model you were shown in the mountain.” 8:6 Yet now this One has come to a superior divine service, by virtue of the fact that he is the mediator of a superior covenant, one based upon superior promises. 8:7 For if that first one had been blameless, there would have been no need to look for a second. 8:8 He lays blame by saying this:

“Look! The days are coming,” says the Master, “when I will confirm a new

covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah, 8:9 not like the old one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. They broke their old covenant with me and I neglected them. 8:10 But here is the new covenant I will make with the house of Israel in those last days," says the Master. "I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God and they will be my people. 8:11 Then they will no longer teach each other to know the Master, because everyone will know me, from the smallest to the greatest of them. 8:12 For I will be appeased to their injustices and forget their sins."

8:13 So he is saying that the old one is fading away, old and weak and almost

gone.

The old temple and its rites

9:1 The former one had regulations for
divine service, and an earthly holy
place. 9:2 A Tent of Meeting was built,
with the front part, the Holy Place,
containing the lamp stand and the table
where the bread was set out. 9:3 Then
behind the second curtain in the Tent of
Meeting, called the Holiest Place, 9:4
there was the golden censer and the
Ark of the Covenant, also overlaid in
gold. And inside of that were the golden
jar of manna and the rod of Aaron that
budded, along with the tablets of the
covenant. 9:5 Over the Ark were the
majestic cherubs, covering the Mercy

Seat. But we cannot say more about that right now.

9:6 Now with everything having been properly set up, the priests are continually going into the front part of the Tent of Meeting to perform their duties. 9:7 But once a year, only the Hgh Priest goes into the back room, and not without blood to offer for his own sake and also for the people, for sins made in ignorance.

9:8 In this way the Holy Spirit was bringing to our attention that the way into the Holiest Place was not yet seen, as long as this first Tent of Meeting was still standing. 9:9 It was an illustration for the present time, showing that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were

unable to clear the conscience of the one offering them. 9:10 It was only about food, drink, many immersions, and good works of the flesh, imposed upon them until the time of a new way.

The new priesthood and covenant

9:11 But the Anointed One came along as the High Priest of better things through a greater and more complete “tent of meeting”— one not made by hands (that is to say, one not of this creation). 9:12 And it was not the blood of goats and calves but his very own blood that he carried into the Holiest Place, once for all eternity, obtaining our redemption. 9:13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and heifer’s ashes

sprinkled over the contaminated ones, could make them holy and purify the flesh, 9:14 how much more will the blood of the Anointed One, who through the eternal Spirit offered his flawless self to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works for divine service to the living God!

9:15 For this reason, he is the mediator of a new covenant. By means of his death he released us from our having sinned under the first covenant, so that those who were invited could receive their eternal inheritance. 9:16 For where there is a legal will, there must be the death of the one who made it. 9:17 A will is not in force until the one who made it dies; it is powerless while they live. 9:18 This is why the first covenant had to be

dedicated with blood. 9:19 For when Moses had given the people all the rules of the law, he took the blood of calves and goats and mixed it with water, red wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled the book and all the people. 9:20 And he said, “This is the blood of the covenant God has made with you.” 9:21 He also sprinkled the Tent of Meeting, as well as all the utensils for the divine service. 9:22 In fact, pretty much everything had to be cleansed with blood according to the law; without shed blood there is no pardon.

9:23 So it was necessary for these patterns of the things in heaven to be cleansed in this way, but the actual heavenly things required better sacrifices. 9:24 It was not a Holy Place

made by hands that the Anointed One went into— those were models of the real thing— but in heaven itself, to be presented to God on our behalf. 9:25 Not that he should have to offer himself often, as did the high priests who had to enter the Holiest Place each year with the blood of others. 9:26 In that case he would have had to suffer many times since the foundation of the world. But now, once at the completion of the ages, he appeared in order to annul sins by means of the sacrifice of himself. 9:27 And just as people must die once and then face judgment, 9:28 so also the Anointed One was offered once to take upon himself the sins of many. And he will be seen again by those who wait for him, not to deal with sins, but for deliverance.

Shadow and reality

10:1 The Law was a shadow, an imperfect image, of better things to come. So it is never able to perfect those who bring the same sacrifices year after year. 10:2 Wouldn't they have stopped making offerings if it could, since they would have stopped sinning? 10:3 Instead, the need for repeated sacrifices reminds people of their sins, 10:4 for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to eliminate them. 10:5 That is why the One who came into the world said:

"Sacrifice and offering were not what you wanted; instead, you prepared a body for me. 10:6 You have no pleasure in burnt offerings for sins. 10:7 Then I

said, ‘Look! Here I am to do your will, God, as it is written about me in the heading of the book.’”

10:8 So when he said God didn’t want the prescribed sacrifices and offerings, 10:9 and then that he came to do God’s will, he was saying he takes away the first in order to establish the second. 10:10 And we are made holy by means of the offering of Jesus’ body, once for all. 10:11 Every priest performs the sacred service day after day and offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away our sins. 10:12 But this One, after making one final sacrifice, is seated at God’s right hand, 10:13 waiting for his enemies to be made his footstool. 10:14 For by one offering he has finally completed the holy ones.

10:15 This is also affirmed by the Holy Spirit:

10:16 “This is the contract I will make with them after those days,” says the Master. “I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, 10:17 and I will not remember their sins and lawlessness.”

10:18 Now if these have been acquitted, there is no more need of offerings for sins.

Encouragement to persevere in hope

10:19 So then, because of the blood of Jesus we can boldly enter the Holy Place, 10:20 via the new and living path

he made so we could go through the curtain— that is, his flesh. 10:21 And since we have such a great Priest over the house of God, 10:22 let us approach him with a true heart in confident faith, with our hearts having been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies having been bathed in clean water. 10:23 Let us hold tightly to the hope of our agreement without wavering, because the One who officially instructed us is trustworthy. 10:24 And let us think of ways to motivate each other toward love and good deeds. 10:25 Don’t give up meeting together as some have done, but encourage each other— and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

10:26 If we choose to keep sinning after recognizing the truth, there is no sacrifice left for our sins, 10:27 but only the certain dread of judgment and the insatiable fire that consumes the hostile. 10:28 If anyone who rebelled against the law of Moses was condemned without pity on the basis of two or three witnesses, 10:29 how much worse punishment do you think awaits those who trample on the God-Man and treat the blood of the covenant that made them holy as nothing special? This is an outrage to the spirit of favor! 10:30 For we know the One who said, "'Vengeance is mine, I will repay', says the Master," and again, "The Master will judge his people." 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

10:32 Think back to the earlier days when you were first enlightened, how you stood strong through all that was happening to you. 10:33 Sometimes you were put on public display, mocked, and oppressed; other times you suffered along with those who were being treated this way. 10:34 You sympathized with the imprisoned and accepted the confiscation of your property with joy, knowing you have better property that no one can ever take away. 10:35 So then, don't throw away your boldness, which will bring you great reward. 10:36 You need to endure so that you can do the will of God and be awarded the promise:

10:37 "In a little while, he who is coming will arrive and not delay. 10:38 My just

one will live by faith, and if they shrink back in fear I will not be happy with them.”

10:39 But we are not among the cowardly who are destroyed; rather, we can trust that our souls have been purchased.

Examples of great faith

11:1 Now faith is a sure hope, a conviction about what is not seen; 11:2 this is what the elders were known for.

11:3 By faith we grasp that the ages have been completed by the declaration of God, such that the hidden has become obvious.

11:4 By faith Abel brought a better sacrifice to God than Cain did; he was justified in God's sight because of his offerings. Even though he is dead, he still speaks through this.

11:5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not experience death; he was not found because God took him away. Before this, he was known to have pleased God. 11:6 Now apart from faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

11:7 By faith Noah, being given divine revelation about what was not yet seen, paid attention and fully equipped the ark for the rescue of his household, through

which he condemned the world and became an heir of justice.

11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed the call to leave for a place he would later inherit, without even knowing where he was going. 11:9 By faith he traveled into the promised land as a foreigner, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, joint heirs of the same promise. 11:10 He waited for the city with foundations whose designer and architect is God.

11:11 By faith Sarah herself, although she was unable to have children, also took hold of the power of the first installment on her descendants, because even though she was well past her prime, she considered the One making the authoritative teaching to be

faithful. 11:12 So these children all came from one who was beyond hope of having children; they are as innumerable as the constellations of the heavens, and as uncountable as the sand on the seashore.

11:13 These all died still believing, without having received the promises, but seeing them from a distance and looking forward to them. They spoke openly about their being strangers and exiles on the earth. 11:14 For those who speak like this admit that they seek their own country. 11:15 Of course, they remember the place they left and have every opportunity to return. 11:16 But instead, they long for a better one— a heavenly one. That’s why God is not

ashamed of them or to be called their God, and he prepared a city for them.

11:17 By faith Abraham tried to sacrifice Isaac; he who received the promises was trying to sacrifice his only son, 11:18 the one about whom it was said, “Descendants will come from you through Isaac.” 11:19 But Abraham determined that God was able to raise the dead, and in a way, he really did.

11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau about what was to come.

11:21 By faith Jacob, who was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons and worshiped while leaning on his staff.

11:22 By faith Joseph, near the end of his life, remembered about the exodus

of Israel and gave instructions about his bones.

11:23 By faith the parents of Moses hid him for his first three months, because they saw that the child was gifted, and they did not fear the king’s decree.

11:24 By faith Moses, when he grew up, disowned himself from being called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, 11:25 preferring to be mistreated with the people of God rather than enjoying a temporary life of ease. 11:26 He considered the shame of the Anointed One to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, because he looked forward to the reward. 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s fury, because he confidently perceived the

invisible. 11:28 By faith he made the Passover and spread blood on the door jambs so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch them.

11:29 By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as though it were dry land; the Egyptians were drowned when they tried it. 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell after being surrounded for seven days. 11:31 By faith the prostitute Rahab was not killed along with the disbelieving, because she welcomed the spies in peace.

11:32 And what more can I say? I don't have time to tell everything about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtha, and David, let alone Samuel and all the prophets, 11:33 who through faith

subdued kingdoms, brought about justice, saw the fulfillment of promises, closed the mouths of lions, 11:34 extinguished the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were empowered out of weakness, became strong in battle, routed the encampments of foreigners, 11:35 and women received their loved ones resurrected from the dead.

Yet on the other hand, others were beaten to death, not expecting to be delivered, so that they might come to a better resurrection. 11:36 Still others went through a trial of being mocked and scourged, and some were bound and jailed. 11:37 They were stoned to death, they were cut and killed with the sword, they wandered around in

sheepskins and goatskins, needy and harassed and mistreated— 11:38 the world was not worthy of them! They wandered in the wilderness and the mountains, in caves and holes in the ground. 11:39 None of these, though they were all confirmed by faith, were rewarded with the promise of God concerning us. 11:40 They were looking forward to something better, so that they would not be complete without us.

Their examples as our motivation

12:1 So since we have a vast cloud of witnesses surrounding us, we must pull out every arrowhead of the sin that opposes us from all directions, so that we can run the race before us and

endure to the finish. 12:2 We must look to the Originator and Completer of the faith: Jesus, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross and ignored its shame. He has been seated at the right of the throne of God. 12:3 Consider this One who endured such resistance from sinners, so that you won't run out of energy and become lazy. 12:4 You have not yet come to the point of bloodshed in your struggle against sin.

12:5 You have been oblivious to the intercession which contends with you as with children: "My child, don't take the Master's training lightly; don't give up when he puts you under examination. 12:6 For whoever the Master loves he trains, and he will punish any child he calls his own." 12:7

So if you are enduring training, it's because you are God's children. After all, what child is not trained by their parents? 12:8 So if you are not being trained— and we are all well familiar with that— you are not true children but illegitimate. 12:9 We have been trained by our physical parents, and we respected them for it. Should we not be all the more supportive of the Father of our spirits and live? 12:10 They trained us for a few days in the way they thought was best, but that One does it for our benefit so we can have a part in his holiness.

12:11 Now of course no training is a joy when we're in it, but a time of sadness. Yet it results in peace and justice for those who are conditioned by it. 12:12

So flex those limp arms and weak knees! 12:13 Make level paths for your feet so the lame will not twist an ankle but instead be healed.

Seek peace and holiness

12:14 Pursue peace with everyone, and also holiness, without which nobody will see the Master. 12:15 Make sure nobody is left out of the favor of God, and that no root of bitterness sprouts up to crowd you out and infect you. 12:16 Also watch out for anyone who is promiscuous or is godless like Esau, who traded his birthright for a meal. 12:17 You know that afterwards he was denied the blessing of inheritance, and he could not get it back from his father, though he sought it with tears.

We no longer fear to be in God’s presence

12:18 For you have not come to the
place where you could feel the fire, the
darkness, the gloom, and the tornado,
12:19 hearing the trumpet blast and the
sound of proclamation, which made
those who heard it beg for it to stop.
12:20 They could not bear the warning
that even if a wild animal touched the
mountain it would have to be stoned.
12:21 The spectacle was so frightening
that Moses said, “I am terrified and
shaking!”

This all refers to when God came to Mount Sinai during the Exodus.

12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion
and to the heavenly city of the living

God, Jerusalem. You have come to many thousands of angels 12:23 in a universal gathering and assembly of the firstborn, having been registered in the heavens. You have come to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of those who have been justified. 12:24 And you have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to a sprinkling of blood that speaks to us in a better way than Abel.

12:25 Be very careful that you do not reject the One who speaks. For if there was no escape for those who rejected the divine revelation given on earth, how much more so for us if we turn from the One from the heavens? 12:26 His voice once shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will

shake not only the earth but also the sky!” 12:27 That phrase, “once more,” makes it clear that what will be shaken — the created things— will be taken away, leaving only that which cannot be shaken. 12:28 So then, by accepting the unshakable kingdom, let us be grateful and offer divine service that is pleasing to God, with precaution and awe— 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Final instructions

13:1 Continue having fondness for others. 13:2 Don’t forget to be hospitable, for that is how some unknowingly took in angels. 13:3 Remember the prisoners as though you too are imprisoned with them, and the mistreated as though you share in their

physical sufferings. 13:4 Marriage is fully honorable and the bed pure, for God will judge the promiscuous and the unfaithful. 13:5 Don’t be in the habit of loving money, but be happy with what you have, for he has proclaimed, “I will never give you up or desert you.” 13:6 That gives us the confidence to say, “The Master is my helper, and I will not fear what anyone might do to me!”

13:7 Remember your leaders who spoke the Word of God to you; consider their behavior and imitate their faith. 13:8 Jesus the Anointed One is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

13:9 Don’t let yourselves be carried away by various strange teachings. It is best to strengthen your mind by

gratitude toward God instead of by certain foods that did nothing to help those who ate them. 13:10 We have an altar at which those who offer divine service in the Tent of Meeting have no right to eat. 13:11 The bodies of animals, whose blood the high priest carries into the holy place for sins, are burned up outside the camp. 13:12 Likewise, Jesus suffered outside the city gate in order to make people holy by means of his own blood. 13:13 So then, let us come out to him, outside of the camp, and share in his disgrace. 13:14 For we do not have a permanent city here, but we search for the one to come. 13:15 Through him, then, let us offer up a continual sacrifice of praise to God, and publicly acknowledge his Name.

13:16 Now don’t forget to do the right thing and be a community, for God is pleased with such “sacrifices.” 13:17 Be persuaded by those who guide you, and defer to them, for they keep careful watch over your souls and must give an account. Make this a joy for them and not a chore, which would not be to your advantage.

Final greetings

13:18 Pray for us; we have a clear conscience but also want to be on our best behavior, 13:19 and I ask you this all the more so I can be back with you more quickly. 13:20 Now may the God of Peace— who raised from the dead our great Shepherd, Master Jesus, by the blood of the eternal covenant— 13:21

fully equip you with every good thing so you can do his will, which is to please him. May he do this by means of Jesus the Anointed One, to whom belongs all honor into the ages, absolutely!

13:22 Now I am sincerely asking you, brothers and sisters, to bear with me in this letter of comfort that I wrote to you in bits. 13:23 Be advised that our brother Timothy has been released, and he will accompany me when I see you if he arrives soon enough. 13:24 Greet all your leaders and the holy ones. Those from Italy greet you. 13:25 May the favor of God be with you all.

James

Greeting

1:1 James, servant of God and Master Jesus the Anointed One,

To the scattered twelve tribes:

Testing our faith

1:2 Be overjoyed! Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various tests, 1:3 knowing that the proofing of your faith results in endurance. 1:4 So let endurance perfect

its work, so you may be complete and unimpaired, lacking nothing.

1:5 Now if anyone among you lacks wisdom, let them ask for it from God, who gives to all freely without scolding, and it will be given to them. 1:6 But they must ask in faith without indecisiveness, for the one who is indecisive is like the waves of the sea being driven and tossed by the wind. 1:7 Such people should not think that they will get anything from the Master, 1:8 because they're wavering and unstable in all their ways.

1:9 The lowly should celebrate their greatness, 1:10 yet the rich should celebrate their lowliness, being no more than garden flowers that quickly wilt.

1:11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and dries up the plant, so that its flower drops off and its beauty is ruined. This is what will become of the careers of the rich.

1:12 Happy are those who endure trials, because it earns them the award of life promised to those who profess to love God. 1:13 But no one can say that these tests are from God, because God is not to be tested and does not test anyone. 1:14 Instead, each one is tested by their own desire, lured and dragged away. 1:15 Desire conceives Sins, and Sins grow up to be Death. 1:16 Do not be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters!

1:17 All good and complete gifts are from above, descending from the

Father of Lights, in whom there is no hint of variation or turning around. 1:18 It was his intention to produce us as a bountiful first crop of his creation by means of his Word. You should all understand this, my brothers and sisters.

Practicing our faith

1:19 Each person should be quick to listen, but slow to speak or become enraged, 1:20 because a person's rage does not produce the justice of God. 1:21 Therefore, put off all filthiness and malicious indulgence; gently receive the Word implanted in you, that is able to save your souls. 1:22 Become those who do what it says, and not just hear it and only fool yourselves. 1:23 For

whoever hears the word and does not do it is like one who sees their face in a mirror 1:24 and then immediately forgets what they looked like. 1:25 But the one who looks intently into the law of freedom and remains in it, who remembers what they heard and does it, will be happy.

1:26 If someone appears religious but does not control their tongue, they are fooling themselves and their religion is a waste of time. 1:27 Religion that is clean and pure before God the Father means visiting the grieving and the widows in their distress, and keeping yourself from being soiled by the world.

Favoritism is forbidden

2:1 My brothers and sisters, do not show favoritism; honor the faith of our Master Jesus the Anointed One! 2:2 If someone comes to your meeting wearing fine jewelry and fancy clothes, and another in filthy rags, 2:3 you tell the rich one to take the seat of honor and the poor one to stand in the back like a servant! 2:4 Did you not discriminate among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 2:5 Listen! Doesn't God choose the poor of the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom promised to those who love him? 2:6 Yet you insult the poor! Aren't the rich the ones who harass you and drag you into court? 2:7 Are they not the ones who speak disrespectfully against the ideal Name you bear?

2:8 The best thing to do is to fulfill the royal law according to the Writing, “Love others as yourself.” 2:9 But if you play favorites you are sinning and are exposed by the law as criminals, 2:10 because anyone who keeps the whole law but trips over just one thing is guilty of lawbreaking nonetheless. 2:11 The One who said “Do not commit adultery” also said “Do not murder,” so if you don’t commit adultery but do commit murder, you have still broken the law. 2:12 So speak and act as those who are about to be judged by the law of freedom, 2:13 for the Judge will show no mercy to those who don’t show mercy. Mercy trumps judgment!

Faith and actions

2:14 My brothers and sisters, what do you gain when you say you have faith but never act on it? That is not a faith that saves. 2:15 Suppose a brother or sister is lacking food and clothing, 2:16 and you just send them away with “Well, I hope you get some food and clothes”; what good is that? 2:17 In the same way, faith that is never put into action is dead because it is alone. 2:18 Now someone may say, “You have faith and I have actions.” But without actions, how will anyone know you have faith? 2:19 So you believe in one God— fine, but so do the demons, who not only believe but shake with fear!

2:20 Are you demanding, empty-headed one, to know why this invisible faith is useless? 2:21 Look at our ancestor

Abraham; wasn't he shown to be just when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 2:22 You can see that his faith and actions worked together, and the actions completed the faith. 2:23 And that fulfilled the Writing, "Abraham believed God, so he was credited with righteousness," and he was called the Friend of God. 2:24 So you can see that a person is shown to be righteous from works and not only from faith. 2:25 Likewise with the prostitute Rahab; was she not shown to be righteous by her actions when she sheltered the army scouts and then sent them out by another route? 2:26 Just as the body is dead when separated from the spirit, so also faith is dead when separated from actions.

The power of words

3:1 Don’t be eager to be teachers, my sisters and brothers, because we who teach will be judged according to a higher standard. 3:2 We all trip up a lot, but if you don’t trip up in your words you are mature and self-controlled. 3:3 Now we put bridles on horses to make them go where we lead, 3:4 and we control huge ships with a tiny rudder operated according to the will of the one at the helm. 3:5 In the same way, the tongue is small and proud, but look at what a huge fire it can start! And a fire it is, a world of injustice. 3:6 The tongue is situated to lead the whole body and ignite it all, and is itself ignited by the eternal fire.

3:7 But though people have tamed everything in nature— the beasts and birds and reptiles, and even sea creatures— 3:8 no one can tame the tongue. It is an evil, poisonous fang. 3:9 We use it to bless the Master and Father, yet also to curse people who were made in the likeness of God. 3:10 Out of the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. Things don't have to be this way, sisters and brothers. 3:11 Can both sweet and bitter water come from the same well? 3:12 My sisters and brothers, fig trees cannot produce olives, vines cannot produce figs, and salt water cannot produce fresh water.

Wisdom expressed as good behavior

3:13 Is anyone among you wise and knowledgeable? Then they should demonstrate it with good behavior and gentle wisdom. 3:14 But if you have bitter jealousy and factions and bragging, you deny the truth. 3:15 That sort of “wisdom” comes not from above but from the earth, the soul, the demonic. 3:16 For wherever there is jealousy and factions, there is also upheaval and every foul practice. 3:17 But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, moderate, reasonable, full of compassion and good results, unbiased, and does not use a double standard. 3:18 Those who plant peace will pick the fruit of justice.

We cannot live in two worlds

4:1 Where do battles and fights among you come from, if not from the cravings clashing among you? 4:2 You want but cannot have; you murder and are jealous but it doesn't get you anywhere; you fight and battle but gain nothing because you do not ask. 4:3 And even when you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with the bad intention of squandering it all on self-gratification. 4:4 You unfaithful spouses! Don't you realize that to be friends with the world is to be enemies of God? Whoever wants to be a friend of the world is considered an enemy of God. 4:5 Or do you think the scripture says this for nothing: "The Spirit that lives within us wants us for itself"? 4:6 Yet he grants favor all the more, which is why he

says, “God sets up for battle against the proud but is favorable to the humble.”

4:7 So align with God. Stand against the Accuser and he will run from you; 4:8 come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and make up your minds, you who can’t decide! 4:9 Be miserable and mourn and cry; change your laughter into mourning and your joy into sorrow. 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Master, and he will lift you up. 4:11 Don’t cut each other down, brothers and sisters, because those who do that despise the law and judge it. And if you judge the law you are putting yourself in the place of a judge, 4:12 but there is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one

who can either save or destroy you.
Who are you to judge others?

Against boasting

4:13 Now see here, you who say “Today or tomorrow we will go to the city for a year and conduct a profitable business,” 4:14 you have no idea what will happen tomorrow. Your life is a vapor that vanishes as soon as it appears, 4:15 so instead you should say, “If the Master approves, we will live and do this or that.” 4:16 But right now you are boasting and showing off, and that is wicked. 4:17 So, if you know what’s best but don’t do it, you sin.

Warning to the rich

5:1 As for you rich people, cry and howl because of the misery coming upon you! 5:2 Your wealth has rotted and your clothes are moth-eaten; 5:3 your money has corroded, and it will testify against you and eat away your flesh, because you hoarded wealth in the last days. 5:4 Listen! The wages you withheld from your employees are shouting out, and the distress calls of the workers have reached the ears of the Master of Armies. 5:5 You live in decadent luxury on the earth, fattening your hearts for slaughter. 5:6 You convict the innocent and murder those who aren’t even opposing you.

Patience in suffering

5:7 So be patient, sisters and brothers, until the Master is here. Observe how the farmer waits for the priceless produce of the land, patiently waiting for the early and late rains. 5:8 So you be patient too, and be ready, because the Master is almost here! 5:9 Do not mutter against each other, so that you will not be judged. Look! The Judge stands at the door. 5:10 My brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the Name of the Master as examples of suffering evil and enduring it. 5:11 Happy are those who endure! You heard about the endurance of Job, and you understood how it ended, because the Master is filled with great compassion.

5:12 Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not take oaths; not by heaven, nor by earth, nor by anything else. Just say “yes” or “no” and mean it, so you won’t come under judgment.

Genuine prayer

5:13 If anyone among you is suffering, they should pray; if anyone is happy, they should play music; 5:14 if anyone is weak, they should call on the elders of the Congregation and have them pray over them, putting olive oil on them in the name of the Master. 5:15 The claim made in faith will save the weak and the Master will raise them up, and if they have sinned they will be forgiven. 5:16 Admit your sins to each other and stand up for each other, so that you may be

healed. The persistent request of the just is very effective. 5:17 Elijah was a person just like us, and when he prayed for it not to rain, it didn’t rain for three and a half years! 5:18 He prayed again, and the rains came over the land to make things grow.

5:19 My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you is led astray from the truth, and someone turns them back, 5:20 understand that the one who turns them away from deception will save their soul from death and cover up innumerable sins.

1 Peter

Greeting

1:1 Peter, an Ambassador of Jesus the Anointed One,

To the chosen exiles scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia 1:2 who, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, are being made spiritually holy through obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus the Anointed One:

Abundant favor and peace to you all!

Our living hope

1:3 Blessings to the God and Father of our Master Jesus the Anointed One, who regenerated us according to his vast mercy into a living hope. This comes through the resurrection of Jesus the Anointed One from the dead, 1:4 into an inheritance that is incorruptible, untainted, and unfading, having been kept in the heavens for you all. 1:5 You are those being garrisoned in the power of God through faith into a salvation ready to be revealed in the last age.

1:6 Briefly at the present time you are being exulted, and sorrowed by various trials if necessary, 1:7 so that your faith will be tested and proved much more

valuable than gold, though the refining fire melts it down. Your faith was made evident through being tested, for praise and honor and worth in the revelation of Jesus the Anointed One. 1:8 Though you did not know the One you cannot see now, you believe anyway and celebrate with unspeakable joy. 1:9 And having been honored, you are responding with the completion of your faith, the salvation of souls.

1:10 The prophets searched intently concerning the salvation they were proclaiming, this favor toward you. 1:11 They were trying to discover the general time the Spirit of the Anointed One in them was predicting for his sufferings and later honors. 1:12 It was revealed to them that in all this they

were attending not to themselves but to you, by means of the ones who brought you the good news; they were commissioned by the Holy Spirit from heaven. The angels strain to look into this.

Be holy

1:13 So then, be strong and prepared in your understanding. Be clear-thinking and mature as you rely on the favor delivered to you in the revealing of Jesus the Anointed One. 1:14 With a compliant attitude, do not conform to your old ways in your ignorant desires, 1:15 but become holy yourselves, just as the one calling you is holy. 1:16 For it is written, “You will be holy, because I am holy.” 1:17 And if you call on the

Father, the one who impartially judges each one's work, then may you behave respectfully for the time of your journey. 1:18 You have seen that you were ransomed from the pointless behavior handed down by tradition. Yet you weren't ransomed by means of decaying things like silver or gold, 1:19 but by the priceless blood of the Anointed One, the flawless and unblemished Lamb.

1:20 Indeed, this was known ahead of time, before the foundation of the world, yet in the last of the times is being revealed on account of you. 1:21 Through him you were brought to faith in God, who awakened him from the dead and gave him honor, so that your faith and hope are put in God. 1:22

Since he purified your souls with compliance to the truth, earnestly and honestly love each other from a clean heart.

1:23 You have not been regenerated from mortal seed but from immortal, through the living and enduring Word of God. 1:24 Since all flesh is like grass, all its honor is like wilted flowers. 1:25 But the declaration of the Master, the good news brought to you, remains forever.

2:1 So then, put off all malice, treachery, pretense, envy, and trash talk. 2:2 As newborns, crave the rational, pure milk through which you may grow into salvation— 2:3 if you have sampled the Master’s kindness.

Jesus the Cornerstone

2:4 Come toward the Living Stone,
which people have rejected but God
has chosen to hold up as a trophy. 2:5
Likewise, as living stones you are being
constructed into a spiritual house, a
holy priesthood to offer up spiritual
sacrifices that are pleasing to God
through Jesus the Anointed One. 2:6 It
is for this reason we read in the
scriptures, “Attention! In Zion I am
laying a select cornerstone, and
whoever believes will in no way be
shamed by it.” 2:7 So the honor is to you
who believe, but to the unbelievers it is
“a stone rejected by the builders that
became the cornerstone,” 2:8 and a
stumbling stone, a rocky trap set for
those who oppose the Word. 2:9 But

you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, an acquired people, so you should proclaim the brave virtues of the one who calls you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 2:10 Once you were no-name people but now you are people of God; once you were not pitied but now you are.

Godly living in a godless world

2:11 Loved ones, I implore you as aliens and exiles to abstain from carnal lusts that make war against the soul. 2:12 Exhibit good behavior among the other nations, so that when they speak against you as evildoers they will honor God when he visits us, because they saw your good deeds. 2:13 Be

supportive of every human institution by means of the Master, whether to the king as superior, 2:14 or to governors sent by him to bring justice against evildoers but honor those who do good. 2:15 Thus it is God's will that the ones doing good should silence the ignorance of clueless people. 2:16 Do not use your freedom as a front for evil. Instead, as servants of God, 2:17 value everyone; love the believers; fear God; respect civic authority.

Suffering unjustly

2:18 Servants, support your employers in fear, and not only the nice ones but also the crooked ones. 2:19 You will be honored if you endure unjust suffering because you stand by your convictions

about God. 2:20 After all, what credit is it if you suffer punishment because you sinned? But if you do good and have to endure suffering, that earns you the favor of God. 2:21 For you were called into this, seeing that the Anointed One also suffered for your sakes, leaving an example for you to follow in his footsteps. 2:22 He did not sin, nor was any treachery found in him. 2:23 Though he was mocked he did not mock in return; though he suffered, he did not threaten, leaving it to the one who judges rightly. 2:24 He carried our sins in his body upon the wood, so that we should live away from those and toward justice, and so that we may be healed by his wound. 2:25 For you were like straying sheep but now you have turned

back toward the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

Believers married to unbelievers

3:1 Wives, likewise, support your own husbands, so that if they are hostile to the Word they may be won over without words by means of their wives' behavior; 3:2 they will realize in fear that your behavior is pure and godly. 3:3 Don't let them only see the outward adornment of hair and jewelry and wardrobe, 3:4 but the inner person, the undying perfection of a meek and quiet spirit that is priceless in the sight of God. 3:5 For this is how holy women rely on God, outfitting themselves with support for their own husbands. 3:6 Be

like Sarah, who called Abraham “master”; you become like her in doing good and not fearing nor being distressed. 3:7 Husbands, likewise, build a home together with them, in keeping with the realization that they have the less stable income. Honor these feminine ones as the joint heirs of favor and life that they are, or your prayers will be opposed!

More about Christian living and unjust suffering

3:8 The goal of all this is for all of you to be in agreement, to be sympathetic, caring, fond of other believers, and humble, 3:9 without taking revenge or responding in kind to inflamed rhetoric. Respond instead with blessing; this is

what you were called to do so that you inherit blessing. 3:10 For whoever wants to enjoy a long life must stop their tongue from speaking evil and their lips from speaking treachery. 3:11 They must do good, not evil, and they must seek and chase after peace. 3:12 The Master has his eyes and ears on the righteous ones and their case, but he stands in opposition against all who do evil.

3:13 Will you be treated poorly if you always strive to do good? 3:14 But if you do suffer for the sake of righteousness, be happy. Yet do not fear them or let them upset you, 3:15 but instead honor Master Anointed One as holy, from the heart. Always be ready with a defense of your hope to anyone who demands it, but do so with deference and respect.

3:16 Then your conscience will be clear, so that if anyone talks trash about you they will be utterly silenced by your good behavior. 3:17 It's better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it, than for doing evil. 3:18 Notice also that the Anointed One suffered for sins, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he may lead you to God.

When he was put to death in the flesh but alive in the spirit, 3:19 he also went to the spirits in prison and made announcement 3:20 to the ones who were hostile to the faith from the time of Noah. God patiently awaited the construction of the ark, inside of which only a mere eight souls were brought safely out of the water. 3:21 This is

representative of the immersion that now saves you, yet it is not the washing of dirt from your flesh but a matter of a good conscience in God by means of the resurrection of Jesus the Anointed One. 3:22 He is at God's right hand, having gone into heaven, with angels and rulers and powers supporting him.

4:1 So since the Anointed One suffered physically, you too must arm yourselves with the same attitude, because the one who has suffered physically has defeated sin. 4:2 That one will by no means still live in human desires but spend the rest of their life doing the will of God.

4:3 Enough time has passed to have determined the intention of the other

nations, who have persisted in vice, lust, excessive drinking, wild parties, drinking contests, and illicit religious practices. 4:4 They think it strange that you do not race with them into the same reckless gusher, so they slander you. 4:5 But they will be required to give an account to the One who is poised to judge the living and the dead. 4:6 So the good news was also brought to the dead so they could be judged. Indeed, according to people they should live for the flesh, but according to God they should live for the spirit.

4:7 Yet the end is near! So be wise and mature in your prayers for all, 4:8 having sincere love within you, since love covers over a multitude of sins. 4:9 Be hospitable among yourselves, without

complaining. 4:10 Dispense your gifts among yourselves as each of you has received them, as exemplary administrators of the multifaceted favor of God. 4:11 If you speak, may it be as the voice of God; if you dispense service, do so from the power God supplies, so that in everything God may be exalted through Jesus the Anointed One— to whom belongs honor and mighty rule for ages and ages, absolutely!

4:12 Loved ones, do not think it strange, this fire raging among you; do not think that this trial which descended upon you is something unexpected. 4:13 Instead, be happy that what you are doing is participating in the sufferings of the Anointed One, and also that you

may celebrate in revealing his favor. 4:14 If you are being reprimanded in the name of the Anointed One, be happy that the spirit and honor of God has come to rest on you. 4:15 Now, let none of you be suffering because you are a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or a meddler! 4:16 But if it's because of being a Christian, See the note on Acts 11:26. then of course you should not be ashamed. Instead, let them honor the name of God. 4:17 This is the time for the judgment to begin from the house of God. And if it starts from us, then what will be the end of those who are hostile toward the good news of God? 4:18 And if the righteous one is barely saved, what will happen to the unrighteous and the sinner? 4:19 Because of that, let those who suffer according to God's will

commit their souls to the faithful Creator.

Instructions to elders and new believers

5:1 So then, as a co-elder and witness of the Anointed One’s sufferings, and a partner in the majesty about to be revealed, 5:2 I implore you to properly shepherd the flock of sheep you are guarding. Don’t do this out of compulsion but voluntarily. According to God, neither must you do this out of greed to make a profit but rather eagerly. 5:3 Do not act as masters over that which has been allotted to you, but be role models for the flock of sheep. 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd is

revealed, you will be rewarded with the victor’s crown of unfading honor.

5:5 Likewise, let the newer believers support the more mature ones. Yet at the same time, let everyone humbly take on the role of a servant, because God sets up for battle against the proud but is gracious to the lowly. 5:6 Be humble, then, under the powerful hand of God so you can be lifted up in due time. 5:7 Load upon him the entire weight of your worries, because he cares about you.

5:8 Be alert and keep watch! Your prosecutor, the Slanderer, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to gulp down. 5:9 Stand against him! Be solid in the faith,

because you know that your brothers and sisters out in the world are fulfilling the same sufferings as you.

Final greetings

5:10 Now to the God of every favor, the one who calls you into his eternal majesty in Anointed Jesus (who will equip, establish, set firm, and ground those who are briefly suffering), 5:11 be eternal power, absolutely!

5:12 I wrote what I consider a brief letter to you through Silvanus the faithful brother, imploring and giving evidence that this is the true favor of God into which you were made to stand. 5:13 She in Babylon who was chosen along with you greets you, along with my son

Mark. 5:14 Greet each other in affectionate love; peace to all of you who are united with the Anointed One.

2 Peter

Greeting

1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and Ambassador of Jesus the Anointed One,

To the ones who happened upon a faith as precious as ours, in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus the Anointed One: 1:2 Abundant favor and peace to you all, in recognition of our God and Master Jesus!

Living consistently with our calling

1:3 It is through that recognition of the
One who calls us that he freely grants
from his divine power for us to live
devoutly. 1:4 Through his own honor
and valor he has freely given us great
and priceless promises, to make it
possible for you to be in a close bond
with the divine nature. You ran away
from the lust-driven corruption in the
world, 1:5 but don't stop there. Put every
bit of effort into this: To faith, add valor;
to valor, add knowledge; 1:6 to
knowledge, add self-control; to self-
control, add endurance; to endurance,
add dedication; 1:7 to dedication, add

fondness for others; to fondness for others, add love.

1:8 Continuing to pursue these things in recognition of our Master Jesus the Anointed One makes you neither lazy nor unfruitful. 1:9 For those who do not possess these qualities are closing their eyes, being oblivious to their having been cleansed from their old sins. 1:10 So then, brothers and sisters, get busy! Confirm your choice and calling, for by doing so you will never be tripped up. 1:11 This is how entrance into the ageless kingdom of our Master and Savior Jesus the Anointed One will be richly supplied to you.

Reminders of fulfilled prophecy

1:12 So I will always keep reminding you of these things, even though you are already aware of them since you have stood firm in the present truth. 1:13 Yet at the same time, I consider it worthwhile that as long as I am in this “tent” I’ll be waking you up as a reminder. 1:14 I am aware that my time to discard this “tent” approaches quickly, as our Master Jesus the Anointed One made clear to me. 1:15 Yet I will make every effort to see to it that you remember these things after I leave.

1:16 When we told you about our Master Jesus the Anointed One, we did not follow clever myths but saw his power and presence with our own eyes. 1:17 God the Father gave him value and

honor when he said in his majestic, magnificent voice, “This is my Son, whom I love, and in whom I delight.” 1:18 We heard this sound from heaven when we were with him on the mountain. 1:19 And you do well to pay attention to the confirmed prophetic word, which is like a lamp shining in a dingy place until the day breaks and the light-bringer rises in your hearts.

False teachers and fallen angels

1:20 Know this first of all: Not a single scripture gets its interpretation from the prophet, 1:21 for no prophecy was ever carried on due to human will; instead, speaking to people from God was carried on by the Holy Spirit.

2:1 Yet false prophets came among the people, and there will also be false teachers among you. They will smuggle in ruinous teachings and even disown the One who bought them and owns them! So they will bring sudden destruction upon themselves 2:2 and many will follow along with reckless abandon. Because of them, the way of the truth will be slandered; 2:3 they will greedily exploit you by means of smooth talk. But their judgment won't wait forever, and their destruction won't sleep forever:

2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but bound and imprisoned them in the gloom of Tartarus, and handed them over to be retained for judgment,

2:5 and if he did not spare the ancient world (except for protecting eight, one of which was Noah, an announcer of justice) but inflicted the irreverent world with the Flood,

2:6 and if he reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes in a catastrophe and condemned them as an example for the irreverent 2:7 (having rescued righteous Lot who lived among them 2:8 and whose soul was tormented day and night by their lawless acts),

2:9 then the Master knew full well how to rescue the devout out of trials, yet hold the unrighteous in reserve for Judgment Day.

2:10 Yet there are those who bow to the flesh and defile it in lust, daring to despise divine authority. They are given to self-gratification and do not hesitate to slander, 2:11 whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, do not bring slanderous judgment against them before the Master. 2:12 Yet in their slandering they doom themselves, like unthinking animals ignorant of the fact that they are born into captivity and destined to die; 2:13 their fate is the wage they earned from injustice. They are the ones who indulge in the luxury of daily self-gratification. They are blemishes and flaws who indulge in their seductions while they party with you. 2:14 Their eyes are saturated with adultery and they never stop luring unstable souls into sinning.

They are accursed; their hearts have been conditioned by greed. 2:15 Once they left the straight path they were led astray themselves (like Balaam of Beor, who loved the wages of injustice. 2:16 Yet his own lawlessness was exposed by a mute beast of burden who was caused by God to speak with a human voice to prevent the prophet's insanity). 2:17 They are waterless springs and storm-driven mists for whom the gloomy darkness has been reserved. 2:18 Made to utter inflated and conceited things, they use the lusts of the flesh to lure back into recklessness the few who are barely escaping from those practicing deception.

2:19 They like to be professors of freedom, but they themselves are

enslaved to corruption, which degrades those it has enslaved. 2:20 For if they fled from the foul pollution of the world and recognized our Master and Savior Jesus the Anointed One, then got involved in it again, they have become worse off than before. 2:21 It would have been better for them to never have recognized the right way than to recognize the holy precept they had been given and then turn back. 2:22 The proverbs about them are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A washed pig returns to its wallowing in the mud.”

The Last Days

3:1 Loved ones, this is already the second letter I’m writing to you, waking you up and reminding you of the

sincere understanding of what has been declared before. 3:2 I am reminding you of what was declared before by the holy prophets, and the teachings of your Ambassadors of the Master and Savior. 3:3 Understand above all that in the last days mockers will come (because mockery is what they crave), 3:4 saying, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? From the time our ancestors died until now, everything goes on as it has from the beginning of creation.” 3:5 For they are deliberately ignorant of this: that the ancient heavens and earth were made out of water and held together in water by the word of God. 3:6 The world at that time was destroyed by the Flood, 3:7 but the current heavens and earth have been reserved by that same word to be burned, being kept for the day of

judgment and the destruction of irreverent people.

3:8 Now do not let this one thing escape you, loved ones: To the Master, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 3:9 The Master is not late with his promise, as some consider lateness, but is being patient with you. He does not intend for any to die, but to make room for all to turn to God. 3:10 Yet the Day of the Master will come as a thief; the heavens will disappear with a roar and the elements will be dissolved by burning, so that everything done in the earth will be discovered.

Motivation for holy living

3:11 Seeing that everything will disintegrate in this way, what kind of people should you be? You behavior should be devout, 3:12 anticipating and hurrying along the arrival of the Day of God when the heavens will be burned up and the elements consumed by fire. 3:13 But according to his promise, we hope for a new heavens and earth where justice lives. 3:14 So, loved ones, hope for these things. Make every effort to be found in peace, spotless and flawless in him. 3:15 And consider the patient salvation of our Master, as our dear brother Paul writes to you in the wisdom he was given. 3:16 He writes about all these things, talking about them in his letters. Some of it is hard to understand, which the ignorant and

unstable twist as they do with the other scriptures, to their own destruction.

3:17 So then, loved ones, know this ahead of time: Be on guard so that you are not led away into deception by those with loose morals, making you lose your resolve. 3:18 Yet grow in the favor and knowledge of our Master and Savior Jesus the Anointed One. All honor to him, now and up to the first day of eternity, absolutely!

1 John

The Word of Life

1:1 This is about the Word of Life— that
which was from the beginning, which
we have heard and seen and touched.
1:2 This Life appeared; we have seen it,
and we are witnessing and reporting to
you the eternal life which was from the
Father and appeared to us. 1:3 And we
are reporting these things to you so you
too can be close friends with us; and
not only with us, but also with the
Father and his Son Jesus the Anointed
One. 1:4 We write these things so we
can be filled with joy.

Walk in the light, not in sin

1:5 Now this is the message we heard
from him and are passing along to you:
that God is light; there is no darkness in
him at all. 1:6 Anyone who says they are
close friends with him yet is in step with
darkness is lying. 1:7 But if we stay in
step with the light, as he is in the light,
we are close friends with each other
and the blood of Jesus his Son cleans
us from every sin. 1:8 If we say we
never sin, we deceive ourselves and
have no truth in us. 1:9 But if we admit
we sin, he is faithful and just and will
pardon us and clean us from all
injustice. 1:10 If we say we have not
sinned, we have made him a liar and
his Word is not in us.

2:1 My little ones in the faith, I write these things to you so you might not sin, but if anyone does, we have an advocate on our behalf to the Father: Jesus the Anointed One, the Just. 2:2 He is the full payment for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the whole world. 2:3 The way we can be sure we have known him is if we always keep his commands. 2:4 Anyone who says “I have known him” but doesn’t keep his commands is a liar. 2:5 But if anyone always keeps his Word, the love of God has truly been perfected in them. This is how we know we belong to him: 2:6 Whoever says they remain in him must keep pace with him.

We cannot love God but hate people

2:7 Loved ones, I am not giving you a new command but an old one you've had from the beginning: the Word you heard. 2:8 Yet in a way I really am giving you a new command, verified by both him and you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already appearing. 2:9 Anyone who says they are in the light, but hates others, is still in darkness. 2:10 But anyone who loves others remains in the light and there is no trap waiting for them. 2:11 Yet anyone who hates others is living in darkness; they don't realize where they are going because the darkness has blinded them.

Overcoming the Evil One

2:12 I write to you, little ones, because you have been forgiven of your sins by means of his Name. 2:13 I write to you, parents, because you have known the One from the beginning. 2:14 I write to you, young ones, because you have conquered the evil one. I write to you, students, because you have known the Father. I write to you, parents, because you have known the One from the beginning. I write to you, young ones, because you are strong, and the Word of God remains in you, and you have conquered the evil one.

Don’t love the world

2:15 Do not love the world and all that goes with it. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in them. 2:16 For everything in the world— its appeal to the flesh and the eyes, all its pretense— is not from the Father but from the world. 2:17 And the world and its desire is passing away, but the one doing God's will lasts till the end.

The one and many impostors

2:18 Little ones, it is the last hour. And just as you heard that an impostor Anointed One is coming, now also many such fakes have come, which is how we know it's the last hour. 2:19 And these fakes came from among us! But if they had really been one of us, they

would have stayed, so their leaving proves they were never one of us at all. 2:20 You all have an anointing from the Holy One and are aware of all this.

2:21 I write to you, not to acquaint you with the truth but because you already know it, for no lie comes from it. 2:22 Who is the liar, if not the one who denies that Jesus is the Anointed One? Such a person is the Impostor Anointed One who denies both the Father and the Son. 2:23 Everyone who denies the Son also denies the Father, but everyone who declares allegiance to the Son has the Father as well. 2:24 Let that which you have heard from the beginning remain in you; if it does, you will also remain in the Son and the Father. 2:25 This is what he promised

us: eternal life. 2:26 I write these things to you about the ones who are deceiving you.

Children of God

2:27 The anointing you received from him remains in you and you really don't need a teacher, but just as his anointing teaches you everything true, remain in him. 2:28 So remain in him, little ones, so that whenever he appears we will be bold and unashamed in his presence. 2:29 If you know that he is just, then you also know that whoever does justice is his child.

3:1 Try and grasp the degree of love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God— that's what we

are! And because of this, the world does not know us and did not know him. 3:2 Loved ones, we are children of God now, but what we will be has not yet appeared. Yet whenever he appears, we will be like him, because we will see him as he is. 3:3 And all who have set their hope on him purify themselves, just as he is pure. 3:4 Everyone who sins is also a lawbreaker; sinning is lawlessness. 3:5 As you know, that One made his appearance for the purpose of taking away our sins, and there is no sin in him. 3:6 So everyone who remains in him does not sin, but whoever does sin has not seen him or known him.

3:7 Little ones, let no one deceive you; the one who does justice is righteous, in

the same way that the One is righteous.
3:8 Conversely, the one who sins comes
from the Slanderer, for the Slanderer
has been sinning from the beginning.
This is why the God-Man appeared: to
nullify the Slanderer's works. 3:9 A child
of God does not keep sinning, because
his very substance remains in them;
they who are God's children cannot
keep sinning. 3:10 So this is how you
can tell the children of God from the
children of the Slanderer: Everyone
who does injustice and who does not
love others is not of God.

Love each other

3:11 The message you heard from the
beginning is that we must love each
other. 3:12 We must not be like Cain,

who followed the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he do it? Because his works were evil but his brother's were righteous. 3:13 So don't be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. 3:14 We know that we have moved out of death and into life because we love others. But the one without love remains in death. 3:15 Whoever hates others is a murderer, and you know that eternal life cannot remain in a murderer. 3:16 We know what love is by the One who laid down his life for our sakes. So we too must be willing to lay down our lives for others. 3:17 Now if anyone has an income in this world yet sees someone in need and is cold-hearted, how can the love of God remain in them? 3:18 Little ones, we must not only say we love, but put it

into genuine action. That is how we will know we are of the truth.

3:19 And we will be confident in his presence, 3:20 because even if we feel guilty, God knows us better than we know ourselves. 3:21 Even if we don't feel guilty we can still come before God 3:22 and boldly ask for whatever we want— provided we keep his commands and do what pleases him. 3:23 And this is his command: to trust in the Name of his Son Jesus the Anointed One, and to love each other. 3:24 That is his command, so whoever keeps it remains in him, and he in them. We know he remains in us by the Spirit he gives us.

Against Gnosticism

4:1 So, loved ones, do not believe every spirit, but test it to make sure it is from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 4:2 Here is the test: If the spirit affirms that Jesus the Anointed One came in the flesh, it is from God; 4:3 if it denies this, it is not of God but of the Impostor Anointed One that you have heard is coming, and in fact is already in the world. 4:4 Little ones, you are of God and you have conquered them, because the One in you is greater than the one in the world. 4:5 They speak like the world because they are part of it, so it listens to them. 4:6 But we are of God, so those who know God listen to us, but those who are not of God don't. This is how you can tell the spirit of truth from the spirit of deception.

Love people because God does

4:7 Loved ones, love each other, for
love comes from God. Those who love
are the ones who know God and are his
children. 4:8 But those who do not love
never knew God, because God is love.
4:9 The love of God appeared among us
when he sent his only-born Son into the
world, so that we could live by means of
him. 4:10 This is love: not that we have
loved God, but that He loved us and
sent his Son as the full payment for our
sins. 4:11 Dear ones, if God loves us in
this way, we should also love each
other.

4:12 No one has ever put God under
investigation, but if we keep loving each

other, God remains in us and his love is perfected in us. 4:13 And we can know we are remaining in him and he in us, because he has given to us from his Spirit. 4:14 We have examined and are testifying that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world. 4:15 Whoever publicly testifies that Jesus is the God-Man is one in whom God remains, and them in God. 4:16 We have known and believed the love God has in us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God in them. 4:17 This is how love is perfected in us, so that we can be bold in the day of judgment, if we are like him in this world. 4:18 There is no fear in love; mature love throws it out, because fear has to do with punishment. So the

one who has no fear has matured in love.

4:19 We love because he loved us first.
4:20 If anyone says “I love God” but hates others, they are lying, because whoever does not love those they can see, cannot love God whom they have not seen. 4:21 And we have this command from God, that whoever loves him must also love other people.

Faith overcomes the world

5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Anointed One is a child of God, and such a child must also love his other children as well. 5:2 And this is how we know we love his other children: by loving God and carrying out his

commands; 5:3 that is the love of God. And his commands are not heavy weights to carry, 5:4 because all who are God's children are conquering the world— it is our faith that conquers it. 5:5 Who conquers the world, if not those who believe that Jesus is the God-Man?

5:6 Jesus the Anointed One is the one who came by means of water and blood — not only water but also blood— and the Spirit is the truthful witness. 5:7 So there are three witnesses: 5:8 the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and they all agree. 5:9 If we accept the witness of mere humans, then the witness of God concerning his Son is greater. 5:10 Whoever puts their trust in the God-Man bears witness of him, but whoever

does not believe God has called him a liar, because they have not believed God's testimony about his Son. 5:11 And this is the testimony: that God gave us eternal life, the life that is in his Son. 5:12 So whoever has the Son has life, but whoever does not have the God-Man does not have life.

Salvation is assured

5:13 I write these things to you so you can understand that you have eternal life, you who put your trust in the Name of the God-Man. 5:14 We can boldly approach God with any request, and if it's according to his will, he will hear us. 5:15 And if we know he hears us, whatever we request is ours.

5:16 If anyone sees another sinning, but in a way that does not lead to death, they should pray and thus save the sinning one's life. (This doesn't apply to a sin that leads to death; they shouldn't pray about that.) 5:17 All injustice is sin and does not lead to death. 5:18 We know that no child of God keeps sinning, but the One born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot touch them.

5:19 We know that we are from God but the whole world is assigned to the evil one. 5:20 Yet we also know that the God-Man is coming, and he has given us understanding so we may know the True One. We are united with the True One, his Son Jesus the Anointed One.

He is the True God and eternal life. 5:21
Little ones, guard yourselves from idols!

2 John

Greeting

1:1 The Elder,

To the chosen master and her little ones in the faith, whom I truly love, and not only I but also everyone who has known the truth. 1:2 Because of the truth that will be with us for eternity, 1:3 we also have favor, mercy, and peace with God the Father and Jesus the Anointed One, the Son of the Father in truth and love.

Love and discernment

1:4 I was overjoyed to find out that your little ones live in the truth, in accordance with the command we received from the Father. 1:5 And now I am asking you, madam, not writing a new command to you but one which we had from the beginning: that we love each other. 1:6 And this is the love we should keep up with, according to his commands; this is the command you heard from the beginning and keep practicing. 1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, who deny that Jesus the Anointed One came in the flesh; such are the Deceiver and the Impostor Anointed One.

1:8 Watch yourselves, so you don't destroy what we worked for but get your full pay. 1:9 Anyone who assumes

leadership but does not remain in the teaching of the Anointed One does not have God. But anyone who remains in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your home; don’t even greet them! 1:11 For the one greeting them participates in their evil work.

1:12 I have much to write to you. But I decided that instead of using paper and ink I would visit you in person and speak to you, so we can all be happy. 1:13 The little ones of your chosen sister greet you.

3 John

Greeting

1:1 The Elder,

To dear Gaius, whom I truly love:

Living out the truth

1:2 Dear one, above all I trust that you are prospering and continuing in good health, just as your soul prospers. 1:3 For I was overjoyed when the brothers and sisters came and testified that you live out the truth. 1:4 Nothing gives me

greater happiness than to hear that my little ones in the faith do this.

1:5 Loved one, you are faithfully carrying out your work for the believers and even for strangers, 1:6 who vouch for your love in the sight of the Congregation. You will do well to send them forward in a way worthy of God. 1:7 After all, they came out of their former nations with nothing, for the sake of the Name. 1:8 So we should pick up the slack for them so we can be co-workers for the truth.

Bad leaders

1:9 I wrote something to the Congregation, but Diotrephes, who loves to be in charge, refuses to accept

us. 1:10 Therefore, if I come I will make known the things he's doing and the wicked gossip he's spreading about us. Not satisfied with that, he also refuses to accept the brothers and sisters, and he prevents people from joining the Congregation and throws them out.

Good leaders

1:11 Dear one, do not imitate evil but only good. The one who does good is from God, but the one who does evil has not seen God. 1:12 Demetrius has a good reputation from everyone and by the truth itself. We concur, and you know our testimony is true.

Final greetings

1:13 I had much to write to you but I don’t want to do so with pen and ink.
1:14 I hope to see you immediately and speak to you face-to-face. Peace to you! The dear ones greet you by name.

Jude

Greeting

1:1 Jude, servant of Jesus the Anointed One but brother of James,

To the dear ones united with God the Father and called by Jesus the Anointed One: 1:2 Abundant mercy and peace and love to you!

Contending for the faith

1:3 Dear ones, I had intended to write to you about our common salvation, but instead I must write to urge you to

contend for the faith that was once and for all handed over to the holy ones. 1:4 For some people have slipped in whose judgment was written about long ago. They violate what is holy, they trade our God's favor for a license to indulge, and they disown our only Owner and Master Jesus the Anointed One. 1:5 So I will remind you, who knew about all this, that the Master saved the people out of Egypt but then destroyed the unbelievers among them.

The fallen angels, and people who are like them

1:6 As for the angels who did not stay in their positions but left their home, he has kept them in prisons of unimaginable gloom for the great

Judgment Day. 1:7 Just like Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, these angels were extremely promiscuous and lusted after different flesh. Their sentence of eternal suffering is an example for us to learn from. 1:8 Likewise, these dreamers pollute flesh and even defy divine authority and slander majesties. 1:9 Yet not even Michael, the Ruling Angel, presumed to pronounce disrespectful judgment when he was disputing with the Slanderer about the body of Moses, but only said, “May the Master impose the penalty on you!” 1:10 But these people mock what they don’t comprehend; with the instinct of unthinking animals, they are skilled at what corrupts them.

1:11 Woe to them! They took the way of Cain; they were scattered like the wages of Balaam; they died as in the rebellion of Korah. 1:12 These are stains at your fellowship meals; they carouse without shame and only guide themselves. They are clouds without rain that are driven away by the wind; they are fruitless late-autumn trees, twice dead! 1:13 They are waves of the churning sea that foam up their shame, wandering stars whose destiny is an eternal gloomy darkness.

1:14 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied this: “Look! The Master is coming with huge numbers of his holy ones, 1:15 to condemn the irreverent for each and every thing they did, and for every twisted word they

spoke against him.” 1:16 These people always grumble and whine in line with their desires, and they brag excessively while flattering others for their own advantage.

A reminder to stay the course

1:17 But you, dear ones, must remember the announcements made earlier by the Ambassadors of our Master Jesus the Anointed One. 1:18 They told you, “In the last time there will be mockers who operate from their own irreverent desires. 1:19 They cause division and are soulish instead of spiritual.” 1:20 But you, dear ones, build yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. 1:21 Keep

yourselves in the love of God and receive the mercy of our Master Jesus the Anointed One into eternal life. 1:22 Be merciful even to those who are undecided, 1:23 mercifully snatching them out of the fire yet hating even the clothing stained by the flesh.

Final blessing

1:24 Now to the One who is able to protect you from harm, and to make you stand in view of his favor in perfect honor, 1:25 to our only God and Savior by means of Jesus the Anointed One, our Master, belongs honor, greatness, strength, and authority, from eternity past and now to eternity future, absolutely!

Revelation

Prologue

1:1 The revelation of Anointed Jesus, which God gave him to show his servants what must suddenly come to pass. It was shown through his commissioned angel to his servant John, 1:2 who testified to the word of God and the martyrdom of Jesus: 1:3 Blessed are both the reader and the hearer of the words of the prophecies, and those who carefully protect what is written in them, because the time is near.

Greetings and praise

1:4 John, to the seven Congregations in the province of Asia: Favor and peace to you from the One who is, who was, and who is coming, from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 1:5 and from Anointed Jesus, the trustworthy martyr and firstborn from the dead, ruler of the kings of the earth who loves us and freed us from our sin by means of his blood, 1:6 making us a kingdom, and priests to his God and Father; honor and mighty rule forever, absolutely!

1:7 Look! He is coming with the clouds and every eye will see him; those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth will grieve. Yes, absolutely! 1:8 “I am the alpha and the omega,” says the Master, “the God who is, who was, and who is coming, the Almighty.”

Jesus appears to John

1:9 I, John, your brother and joint partner in oppression, the Kingdom, and endurance with Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 1:10 I came to be in the Spirit in the Day of the Master and heard behind me a loud voice as from a trumpet, 1:11 “Write down on a scroll what you see, and send it to the seven Congregations: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

1:12 I turned around to see what voice was talking to me, and I saw seven golden lampstands. 1:13 In the center of them was someone human-like, clothed in a full-length garment with a golden sash around his chest. 1:14 His head and hair were as white as wool or snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 1:15 His feet were like burnished copper that has been fired in a furnace, and his voice sounded like the rushing of great amounts of water. 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp, double-edged broadsword. His appearance was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

1:17 When I saw him I dropped at his feet as if I were dead, but he placed his right hand on me and said, “Do not be afraid! I am the First and the Last, 1:18 the Living One who died, but look! I am alive forever, and I hold the keys of Death and Hades. 1:19 So then, write down what you’ve seen, what is now, and what is about to take place. 1:20 The secret meaning of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars

are the messengers of the Congregations, while the seven lampstands are the Congregations themselves."

To the Congregation in Ephesus

2:1 "To the messenger of the Congregation in Ephesus, write this:

"These are the words of the one in firm control of the seven stars in his right hand, the one walking among the seven golden lampstands: 2:2 I have seen what you've been doing, your hard labor and endurance, and that you don't put up with scoundrels. You tested their claims to be Ambassadors (they are not) and found those claims to be false. 2:3 You have endured and upheld my name tirelessly.

2:4 "But I have this against you: You have abandoned the devotion you had at first. 2:5 Remember, then, the height from which you have fallen, and turn to God. Do the things you once did, because if you don't, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. 2:6 But at least you have this going for you: You despise what the Nicolaitans do, just as much as I.

2:7 "Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations! To those who conquer I will give food from the Tree of Life which is in the middle of the Paradise of God.

To the Congregation in Smyrna

2:8 “To the messenger of the Congregation in Smyrna, write this:

“These are the words of the First and the Last, who died and then lived again: 2:9 I have seen the pressure you’ve been under, and your poverty (yet you are rich!), and the slander of those who claim to be Judeans but are not (they are a synagogue of the Adversary). 2:10 But do not fear what you are about to experience. Look! The Slanderer is going to throw you into prison to test you, and you will be under pressure for ten days. Be faithful even to the point of death, and I will award you the gift of life.

2:11 “Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations! Those who conquer will absolutely not be harmed by the Second Death.

To the Congregation in Pergamos

2:12 “To the messenger of the Congregation in Pergamos, write this:

2:13 I have seen where you live— where the Adversary’s throne is. But you hold tightly to my name and have not renounced my faith, even in the days when my faithful martyr Antipas was killed among you— where the Adversary lives.

2:14 “But I have a few things against you: that you have some people there who are devoted to the teaching of Balaam, who advised Balak to set a trap for the people of

Israel and entice them to eat food sacrificed to idols and to practice promiscuity. 2:15 You likewise have some who have adopted and hold tightly to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 2:16 Turn to God, then! Otherwise I will suddenly come to you and battle with them with the broadsword from my mouth.

2:17 “Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations! To those who conquer I will give the hidden manna, and also a white pebble with a new name written on it, which no one knows but the one holding it. The white pebble symbolized a verdict of innocence.

To the Congregation in Thyatira

2:18 “To the messenger of the Congregation in Thyatira, write this:

2:19 “I have seen what you’ve been doing, your love and faith and service, your endurance, and that you are doing more now than you were at first.

2:20 “But I have this against you: you let that woman Jezebel go around saying she’s a prophet, teaching and misleading my servants to practice promiscuity and eat food sacrificed to idols.

Jezebel is a reference to Queen Jezebel, wife of Ahab, who enticed the people of Israel to sacrifice to idols and commit sexual sin. The Bible never identifies Jezebel as a spiritual (non-human) entity, nor does it indict her for failing to obey her husband.

2:21 I gave her time to turn to God, but she won't give up her promiscuity. 2:22 Look! I am throwing her and her clients into a bed of great suffering if they don't turn back from her practices. 2:23 And I will strike her children dead so that all the Congregations will know I am the one who searches minds and hearts; everyone will get what's coming to them!

2:24 "Yet I say this to the rest in Thyatira who do not hold to this teaching, who have not known the so-called 'deep things of the Adversary': I will not put any other weight on you, 2:25 except that you hold on tight until I arrive. 2:26 To the ones who conquer and keep doing what I say to the end, I will give jurisdiction over the nations. 2:27 They will 'shepherd them with a rod of iron and crush them like earthenware jars', just as I too have received jurisdiction from my Father, 2:28 and I will give the ones who conquer the Morning Star.

2:29 "Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations!

To the Congregation in Sardis

3:1 "To the messenger of the Congregation in Sardis, write this:

"These are the words of the one having the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I have seen what you've been doing, with your reputation of being alive— but you are dead! 3:2 Wake up and reinforce what little remains and is about to die, because you have not fulfilled your work before my God. 3:3 Remember, then, what you have received and

heard; guard it and turn to God. But if you don't stay alert, I will come like a thief, without warning.

3:4 "But you have a few people there in Sardis who have not contaminated their clothes; they will walk with me in white, because they are worthy. 3:5 Those who conquer will likewise be clothed in white garments, and I will definitely not erase their names from the Book of Life but will acknowledge them before my Father and his angels.

3:6 "Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations!

To the Congregation in Philadelphia

3:7 "To the messenger of the Congregation in Philadelphia, write this:

"These are the words of the one who is holy and true, the one having the Key of David that opens what no one can lock and locks what no one can open. 3:8 I have seen what you've been doing, but look! I have set before you an open door that no one can shut, because you have little power yet you guard my Word and have not renounced my name.

3:9 "Look! I am making those of the congregation of the Adversary (who lie and say they are Judeans but are not) come and worship at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. 3:10 Since you guarded the Word of my endurance, I will also guard you out of the hour of trial that is about to come upon the whole inhabited world, to test all

who live on the earth. 3:11 I am coming suddenly! Hold tightly to what you have so that no one can take your reward.

3:12 “Those who conquer will be made pillars in the temple of my God and will never go outside of it again. And I will write on them the name of my God and the name of his city, the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven from him, and my new name.

3:13 “Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations!

To the Congregation in Laodicea

3:14 “To the messenger of the Congregation in Laodicea, write this:

“These are the words of the True One, the trustworthy martyr, the originator of God’s creation. 3:15 I have seen what you’ve been doing. You are neither hot nor cold; if only you were one or the other! 3:16 And so since you are tepid— neither hot nor cold— I am about to vomit you out of my mouth! 3:17 You say ‘I am rich and have amassed wealth and need nothing’, but you cannot see that you are wretched, pitiful, destitute, blind, and naked.

3:18 “I advise you to buy from me refined gold so you can be truly rich, white clothes so your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and eye salve to anoint your eyes so you can see. 3:19 Those I am fond of I rebuke and instruct. So be filled with desire, and turn to God!

3:20 “Look! I have been standing here knocking on the doors. If anyone hears the sound and opens up the doors, I will enter in and dine with them, and they with me. 3:21 To those who conquer I will grant the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I conquered and sat with my Father on his throne.

3:22 “Let those with ears pay attention to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregations!”

The throne in heaven

4:1 After these things I looked, and what did I see but a door opened up in heaven! Then the trumpet-like voice I had heard before said to me, “Come up here, and I will show you what must come to pass after these things.”

4:2 Immediately I was in the Spirit, and look! A throne set in heaven, 4:3 and on the throne sits someone whose appearance is like the precious stones jasper and carnelian. Surrounding the throne is a rainbow like an emerald, These precious gems have a variety of colors 4:4 and twenty-four thrones with twenty-four elders sitting on them, with the elders clothed in white garments and wearing golden victor’s crowns on their heads. 4:5 Flashes of light, sounds, and thunder issue from the throne, and in front of the throne are seven flaming torches which are the seven spirits of God. 4:6 Beyond them is a glassy, crystal-like sea.

The throne is in the center of a circle formed by four creatures covered with eyes from front to back. 4:7 The first is like a lion, the second is like a calf, the third has a human-

like face, and the fourth is like a flying eagle. 4:8 Each one has six wings and is loaded with eyes, inside and out. Day and night they never stop saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Master God Almighty, who was, and is, and is coming!”

4:9 Whenever the creatures give honor and esteem and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever), 4:10 the twenty four elders fall down before the one on the throne and worship him who lives forever. Throwing their crowns before him they say, 4:11 “You are worthy, our Master and God, to receive honor and esteem and power, because you formed everything by your will.”

The Lamb is worthy

5:1 Then in the right hand of the one sitting on the throne I saw a scroll. It had writing on both sides and was sealed with seven seals. 5:2 And I saw a strong angel announcing in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open up the scroll and break its seals?” 5:3 But no one was able, not in the sky or the earth or beneath the earth, to open the scroll and look at it. 5:4 I cried and sobbed because no one was found worthy to open up the scroll and look at it. 5:5 But one of the elders says to me, “Don’t cry; look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered in order to open up the scroll and its seals.”

5:6 Then I saw a Lamb standing in the middle of the throne surrounded by the four creatures and the elders. It appeared to have been slaughtered, and it had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

5:7 It came and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne, 5:8 and when it did, the four creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb. Each of them had a harp and a golden bowl filled with incense, which is the prayers of the holy people.

5:9 They sing a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals because you were slaughtered, and with your blood you bought us for God from every tribe and language and people group and nation. 5:10 You made them a kingdom and priests to God, and they will reign on the earth.”

According to https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/revelation/reve 5/revelation-5-9.html, manuscript study strongly indicates that elders include themselves in the company of the redeemed. B four creatures are also singing this song, and it is likely they w refer to the redeemed as “them” in response to the song of the elders.

5:11 I looked and heard the voices of many angels surrounding the throne and the creatures and the elders; they numbered in the ten-thousands, even the millions! 5:12 They shouted loudly, “The Lamb who had been slaughtered is worthy to take the power, the wealth, the wisdom, the strength, the esteem, the honor, and the blessing!” 5:13 And every created thing in the sky, the earth, beneath the earth, and on or in the sea— I heard them all saying, “Blessing and esteem, honor and mighty rule belong forever to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb!” 5:14 Then the four

creatures said, “Absolutely!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

The first six Seals

6:1 I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four creatures say in a voice like thunder, “Come!” 6:2 Suddenly there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow and wore a victor’s crown, and went out conquering with the intent to keep on conquering.

6:3 When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second creature say “Come!” 6:4 And out came another horse, a fiery one. Its rider was given a large sword and granted the power to take peace from the earth so that people would slaughter each other.

6:5 When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third creature say “Come!” Suddenly there was a black horse whose rider held a pair of scales. 6:6 And I heard a voice from the center of the four creatures saying, “A day’s ration of wheat for a day’s wages, and three days’ ration of barley for a day’s wages… and don’t damage the olive oil and the wine!”

6:7 When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth creature say “Come!” 6:8 Suddenly there was a green horse whose rider was labeled Death, accompanied by Hades. They were given jurisdiction over a fourth of the earth to kill with the sword, with famine, with other causes, and with the wild animals of the earth.

6:9 When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw at the base of the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered on account of the Word of God and the testimony they held. 6:10 They shouted loudly, “How long, holy and true Master, until you judge the earth dwellers and avenge our blood?” 6:11 Then each of them was given a white robe and told to be patient for a little longer for their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, who were about to be killed as they were.

6:12 I watched the Lamb open the sixth seal, and there was a great disturbance; the sun became black as goat hair cloth and the whole moon became like blood. 6:13 Then the stars fell from the sky to the earth, something like when a strong wind shakes a fig tree and causes it to cast its overripe figs. 6:14 The sky recoiled as when a scroll is rolled up, and every mountain and island was shifted from its place.

6:15 Then the kings of the earth, the great ones, the military commanders of thousands, the rich, the strong, the servant and the free all hid themselves in caves and in crevices in the mountains. 6:16 They said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one sitting on the throne and from the fury of the Lamb! 6:17 For the day of their great fury has arrived, and who is able to stand?”

The 144,000 are sealed

7:1 After this I saw four angels standing on the four cardinal points of the earth, meaning north, south, east, west. holding back the four winds to keep them from blowing on the earth

or sea or any trees. 7:2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the direction of the rising sun and possessing the Seal of the Living God. The angel called out in a loud voice to the four other angels, who were given permission to harm the earth and the sea, 7:3 “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we seal the servants of our God on their foreheads.” 7:4 I heard the number of the sealed ones, and it was one hundred forty-four thousand from all the tribes of Israel, twelve thousand from each one: 7:5 Judah, Reuben, Gad, 7:6 Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, 7:7 Simeon, Levi, Issachar, 7:8 Zebulon, Joseph, and Benjamin.

The crowd from many nations

7:9 After these things, suddenly there was a crowd so large that no one could possibly count the number of people! They came from all the nations, tribes, people groups, and languages, and were standing before the throne and the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. 7:10 They shouted loudly, “Salvation to our God sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb!” 7:11 Then all the angels standing around the throne, as well as the elders and the four creatures, fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God: 7:12 “Truly blessing, honor, wisdom, thanks, esteem, power, and strength belong to our God forever, absolutely!”

7:13 Then one of the elders asked me, “These who have been clothed in white robes: who are they and where did they come from?”

7:14 And I answered, “Sir, only you know!”

“These are the people coming out of the Great Oppression,” he replied. “They soaked and whitened their robes in the blood of the Lamb, 7:15 and as a result they are before the throne of God. They offer divine service to him day and night in his temple, and the one sitting on the throne will shelter them personally. 7:16 No longer will they go hungry; no longer will they thirst; no longer will the sun beat down on them with its heat. 7:17 For the Lamb, the one in the center of the throne, will shepherd them and guide them to wells of water. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”

The seventh Seal

8:1 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, it became silent in heaven for half an hour. 8:2 Then I saw the seven angels standing before God, and they were given seven trumpets.

8:3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden frankincense container. He was given a lot of incense, which is the prayers of the holy people, to place on the golden altar before the throne. 8:4 And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the holy people ascended from the angel’s hand to the presence of God. 8:5 Then the angel took the frankincense container and completely filled it with fire from the altar, then threw it into the earth causing thunder, rumbling, lightning, and an earthquake.

The first four Trumpets

8:6 Then the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. 8:7 The first trumpet sounded, and there came hail and fire mingled with blood. It was thrown to the earth, and a third of the earth, a third of the trees, and all the green grass was burned up.

8:8 The second trumpet sounded, and a huge blazing mountain was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea became blood, 8:9 a third of the sea creatures with souls died, and a third of the ships disintegrated.

8:10 The third trumpet sounded, and a huge star burning like a torch fell out of the sky, landing on a third of the streams and springs 8:11 (the star is called Bitterness Traditionally known as Wormwood, after a bitter herb). A third of the waters became poisonous, and many people died from drinking it.

8:12 The fourth trumpet sounded, and a third of the sun, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars were struck with darkness, such that the light of both day and night was reduced by a third. 8:13 Then I saw an eagle flying through the sky, and I heard it shout, “Woe, woe, woe upon the earth dwellers, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the remaining three angels!”

The fifth and sixth Trumpets

9:1 The fifth trumpet sounded, and I saw a star that had fallen out of the sky, and he was given the keys to the shaft of the Abyss. 9:2 When he opened the shaft, smoke went up

from it like the smoke from a huge furnace, darkening the sun and the air. 9:3 Out of the smoke to the earth came locusts, and they were given permission like that of the earth's scorpions. 9:4 The locusts were told not to harm the pastures of the earth, nor anything green, nor any of the trees, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 9:5 And they were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. The torture was like the agony of a scorpion sting, 9:6 and in those days people will seek death but not find it; they will want to die but death will elude them.

9:7 The locusts resembled horses prepared for battle. On their heads they had what looked like golden victor's crowns, and they had faces like humans. 9:8 Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9:9 They wore body armor that seemed to be made of iron, and the sound of their wings was like many horses and chariots running into battle. 9:10 The locusts had tails with stingers like scorpions, and the tails were allowed to harm people for five months. 9:11 They had as king over them the Angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon. Abaddon and Apollyon mean "Destroyer."

9:12 The first "woe" is gone, but look! There are still two to come after these things!

9:13 The sixth trumpet sounded, and I heard a voice coming from the four projections on the golden altar before God. 9:14 It told the sixth trumpeter, "Release the four angels confined to the great river Euphrates!" 9:15 So the four angels were

released, having been prepared for this hour, day, month, and year, to kill a third of mankind. 9:16 The number of the cavalry troops was two hundred million; I heard that number.

9:17 This is how I perceived the horses and riders in my vision: They had body armor that was fiery red, deep blue, and bright yellow. The horses' heads were like lions' heads, and out of their mouths go fire and smoke and sulphur. 9:18 From these three disasters— the fire, the smoke, and the sulphur coming out of their mouths— a third of mankind was killed. 9:19 The horses' power to kill is in their mouths and tails, because their tails are like serpents who inflict injury with their heads.

9:20 The rest of mankind who were not killed in these three disasters refused to turn away from what they had done; they did not stop worshiping demons and idols of gold, silver, copper, stone, and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk around. 9:21 Neither did they turn away from their murders, their sorceries, or drug use their promiscuity, or their thefts.

The angel and the little scroll

10:1 Then I saw another strong angel descending out of the sky. He had been clothed with a cloud and there was a rainbow over his head. His face was like the sun and his feet were like pillars of fire. 10:2 In his right hand he held a little open scroll. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land.

10:3 He called out in a loud voice like the roar of a lion, and the seven thunders responded. 10:4 When they did, I intended to write it down but I heard a voice from the sky saying, “Seal up what the seven thunders said and do not write it down.”

10:5 Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and the land lifted his right hand to the sky. 10:6 He swore an oath to the Eternal Living One, who formed the sky, the earth, the sea, and all they contain, that there will be no more delay. 10:7 In the day that the seventh angel sounds the trumpet the secret of God will be completed, which is the good news he announced to his servants the prophets.

10:8 Then the voice I had heard from the sky spoke to me again and said, “Go and take the open scroll from the hand of the angel standing on the sea and the land.” 10:9 So I went to the angel and asked for the little scroll, and he replied, “Take it and eat it; it will upset your belly but taste as sweet as honey in your mouth.” 10:10 Then I took the little scroll out of his hand and ate it, and it did in fact taste as sweet as honey in my mouth but upset my belly. 10:11 Then he says to me, “You must prophesy again to people groups, nations, languages, and many kings.”

The Two Witnesses

11:1 Then I was given a stick like a measuring rod and was told, “Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar and those worshiping at it. 11:2 But leave out the outer court and don’t measure it, because it was given to the other

nations, who will trample the holy city for forty-two months. 11:3 And I will give my two witnesses the charge of prophesying for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”

11:4 These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands set before the Master of the Earth. 11:5 And if anyone decides to harm them, fire goes out of their mouths and consumes their enemies; this is how whoever decides to harm them must die. 11:6 These two have permission to lock up the sky so it doesn’t rain for as long as they prophesy, to turn the waters into blood, and to strike the earth with all kinds of disasters as often as they choose. 11:7 And when they complete their testimony, the beast ascending out of the Abyss will fight and conquer them, and kill them.

11:8 Their corpses will lie in the main square of that city which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt— that is, where their Master was crucified. 11:9 People from every group and tribe and language among the nations gawk at the corpses for three and a half days, refusing them burial. 11:10 The earth dwellers gloat over them and even send gifts to each other, because these two prophets had tormented them. 11:11 But after the three and a half days, the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell upon those who watched. 11:12 Then they heard a loud voice from the sky say to the two, “Come up here!” and they ascended into the sky in a cloud while their enemies watched. 11:13 In that very hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven

thousand individuals were killed, and the survivors were gripped with fear and gave honor to the God of heaven.

11:14 The second “woe” has passed, but look! The third “woe” is coming rapidly.

The seventh Trumpet

11:15 Then the seventh trumpet sounded, and there were loud voices in the sky saying, “The kingdom of the world now belongs to our Master and his Anointed One, who will reign forever!” 11:16 Then the twenty-four elders sitting on thrones before God fell down on their faces and worshiped God: 11:17 “We thank you, oh Master God Almighty, who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and assumed your reign! 11:18 The nations were angry and your rage came, and now is the time for the dead to be judged—to repay your servants the prophets and the small and great who fear your name, and to ruin those who ruin the earth.”

11:19 Then the temple of God in heaven was opened so that the Ark of the Covenant could be seen inside, and there came lightning, rumblings, thunder, an earthquake, and large hail.

The woman and the dragon

12:1 Then a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, the moon beneath her feet, and a victor’s crown of twelve stars on her head. 12:2 She is pregnant and

crying out because of the torture of labor pains as she is giving birth.

12:3 Another sign was also seen in heaven, and look! A huge, fiery dragon with seven heads and ten horns, with each head wearing a royal crown. 12:4 Its tail dragged a third of the stars of the sky and threw them onto the earth. It stood before the woman with the intention of consuming the child as soon as it was born. 12:5 She gave birth to a male child who is to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron. But her child was snatched up to God and his throne, 12:6 and the woman fled into the desert where there is a place prepared by God. There they will nourish her for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days.

12:7 Then there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and its angels fought back. 12:8 But they were not strong enough and there was no more place for them in heaven. 12:9 So the great dragon, the ancient serpent called the Slanderer and the Adversary who misleads the whole inhabited world, was thrown along with his angels to the earth.

12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, “Now salvation, power, and the kingdom of our God has arrived, as well as the jurisdiction of his Anointed One, because the accuser of our sisters and brothers, the one who accused them before God day and night, has been thrown out! 12:11 They conquered him by means of the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, even to the point of giving up their lives. 12:12 On account of this, be happy all you who live

in heaven! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the Slanderer has come down to you and is filled with great rage, seeing that his time is short."

12:13 Now when the dragon saw that it had been thrown to the earth, it pursued the woman that had given birth to the male child. 12:14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle so that she could fly from the presence of the serpent into the desert. She was taken to the place prepared for her to be nourished for a time, times, and half a time.

12:15 So the serpent shot out from its mouth water like a river so it would carry her off. 12:16 But the earth helped the woman and opened up its mouth to swallow the river that the dragon had shot out of its mouth. 12:17 The dragon then went off in a rage and prepared to do battle with the rest of her offspring who guard the injunctions of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And it stood on the seashore.

The Beast from the sea

13:1 Then I saw a beast rise out of the sea, and it had ten horns and seven heads. On each horn was a royal crown, and on each head was a slanderous name. 13:2 This beast was like a leopard with a bear's paws and a lion's mouth. The dragon gave this beast his power, his throne, and wide-ranging jurisdiction. 13:3 One of the beast's heads appeared to have sustained a mortal wound but was healed. The whole earth was astounded at the beast, 13:4 and they worshiped the dragon for giving jurisdiction to it. They said, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight it?"

13:5 The beast was given a mouth with which to speak outrageous and slanderous things, and its jurisdiction would be for forty-two months. 13:6 It opened up its mouth to slander God and his name, and his sanctuary and all who live in heaven. 13:7 And it was allowed to do battle with the holy people and conquer them, as well as to have jurisdiction over all tribes, people groups, languages, and nations. 13:8 All the earth dwellers will worship it, whose names have not been written in the scroll of life of the Lamb who had been slaughtered from the establishment of the world.

13:9 Whoever has an ear had better listen! 13:10 If anyone is to go into captivity, they will be taken; if anyone is to be killed with the sword, they will be killed. Such is the endurance and faith of the holy people.

The Beast from the earth

13:11 Then I saw another beast ascending out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb but spoke like a dragon. 13:12 It wields all the jurisdiction of the first beast and makes all the earth dwellers worship it (the one that was healed of the fatal wound). 13:13 It does great miraculous signs, such as making fire fall from the sky to the earth in front of everyone. 13:14 And it misleads the earth dwellers through the signs it was given to do in the presence of the first beast.

It told them to make an image of the beast that had the fatal wound but lived. 13:15 It was allowed to give spirit to the image of the beast so that it could talk, and to put to death

anyone who would refuse to worship the image. 13:16 It also forces everyone— small or great, rich or poor, free or slave — to accept an inscription on their right hand or forehead. 13:17 No one will be able to buy or sell without having the inscription of either the name or the number of the beast.

13:18 This takes wisdom; let the one with insight compute the number of the beast, because it is the number of a person. The number is six-hundred sixty-six.

The 144,000 follow the Lamb

14:1 Then suddenly I saw the Lamb on Mount Zion, and with him were one hundred forty-four thousand people with his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 14:2 And I heard a sound coming from the sky; it was like the noise of a lot of rushing water or loud thunder. It seemed to be harpists playing their harps, 14:3 and they are singing a new song before the throne, the four creatures, and the elders. No one could learn the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who were bought from the earth.

14:4 These are the ones who were not polluted with women, for they are unmarried.

The word for "unmarried" is almost exclusively used for females. If part of the significance of the 12,000 from each tribe is a reference to a military force, it should be noted that one requirement for Jewish soldiers going into battle was sexual purity (Deut. 23:9-10, 1 Sam. 21:5, 2 Sam. 11:11). This is consistent with the overall purity theme in Revelation.

They follow the Lamb wherever he goes, having been

bought from mankind as a first harvest to God and to the Lamb. 14:5 No deceit was found in them, because they are flawless.

Three angels

14:6 Then I saw another angel flying in midair, having the ageless good news to bring to those on the earth— the nations of every tribe and language and people group. 14:7 The angel announced loudly, “Fear God and give him honor, because the hour of his judgment has come! Worship the one who made the sky and the earth and the sea and the springs of water!”

14:8 A second angel followed: “Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the Great, that made all the nations drink the wine of the fury of its promiscuity!”

14:9 A third angel followed: “If anyone worships the beast and its image, and takes its inscription on their forehead or right hand, 14:10 they will drink the wine of the fury of God, mixed full-strength with his rage, and will be tortured in fire and sulphur before the angels of the holy people and the Lamb. 14:11 The smoke of their torture rises forever; there is no relief day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, and who take the inscription of its name.”

14:12 This requires the endurance and faith of the holy people, who guard the injunctions of God and the faith of Jesus. 14:13 Then I heard a voice from the sky say, “Write this: Happy are those who die belonging to the Master from

now on! “Yes,” says the Spirit, “They will rest from their labors because their actions follow them.”

The harvest and the winepress

14:14 Then suddenly there was a white cloud, and on the cloud sat someone human-like. On his head was a golden victor’s crown, and in his hand was a sharp sickle. 14:15 Another angel came out of the temple shouting loudly to the one sitting on the cloud, “Send out your sickle and reap, for the time has come to reap the shriveled harvest of the earth.” 14:16 So the one sitting on the cloud threw his sickle on the earth and reaped it.

14:17 Another angel with a sharp sickle came out of the temple in heaven. 14:18 Then another angel, who had jurisdiction over the fire, came from the altar and shouted to the one with the sharp sickle, “Send out your sickle and pick the clusters from the vine of the earth, because the grapes are ripe!” 14:19 And the angel threw his sickle to the earth and picked the grapes, then threw them into the winepress of God’s great rage. 14:20 The winepress was used outside the city, and blood came out of it to the point where it rose to the height of a horse’s bridle for a distance of 184 miles.

The sea of glass and the Temple

15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, huge and perplexing: seven angels with the seven last disasters, since with them the fury of God is fully spent. 15:2 And I saw a glassy sea mixed with fire. Standing next to it were those

who had conquered the beast, its image, and the number of its name, and they held glassy harps from God.

15:3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: “Great and awesome are your actions, oh Master God Almighty! Just and true are your ways, King of the Nations! 15:4 Who will not fear you, Master, and honor your name? For you alone are clean; all the nations will come and worship before you because your equitable decrees were revealed.”

15:5 After these things I saw that the Temple of the Sanctuary of the Testimony in heaven was opened. 15:6 Out of it came seven angels with the seven disasters, clothed in clean, shining linen with golden sashes around their chests. 15:7 And one of the four creatures gave them seven golden bowls filled with the fury of God, who lives forever. 15:8 The temple was completely filled with the smoke of the majesty and power of God, and no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven disasters of the seven angels were fully discharged.

The seven Bowls

16:1 Then I heard a loud voice coming out of the temple telling the seven angels, “Go and pour out the seven bowls of the fury of God onto the earth.”

16:2 The first went out and poured his bowl onto the earth, and awful, terrible ulcers broke out on the people who had the inscription of the beast and were worshiping its image.

16:3 The second poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead person, and every living thing in the sea died.

16:4 The third poured out his bowl into the rivers and springs of water, which all became blood. 16:5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, “You who were and are, the one who is clean, have judged these things as they deserve, 16:6 because it is the blood of the holy people and prophets that they spilled, so you are right to give them blood to drink.” 16:7 And I heard the altar say, “Yes, Master God the Almighty, your judgments are true and right!”

16:8 The fourth poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given permission to scorch people with fire. 16:9 They were scorched so badly that they cursed the name of the God who had control over these disasters, and they refused to turn to him and give him honor.

16:10 The fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in agony 16:11 and cursed the God of heaven due to their miseries and ulcers, and they still would not change their ways.

16:12 The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and it dried up to prepare passage for the kings from the rising of the sun. 16:13 Then I saw three unclean spirits resembling frogs come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. 16:14 They are the spirits of demons that perform signs, and they go out to the

kings of the whole inhabited world to gather them for battle in the days of the great God Almighty.

16:15 “Look, I am coming like a thief! Blessed are those who stay alert and keep their clothes on, so that they don’t walk around naked and people see their indecency.”

16:16 When they all had assembled at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon, 16:17 the seventh poured out his bowl on the air. And a loud voice came out of the temple saying, “It has come to pass!” 16:18 Then there was lightning, rumbling, thunder, and a huge earthquake. There had never been an earthquake of this magnitude in all of human history, the quake was so big. 16:19 The city split into three parts, and the cities of the other nations fell. And God remembered Babylon the Great, to give her the cup with the wine of his fury and anger. 16:20 Every island fled and the mountains were found no more. 16:21 Then hailstones weighing a hundred pounds start falling from the sky onto people and they cursed God on account of it, because it was such an extreme disaster.

Babylon rides the Beast

17:1 Then one of the seven angels with the bowls came and talked with me. He said, “Here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot sitting on many waters. 17:2 The kings of the earth have been promiscuous with her, and the earth dwellers have been made drunk with the wine of her promiscuity.”

17:3 He carried me away in spirit to the desert, and there I saw a woman riding a red beast covered with slanderous names and having seven heads and ten horns. 17:4 She was clothed in purple and red, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She had in her hand a golden chalice filled with the disgusting filth of her promiscuity. 17:5 On her forehead was written a cryptic name: “Babylon the Great, mother of harlots and the disgusting things of earth.”

17:6 I saw that she was drunk with the blood of the holy people and those who testify of Jesus, and I was aghast at the sight of her. 17:7 Then the angel said to me, “Why are you shocked? I will explain to you the secret of the woman and the seven-headed, ten-horned beast that carries her.

17:8 “The beast you saw was, and is not now, and is about to ascend from the Abyss and then be taken into oblivion. The earth dwellers whose names have not been written on the Scroll of Life from the establishment of the world will be in awe of the beast that was, is not now, and will be.

17:9 “This takes wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains the woman sits upon. 17:10 These are seven kings; five have fallen, one is now, and the other has not yet come. But when he does, he will only remain for a short time. 17:11 The beast that was and is not now, is an eighth that comes from the seven but is proceeding to oblivion.

17:12 “The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet acquired a kingdom, but they will share royal jurisdiction with the beast for one hour. 17:13 They will all be in agreement

and give their power and jurisdiction to the beast. 17:14 They will battle the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them, since he is the Master of Masters and King of Kings, and those with him are appointed and chosen and trustworthy."

17:15 Then he says to me, "The waters you saw which the harlot is sitting upon are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. 17:16 The ten horns you saw, and the beast, will despise the harlot; they will obliterate her, strip her naked, consume her flesh, and set her on fire. 17:17 This is because God put it in their hearts to do his bidding, and to unite in giving their kingdom to the beast until the words of God are fulfilled. 17:18 And the woman you saw is the great city that has sovereignty over the kings of the earth."

The judgment of Babylon

18:1 After these things I saw another angel descending from heaven with great authority. The earth was illuminated with his majesty, 18:2 and he called out in a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the Great! It has become the haunt of demons and a prison for every unclean spirit, unclean bird, unclean beast, and all that is despised. 18:3 For all the nations and kings of the earth have drunk the wine of the fury of her promiscuity, and the merchants of the earth became rich from the power of her indulgence."

18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, so you don't share in her sins or take her punishment! 18:5 For her sins have piled up to heaven and God has not forgotten her crimes. 18:6 Repay her as she

has paid you and do twice as much to her as she's done to you. Mix her a double helping from the cup she served to you. 18:7 Hand her as much torture and mourning as the honor and indulgence she demanded for herself, because in her heart she says, 'I sit as queen; I am not a widow and will never mourn.' 18:8 "So in one day all these disasters will come: death, mourning, and starvation. She will be burned down because the Master God Almighty is judging her.

Three woes for Babylon

18:9 The kings of the earth who indulged in promiscuity with her will sob and grieve when they see the smoke from her burning. 18:10 They will stand far away out of the fear of her torture and say, 'Woe, woe to the great city, mighty Babylon, because your judgment came in just one hour!'

18:11 "The merchants of the earth sob and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo anymore: 18:12 gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen of purple and silk and crimson, all kinds of citrus wood, all kinds of things made of ivory or expensive wood, copper, iron, marble, 18:13 cinnamon, ginger, incense, perfumed oil, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine wheat flour, grain, livestock, sheep, horses, carriages— and the bodies and souls of people.

18:14 " 'Babylon, the payoff that your soul craved has deserted you; all your delicacies and fancy things are gone from you and cannot be found.' 18:15 The merchants who became rich from her will stand far away out of the fear of her torture, sobbing and mourning 18:16 and saying, 'Woe,

woe to the great city that was clothed in fine purple and crimson linen, and was decorated with gold, precious stones, and pearls! 18:17 For in only one hour all her immense wealth was desolated.' "

Every sea captain, every sailor and mariner, and all who make their living from the sea stood far away. 18:18 When they came out and saw the smoke of her burning they said, "Who is like that great city?" 18:19 And they threw dust on their heads and went out sobbing and mourning: "Woe, woe to that great city, by whose wealth all who have ships on the sea made themselves rich, for she was desolated in just one hour! 18:20 But celebrate her demise, heaven and holy people and Ambassadors and prophets, for God has passed your sentence upon her instead."

Babylon's eternal doom

18:21 Then a strong angel lifted up a huge stone the size of a millstone and threw it into the sea and said, "This is how the great city Babylon will be thrown down and never found again! 18:22 No longer will the sounds of harpists and musicians and floutists and trumpeters be heard in you, Babylon; no more will designers of every kind of art be found in you; never again will anyone hear the sound of industry in you. 18:23 Not the tiniest light will shine in you again; the voices of bridegrooms and brides will never be heard in you again. For your merchants were the world's magnates and by your sorcery they mislead all the nations." 18:24 And in

her was discovered the blood of all the prophets and holy people who had been slaughtered on the earth.

Three cheers for Babylon's doom

19:1 After these things I heard the sound of a huge crowd in heaven saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, honor, and power to our God, 19:2 because his judgments are true and right. For he judged the great harlot who destroyed the earth with her promiscuity, and avenged the blood of his servants shed by her hand." 19:3 A second time they shouted, "Hallelujah! The smoke from her burning rises forever!"

19:4 Then the twenty-four elders and the four creatures fell down and worshiped God sitting on his throne: "Hallelujah, absolutely!" 19:5 And a voice came out of the throne saying, "Praise our God, all his servants, and let the small and the great fear him!"

19:6 Then I heard a sound like a huge crowd or the rushing of many waters or strong thunder saying, "Hallelujah, for Master God Almighty has established his reign! 19:7 Let us be happy and rejoice and give him honor, because the wedding of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready." 19:8 And she was given shining, clean linen to wear, because the fine linen represents the just reward of the holy people.

19:9 Then the angel says to me, "Write this: Happy is the one who has been invited to the wedding dinner of the Lamb!" And he adds, "These are the genuine words of God." 19:10 I

fell at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “No! I am a co-servant with you and your sisters and brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Jesus returns to defeat the Beast

19:11 Then I saw the sky open up, and suddenly there was a white horse, whose rider is called Trustworthy and True, who judges and battles righteously. 19:12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many royal crowns, as well as a name written that only he knows. 19:13 He is clothed in a garment that had been immersed in blood, and his name is called The Word of God.

19:14 The armies of heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in clean, fine, white linen. 19:15 And out of his mouth goes a sharp broadsword with which to strike the nations. He will shepherd the nations with an iron rod, and he himself treads out the winepress of the fury and anger of God Almighty. 19:16 On his garment and thigh had been written his name: King of Kings and Master of Masters.

19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, who called out in a loud voice to all the birds and other things that fly in midair, “Come here and gather for the great feast of God, 19:18 that you may eat the flesh of kings, rulers over thousands, the strong, horses and riders, free and slave, small and great!”

19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered to do battle with the one riding the horse and his army. 19:20 But the beast was captured, along with the false prophet who had performed signs on its behalf and mislead people into taking its inscription and worshiping it. They were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. 19:21 The rest were killed by the broadsword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

The Thousand Years

20:1 Then I saw an angel descending from heaven with the key to the Abyss and a large chain in his hand. 20:2 He seized the dragon— the ancient serpent, the Slanderer, the Adversary— and confined him for a thousand years. 20:3 He threw him into the Abyss and then locked and sealed it over him, so that he could not mislead the nations until the thousand years were finished. After that, he must be released for a short time.

20:4 Then I saw thrones, and sitting on them were judges. The souls of those who had been beheaded on account of the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or its image or accepted its inscription on their forehead or hand, lived and reigned with the Anointed One for a thousand years. 20:5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were over.

This is the first resurrection. 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have a part in the first resurrection! The second death

has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of the Anointed One, and they will reign with him during the thousand years.

Satan is judged

20:7 When the thousand years are completed, the Adversary will be released from his prison. 20:8 He will go out to mislead the nations in the four corners of the earth— Gog and Magog— to gather them for battle; the number of them is like the grains of sand on the seashore. 20:9 They went up all across the earth and surrounded the encampment of the holy people and the beloved city, but fire came down from the sky and consumed them. 20:10 Then the Slanderer, the one misleading them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were. They will be tortured day and night forever.

Everyone else is judged

20:11 Then I saw a large white throne, and there was someone sitting on it. The earth and sky fled away from his presence but there was no place for them. 20:12 Then I saw the dead, the great and small, standing before the throne. Scrolls were opened, and then another scroll which is the Book of Life. The dead were judged according to their actions as recorded in the scrolls. 20:13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and everyone was judged according to their actions.

20:14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire; this Lake of Fire is the second death. 20:15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the Book of Life was thrown into the Lake of Fire.

The new earth and sky

21:1 Then I saw a new sky and a new earth, because the first sky and earth had gone away and the sea is no more. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, descending from heaven and God, having been prepared as a bride dressed for her groom.

21:3 Then I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! The sanctuary of God is with people. He will reside with them; they will be his people and he will be with them. 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, or mourning, or commotion, or misery, because the old ways are gone.”

21:5 Then the one sitting on the throne said, “Look! I am making everything new.” And he added, “Write this down, because these words are trustworthy and true.” 21:6 He continued, “It has come to pass! I am the alpha and the omega, the start and the finish. I will give freely to the thirsty from the well of the Water of Life. 21:7 Those who conquer will inherit all this; I will be their God and they will be my child. 21:8 But the cowardly, the untrustworthy, the disgusting, the murderers, the promiscuous, the sorcerers, the idolators, and all liars, will have their share of the lake burning with fire and sulphur, which is the second death.”

The new Jerusalem

21:9 Then one of the seven angels with the bowls of the final seven disasters came out and spoke to me: “Here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit to a huge, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God. 21:11 It radiated the majesty of God the way a very precious stone such as crystalline jasper reflects light.

21:12 It had a huge, high wall around it with twelve doorways, with an angel at each one, and over the doorways were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. 21:13 There were three doorways on each of the four sides: east, north, south, and west. 21:14 The wall also had twelve foundations, named for the twelve Ambassadors of the Lamb.

21:15 Then the one speaking with me had a golden measuring stick with which to measure the city, its doorways, and its wall. 21:16 The city is laid out in a square; the length and width are equal. It measured 1,380 miles in length, width, and also height. 21:17 The wall itself measured 200 feet thick according to standard human measure, which the angel is using.

21:18 The wall is composed of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as clear as glass. 21:19 The wall’s foundations have been decorated with every kind of precious stone: the first with jasper, the second with sapphire, the third with chalcedony, the four with emerald, 21:20 the fifth with onyx,

the sixth with ruby, the seventh with chrysolite, the eight with beryl, the ninth with topaz, the tenth with chrysoprase, the eleventh with hyacinth, and the twelfth with amethyst. 21:21 The twelve doorways were composed of twelve pearls— each one from a single pearl. And the city square was made of pure gold, as clear and transparent as glass.

21:22 I saw no temple in the city, because the Master God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 21:23 The city has no need of the sun or moon to shine on it, because the majesty of God is its light and the Lamb is its lamp. 21:24 The nations will walk about in its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their majesty into it. 21:25 The city doors will never be locked on any day, because there will be no night, 21:26 and the majesty and honor of the other nations will be brought to it. 21:27 But the vulgar, the disgusting, the false— whoever wasn't written in the Lamb's Book of Life— will absolutely not be granted entry.

The end of death and suffering

22:1 Then the angel showed me the River of the Water of Life, shining like a crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 22:2 In the middle of the city square and on either side of the river was the Tree of Life, which produces fruit in each of the twelve months of the year. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. 22:3 The Curse will be no more!

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will offer him divine service. 22:4 They will gaze on

his face and have his name on their foreheads. 22:5 There will be no more night, and thus no need for the light of a lamp or the sun, because the Master God will provide their light, and they will reign forever.

Jesus will come suddenly

22:6 Then the angel said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true.” And the Master, the God of the spirits of the prophets, commissioned his angel to show his servants what must suddenly come to pass: 22:7 “Look! I am coming suddenly. Blessed are those who guard the words of the prophecy of this scroll.”

22:8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I did, I fell down at the feet of the angel showing me these things. 22:9 But he says to me, “Look! No! I am just a co-servant with you and your brothers and sisters the prophets, and those who guard the words of this scroll. Worship God!”

22:10 Then he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near. 22:11 Let the unjust continue to harm; let the dirty remain dirty; let the just continue to be righteous; let the holy remain holy. 22:12 Look! I am coming suddenly, bringing with me the wages everyone has earned.

The offer and the warning

22:13 “I am the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the start and the finish. 22:14 Happy are those who wash their robes; they are granted access to the Tree of Life and passage through the city doorways. 22:15 But outside are the loathsome, the sorcerers, the promiscuous, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. 22:16 I, Jesus, sent my angel to give you this testimony to the Congregations. I am the root and family of David, the shining morning star.” 22:17 The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come!” And let those who hear, say, “Come!” Let the thirsty come; let whoever chooses, drink freely of the Water of Life.

22:18 “Indeed, I testify to all who hear the words of the prophecy of this scroll: Whoever adds to those words, God will add to that person the disasters they describe. 22:19 And to whoever subtracts from those words, God will subtract their share from the Tree of Life and the holy city as those words describe.”

Epilogue

22:20 The one testifying to these things says, “Yes! I am coming suddenly!” Absolutely! Come, Master Jesus! 22:21 May the favor of Master Jesus be with you all.